

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



MMA Fighter Corey Anderson headlines RACVB's Sport Stories Event

Guest panelists include Toronto Raptor Fred VanVleet, Team USA Boxing Champion Angel Martinez and NJCAA Champion Misty Opat

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ROCKFORD, IL – Sport Stories, a Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau production as part of the organization's Bring Your Game 2 Rockford (BYG2RKFD) campaign, will feature keynote speaker **Corey Anderson**, Rockton native and Ultimate Fighting Championship #6 Light Heavyweight in the World. In addition, a guest panel featuring **Fred VanVleet** (Toronto Raptors and RACVB Sports Tourism Ambassador), **Angel Martinez** (Team USA Boxing and Gold Gloves National Champion) and **Misty Opat** (4-time NJCAA Women's Basketball Champion Head Coach at Rock Valley College) will highlight an evening focused on advancing the positive impact of sports tourism in the Rockford region.

Sport Stories will be held at 7 p.m. on Thursday, June 22 at Veteran's Memorial Hall (211 N. Main Street, Rockford). The event is free; however, due to limited seating tickets must be reserved at www.gorockford.com/sportstories.

"Sport Stories is really about sports tourism as a platform to give back. There are so many people from the community who are making an impact through sports and we want to help move that narrative forward. Corey Anderson is a proud Rockton native and national superstar in the world of mixed martial arts, and we're honored to have him back home as our keynote speaker," said Nick Povalitis, Sports Destination and Sales Manager. "And with our championship guest panel, we're going to look at what success means locally and beyond through the eyes of some of our region's best ambassadors."

Anderson, who was the 2014 The Ultimate Fighter Season 19 Champion, said he was excited to return home and share with the community his path to success.

"It's always an honor for me to share my story, but an even bigger honor when I have the opportunity to come home and share with the community that I grew up in. If my story touches one person every time I speak, then I've done the job I set out to do," said Anderson.

The evening will begin with the keynote presentation by Anderson, followed by a moderated Q&A session with the guest panelists highlighting their career accomplishments, thoughts on the value and role of sports in a community and how they see sports as a catalyst for tourism and quality of life in the region. Attendees will be allowed to ask questions, as well.

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"The level of talent that is born and lives in the Rockford region is amazing," said Povalitis. "Our hope is to showcase how sports impact our lives and how sports can help the community raise its game."

Sports Stories kicks off a busy week of activity for the RACVB's BYG2RKFD initiative as the first ever Fred VanVleet Summer Camp and Fan Fest takes place at the UW Health Sports Factory on June 23-25. For more information go to www.gorockford.com/fvvcamp.

The mission of the RACVB is to drive quality of life and economic growth for our citizens through tourism marketing and destination development. www.gorockford.com

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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