

# NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



## RACVB Wins Awards at State Tourism Conference

*Awards Include Best Branding, Best Cooperative Partnership*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 25, 2019

**ROCKFORD, IL** — The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB) earned two awards from the Illinois Governor’s Conference on Travel & Tourism honoring excellence in the **Best Branding Initiative** category for the **BYG2RKFD sports marketing campaign**, and **Best Cooperative Partnership** category for the **Rockford Peaches 75th Anniversary events and promotions**. Over 500 individuals gathered at the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago to recognize best practices and strategies in Illinois’ travel & tourism industry.

RACVB received the following Illinois Excellence in Tourism Awards:

- **Best Branding Initiative** for RACVB’s Bring Your Game 2 Rockford (BYG2RKFD) sports marketing campaign. This campaign features the Rockford region’s local multi-use facilities and local notables including Fred VanVleet, Kenny Gould, Corey Anderson and Nicole Briscoe.
- **Best Cooperative Partnership** for the Rockford Peaches 75th Anniversary events that took place during summer 2018 throughout the Rockford region. RACVB was proud to be part of planning, promoting and executing along with the lead partners at the International Women’s Baseball Center and Friends of Beyer Stadium.

“We are honored to accept these awards on behalf of the great communities we serve and would like to thank our area partners for their support and commitment when working on community-wide events and program. With these invaluable partnerships, we are able to produce award-winning work and results,” said John Groh, RACVB president/CEO. “We will continue to put a bright spotlight on the Rockford region in the year ahead.”

The Illinois Governor’s Conference on Travel & Tourism is an annual reminder of the power of the industry on the economy of Illinois. Tourism continues to have a vital impact on communities at the local and state level. Over the course of 2017, an additional 1.6 million travelers visited Illinois, bringing an increase in visitor spending, tax revenue and local jobs. When [announcing the numbers in May 2018](#), the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity’s Office of Tourism noted that 2017 marked the seventh consecutive year of record-breaking tourism in the state. Visitors to Illinois hit an all-time high in 2017. Nearly 114 million people traveled to the state last year to “Enjoy Illinois” and give a \$1.1 billion boost to the state’s economy. Last year’s visitor totals were 1.4% higher than 2016, which also was a record year. Travelers came from all over the world for business (17%) and pleasure (83%). In the past 10 years, travelers visiting Illinois increased by more than 22 million, and tourism has become one of the state’s most important industries.

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The Illinois tourism industry supported 335,500 jobs in 2017, an increase of 18,600 jobs since 2015. Visitors spent \$39.5 billion in Illinois in 2017, according to the U.S. Travel Association. That's an increase of \$1.1 billion or 3 percent from 2016. Visitor outlays for goods and services generated \$2.95 billion in state and local tax revenue, up \$75 million from 2016. Tourist spending saves the average Illinois household over \$1,300 in taxes each year.

***About the Awards:*** Illinois tourism-related organizations are invited to enter the Illinois Excellence in Tourism Awards. The awards honor innovative tourism marketing initiatives that promote the outstanding destinations, attractions and events throughout Illinois. The winning entries were announced at the Awards Ceremony dinner on Monday night, February 4, 2019 during the 2019 Illinois Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism in Chicago, IL. The winning entries will also be recognized in media releases, as well as in Illinois Office of Tourism and Illinois Council of Convention and Visitor Bureaus newsletters.

*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](http://www.gorockford.com)*

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