

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



2-State Win: Rockford Region and Beloit to Welcome Large, National Softball Tournament to the Stateline *2019 National Softball Association Girls Fast Pitch World Series to generate more than \$2.1 million in economic impact to the area*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 14, 2019

Rockford, IL – Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB), Visit Beloit and other area partners announced a sports tourism win for the Stateline region at a news conference this afternoon. The **2019 National Softball Association (NSA) North-Central “B” & “C” Girls Fast Pitch World Series** will be hosted in the Stateline for the first time **Wednesday, July 17** through **Sunday, July 21**. This is also the first time the Rockford region and Visit Beloit have officially entered into a partnership to co-host a national sports tournament.

The NSA World Series is the **largest girls fast pitch softball tournament** that each community has ever hosted. It is expected to generate over **\$2,102,494** in **estimated economic impact**, draw **5,000** or more **athletes** and **attendees** and utilize approximately **4,000 room nights** in the Rockford region and an **additional 1,600 room nights** in Beloit, Wisconsin and Elgin, Hoffman Estates and Freeport, Illinois.

Visitors will travel from 12 US states and Canadian provinces including Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Kentucky and Ontario.

Numerous softball games will be played at the Rockford Park District's **Mercyhealth Sportscore One (Rockford, IL)**, **Harlem Community Center (Machesney Park, IL)**, **Davis Junction Community Park Softball Fields (Davis Junction, IL)** and the **Youth Sports Complex – Stateline Family YMCA (Beloit, WI)**. The tournament will drive tourism by bringing in top youth female softball players from nearly **200 teams** (8U, 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U and 18U age groups), tournament directors and spectators to the area.

“The RACVB, Visit Beloit and other partners like the Rockford Park District saw an opportunity to leverage our combined resources to bring this large-scale tournament to our region – which happens to be the largest softball tournament the Rockford region has ever hosted. We have a great relationship with our neighbors at Visit Beloit and are confident we will provide the best fields, facilities and accommodations to over 5,000 visitors expected to be here in July,” said Lindsay Arellano, RACVB vice president of sales & servicing. “We are grateful to the NSA tournament organizers for making the decision to bring this tournament here and look forward to proving to them that they made the right choice.”

It was also announced that the Rockford region and Beloit will be included in the rotation to host future NSA World Series tournaments. Tournament organizers say they hope to be able to work with both destinations every two to four years. More information about this will be provided at a later time.

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"We are thrilled to work in collaboration with the Rockford Area CVB in order to host this national tournament. By working cooperatively across the Stateline, our destinations are combining all of the best facilities and partners to create a one-of-a-kind experience that these athletes and families will never forget," said Celestino Ruffini, Visit Beloit executive director. "The National Softball Association's decision to come to the Stateline area is a major win for our region not only for the economic impact it will create, but also for the opportunity to showcase the best of what our area has to offer."

The NSA tournament games are open to the public and there is no admission fee to spectate.

"We selected the Rockford region and Beloit, Wisconsin communities based on the great relationship that has been getting developed over a few years with NSA Illinois Girls Fast Pitch State Director Bob Biehl, plus the relationship we have forged from just a meeting at a NASC Conference with the RACVB. We feel these relationships have set the foundation for a great partnership between NSA, RACVB, Visit Beloit, Rockford Park District and other community partners," said Bill Horton, NSA-BPA president/CEO. "NSA will continue to build on our partnership with not just NSA Girls Fast Pitch Worlds but Adult Slow Pitch and our BPA Baseball programs."

Additional details about the organization and tournament can be found at <https://nsafastpitchworldseries.com>

National Softball Association is a full-service organization that offers a division of play and a level of competition that youth and adults can enjoy. Their mission is to be the most successful Softball Association in the United States. They will achieve success by uncompromising commitment to superior team/sponsor/coach satisfaction, director-umpires oriented environment, industry leading values/selection/services and ethical business conduct.

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

Visit Beloit is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to attract visitors to the Greater Beloit area to experience their attractive, vibrant community and to ensure guests and residents enjoy friendly and warm hospitality. www.visitbeloit.com

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