

# Visit McHenry County Wins at State Tourism Conference

## *Best Cooperative Partnership for McHenry County Made*

Visit McHenry County won an award from the Illinois Governor's Conference on Travel & Tourism honoring excellence in the **Best Cooperative Partnership** category for **McHenry County Made**. Over 500 individuals gathered at the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago to recognize best practices and strategies in Illinois' travel & tourism industry.

Visit McHenry County received the following Illinois Excellence in Tourism Award:

- **Best Cooperative Partnership** for our McHenry County Made marketing program and Passport. The McHenry County Made program was created as an offshoot of the Illinois Made program and highlights 15 unique businesses who create fine products, foods, drinks and art in McHenry County! Promotions for this program include video, social media, print, media familiarization (FAM) tours and an interactive passport experience which features 9 of our makers.

"We are honored to accept this award on behalf of all of our amazing McHenry County Made partners. With these invaluable partnerships, we were able to produce an award-winning marketing program. We are grateful and honored to be able to share the stories of our makers with everyone," said Jaki Berggren, Executive Director of Visit McHenry County. "We will continue to add makers to this program and promote their unique and authentic stories. It is these businesses that make McHenry County a great place to visit and live."

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 gave 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.

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 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.

*Visit McHenry County exists to create economic growth for McHenry County through effective marketing of its tourism products and supporting the development of new tourism products.*

*visitmchenrycounty.com  
mchenrycountymade.com*

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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