

LunchChat

Connect. Inform. Help.



Tourism Ties: Partnering to Enhance Our Region's Quality of Place

May 5, 2020

Hosted by Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

Connect. Inform. Help.

UnitedWayRRV.org/covid-19

OR

Text TOGETHER to 40403



National Travel & Tourism Week

May 3-9, 2020

RACVB Panelists



John Groh
President & CEO



Martesha Brown
Director of Advancement



Nick Povalitis
VP of Marketing & Sports Development

RACVB Panelists



Lindsay Arellano
VP of Sales & Service



Austin Taylor
Group & Event Services Manager



Kristen Paul
Director of Destination Development




Today's Discussion

History, Team, & Partnerships

Branding Our Destination

Sports & Meetings

Destination Defining Events



History, Team, & Power of Partnerships



History, Team, & Partnership Panelists



John Groh
President & CEO



Martesha Brown
Director of Advancement



History :

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau (RACVB) is a private, non-profit organization established in 1984 to promote and champion efforts to make the Rockford Region an overnight visitor destination.



Mission:

The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau drives **quality of life** and **economic growth** for our citizens through **tourism marketing** and **destination development**.





RACVB Executive Board



Jennifer Furst
CHAIR
FURSTSTAFFING



Todd Cagnoni
VICE CHAIR
CITY OF ROCKFORD



Tim Meyers
TREASURER
WIFR



Einar Forsman
SECRETARY
ROCKFORD CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

RACVB Board

- **Chad Anderson**, *Anderson Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram*
- **David Anderson**, *Anderson Japanese Gardens*
- **Marcus Bacon**, *Radisson Hotel & Conference Center*
- **Nathan Bruck**, *City of Loves Park*
- **Nathan Bryant**, *Rockford Area Economic Development Council*
- **Bryan Davis**, *SupplyCore*
- **Patricia Diduch**, *Village of Rockton*
- **Daniel Fellars**, *Winnebago County*
- **Kevin Frost**, *City of Rockford*
- **Tiana McCall**, *Rock Valley College*
- **Mike Nelson**, *Valley Expo Displays*
- **Noel Nickel**, *SwedishAmerican*
- **John Penney**, *Painters District Council No. 30, Local 607*
- **Ted Rehl**, *City of South Beloit*
- **Jay Sandine**, *Rockford Park District*
- **Carol Schuster**, *University of Illinois College of Medicine Rockford*
- **Darrell Snorek**, *Lamonica Beverages*

TOURISM'S GROWTH

2018 IN WINNEBAGO COUNTY

VISITOR SPENDING

Visitors in Winnebago County spent **\$392 MILLION** in 2018.



LOCAL JOBS

Visitors in Winnebago County put **3,039** people to work in the hospitality sector, resulting in **\$95 MILLION** in payroll in 2018.



LOCAL TAX RECEIPTS

Visitors in Winnebago County generated **\$6.8 MILLION** in local tax receipts in 2018.



EVENTS & ATTRACTIONS

8,639,347 PEOPLE (VISITORS and RESIDENTS) visited attractions and events in Winnebago County in 2018.



2018 WINNEBAGO COUNTY HOTEL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS IN THE NEWS

An Illinois City Aims to Move Better Policing Right Into the Neighborhood

Rockford program encourages officers to live in the areas they patrol by offering free housing.

"Officer Patrice Turner starts her weekdays by getting on her bike and riding to West Middle School, greeting children and getting stragglers into the doors before they close."

September 14, 2017

Rockford is making a comeback — and so is the city's pride

"Even't been to Rockford in a few years, it's time to plan a visit. While you were sleeping, downtown started waking up."

September 14, 2017

Rockford Illinois Workforce Program Propels Aerospace Cluster

"There aren't many places in the country where a student can earn a four-year mechanical engineering degree at a cost of less than \$40,000. But in Rockford, Illinois it's possible."

February 12, 2018

Six area breweries that serve stellar food

"...[Pig Minds Brewing Co.] offers a 100-percent plant-based menu. Even if you think you don't care for vegan cuisine, you'll be pleasantly surprised that the healthy vittles can be so damn flavorful."

September 26, 2017

Chef credits prison for his success

"I started mulling about outside of James Purifoy's burger parlor, the line often snakes around the small, red"

September 26, 2017

EB-5 program a win for immigrant investors and U.S. business?

"EB-5's Jeff Flock talks to Gorman & Co. founder Gary Gorman about the EB-5 program that opens a path to citizenship through investments in the U.S."

April 3, 2018



Regional Impact

- 285,873 People (Winnebago County)
 - Rockford
 - Loves Park
 - South Beloit
 - Machesney Park
 - Rockton
 - Cherry Valley
 - Pecatonica
 - Roscoe
 - Winnebago
 - Durand



Regional Destination Footprint

Listings on the GoRockford website
(Locally-owned, with the exception of hotels)

Attractions - 261

Shopping – 120

Dining – 308

Hotels – 25

Campgrounds – 8

Marketing Partner Meetings

FAM (Familiarization) Tours

Calendar of Events on GoRockford.com



**Good for the community.
Good for a visitor.**

The Importance of Partnership





Partnership in Branding Our Destination

Real. Original.

ROCKFORDSM
ILLINOIS, USA

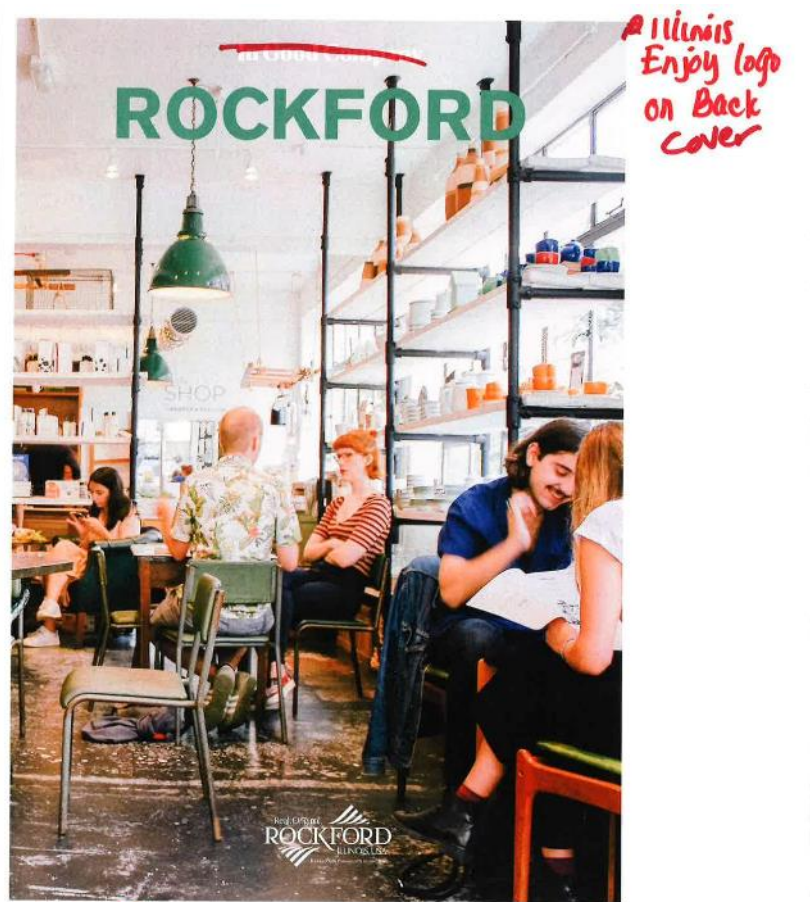
Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

RACVB MarCom / PR Pillars

- Proactive storytelling
- Comprehensive public relations
- Data drives decisions



Where We Were – “Business as Usual”



- wrap front to back
- Norwegian landscape showing food, spirits, coffee, entertainment, kids/families / adult singles etc.



The Importance of...



Agility!

Where We Are – Since March 16...

The screenshot shows the GoRockford website with a browser address bar at gorockford.com. An orange banner at the top reads "Rockford Area Tourism/Hospitality COVID-19 Resources" and states: "RACVB will continue to monitor updates related to COVID-19, sending out pertinent information via subsequent e-blasts, across all GoRockford social channels and on our website. [Read More](#)". Below this is a green navigation bar with links for MEETINGS // SPORTS // GROUPS // MEDIA, a shopping cart icon (0), a weather icon (40°), a search icon, and a "Book Now" button. The main content area features a large image of a sports field with the text "WE'RE HERE FOR YOU" and "MERCYHEALTH SPORTSCORE TWO". Below this is a section titled "For Now, Stay Home, Stay Healthy & Stay Safe!" with a message from the Rockford Area CVB sales and servicing team. The message states: "Greetings from the Rockford Area CVB sales and servicing team. It's been a difficult couple weeks, and we have a long ways to go for sure. But in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we wanted to check in again to see how you're all holding up at home. We of course miss seeing you at industry events, at our venues, in your communities, and in our community. In due time..." It continues: "Fortunately, we all have an opportunity and responsibility within tourism to be tactful and ready for recovery. With that in mind, **we are in contact with our venues, hotels, sites and attractions, restaurants and event partners to make sure we are aligned when the time is right.** For any event operator who had to cancel, please consider rescheduling for later in the year. We're here to help ensure the rescheduling process goes smooth for everyone." At the bottom of this section is a row of four small portrait photos of diverse individuals. To the right of the main content area is a "RESOURCE CENTER" section with a link to "COVID-19 UPDATES" and a "Read More" button.

Rockford Area Tourism/Hospitality COVID-19 Resources

RACVB will continue to monitor updates related to COVID-19, sending out pertinent information via subsequent e-blasts, across all GoRockford social channels and on our website. [Read More](#)

MEETINGS // SPORTS // GROUPS // MEDIA

(0) 40°

[Book Now](#)

HOTELS **Real Original. ROCKFORD ILLINOIS, USA** RESTAURANTS PLAN ABOUT

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

MERCYHEALTH SPORTSCORE TWO

For Now, Stay Home, Stay Healthy & Stay Safe!

Greetings from the Rockford Area CVB sales and servicing team. It's been a difficult couple weeks, and we have a long ways to go for sure. But in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we wanted to check in again to see how you're all holding up at home. We of course miss seeing you at industry events, at our venues, in your communities, and in our community. In due time...

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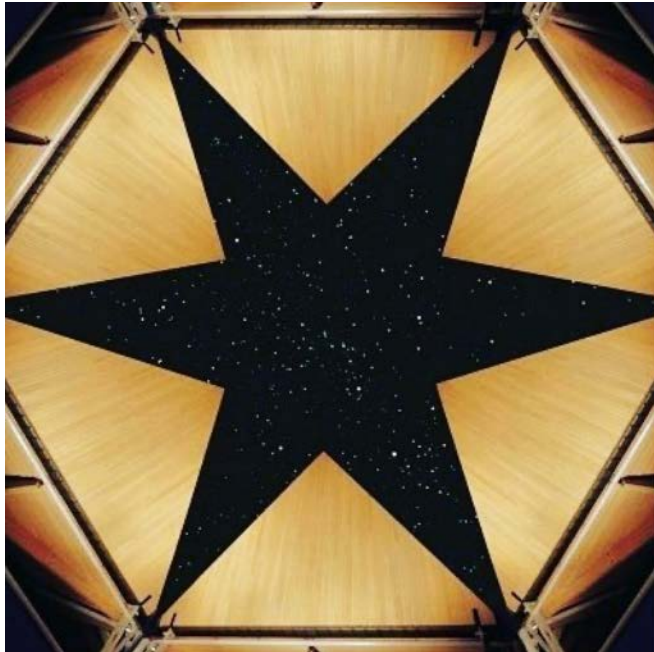
RESOURCE CENTER

COVID-19 UPDATES

Stay up to date on local updates regarding events and locally owned businesses.

[Read More](#)

#StayHomeRKFD Launch!



gorockford
Rockford, Illinois

gorockford 📸 🌟 #RockfordNightSkies
Community Photo Contest starts NOW!! We're looking for the best of the best—from your rural farmland, city backyard or downtown dwelling. 📸
Contest Rules: Stay home. Go outside. Look up, take a photo and capture nature, skyline structures, or the cosmos. Post your picture on IG using #RockfordNightSkies and #GoRockford by the next new moon (3/24), and the winner will receive a \$50 local restaurant gift card. GO! 📸

1w

Rockford Area Native Sports Icons

Nick Povalitis

Corey Anderson Nicole Briscoe Darin Monroe John Groh (Moderator)

47:29 HD

Chat (51) Share Comment Like

Rockford CVB @gorockford · Mar 22
ICYMI !! Rockford, Illinois is always in Michelle's heart, thoughts and prayers. Check out her video message!
#StayHomeRKFD #GoRockford

Michelle Williams @RealMichelleW · Mar 22
Replying to @gorockford @CityofRockford and 6 others
Love to #ROCKFORD #ILLINOIS ❤️

0:59 940 views

LunchChat

Go Rockford was live.
on Monday · 🌐
Check out LunchChat with Rockford

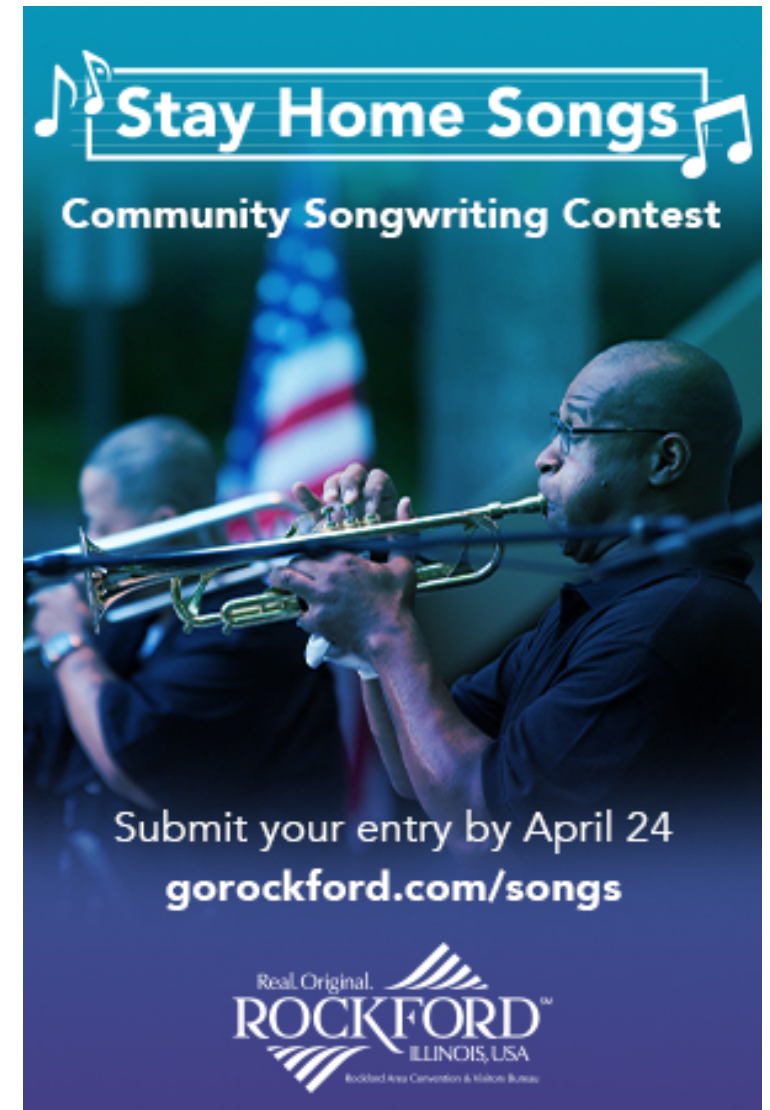
3,402 People Reached 479 Engage

9

Like Comment
Comments

Most Relevant ▾

Go Rockford · 3:25 If you of the panelists during the them here and we will sub webinar!
Like · Reply · Commented on



Where We'll Be – In Due Time!



We Need You!

- **Less resources = quality control**
- **User-generated storytelling – SHARE TOURISM'S IMPACT!**
- **Funding for sustaining and growing holistic programs**
- **Tourism creates value for residents and visitors!**





Partnerships in Sports & Meetings

Real. Original.
ROCKFORDSM
ILLINOIS, USA
Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

Sales & Service Panelist



Lindsay Arellano

Vice President of Sales
& Service



Nick Povalitis

Vice President of
Marketing & Sports
Development



Austin Taylor

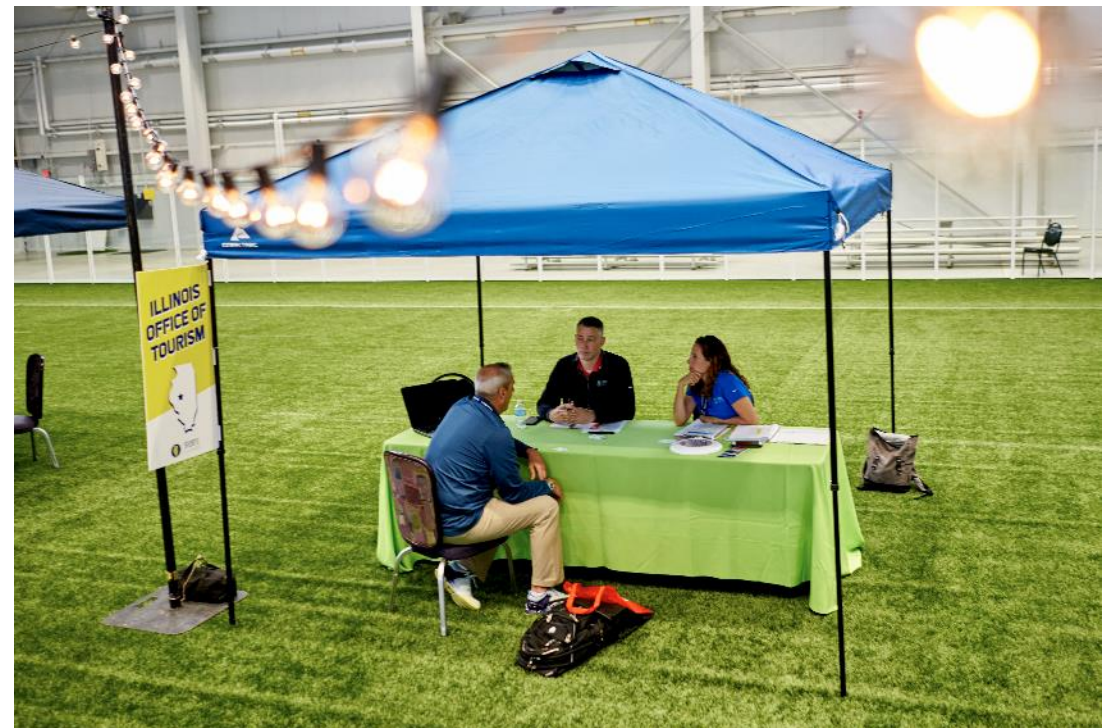
Group & Event
Services Manager

Sales Team

The RACVB Sales team is responsible for securing sports and meeting/convention group business.

Methods:

- ❖ Sales Missions
- ❖ Site Visits
- ❖ Networking
- ❖ Warm/Cold Calls
- ❖ Trade Shows
- ❖ Advertising



Markets

Meetings

- ❖ Social
- ❖ Military
- ❖ Educational
- ❖ Religious
- ❖ Fraternal



Sports

- ❖ Soccer
- ❖ Softball
- ❖ Basketball
- ❖ Volleyball
- ❖ Cribbage
- ❖ Table Tennis
- ❖ Kubb
- ❖ Bowling
- ❖ Much More



International

- ❖ United Kingdom
- ❖ Germany
- ❖ Sweden



Servicing



NJCAA DIII Women's
Basketball National
Championship Tip-Off
Banquet

2019 North American
Olympic Table Tennis
Trials



IHSA Girls Bowling State Finals



Servicing



Real. Original.

ROCKFORD

ILLINOIS, USA

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

Customers



Results

- In FY19 The RACVB helped booked:
- 190 Events (meeting and sports markets)
- 95,772 Room nights in FY19
- Which equated to \$44M in economic impact to the community
- The RACVB won Sports Tourism Organization of the Year in 2016 & 2018 by the National Association of Sports Commissions.
- The RACVB won the 2018 Destination Branding & Marketing Campaign of the Year.





Partnership in Destination Defining Events



Destination Development Panelist



Kristen Paul

Director of Destination
Development



Destination Development - Stroll on State



- Community Driven-free and open for all
- Decorates Downtown Rockford for season
- Supports small businesses
- Volunteer Driven
- Made possible by Community partnerships, local businesses, residents and sponsors
- Full day of activities





Destination Development – Forest City Beautiful



- Focus to improve civic spaces and restoring public landscapes
- Partnership with the City of Rockford
- Business is Blooming



2019 Rockford Sharefest Partnership



- 4,555 new plants
- 220 gallons of paint
- 33 lamp posts
- 6 cedar benches
- 5,800 volunteer hours
- 1 gazebo
- 1 semi of mulch



Destination Development – CRE8IV

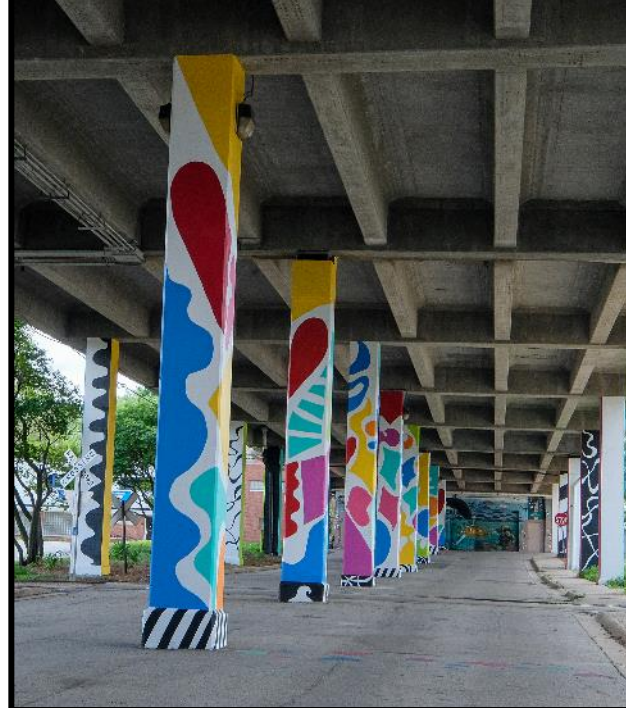


- Matching grant from the IL Department of Commerce, Office of Tourism
- Sponsorship match from local business and individuals
- Business Owner and local artist support
- 9 Murals in 7 days & 5 Block pARTy Events
- Placemaking (15+ year Lifespan)











Destination Development – Sculpture Biennial



- Current Exhibit arrived in 2018
- 13 Large-Scale Sculptures
- Up for sponsor renewal to keep until June 2021



Destination Development – Summer at Davis Park



- Free Events
- Workout Wednesdays
- Concerts at Davis Park
- Reintroduce Davis Park to residents
- 2,000+ attendees



2020 Summer Events TBD

GoRockford.com
[@GoRockford](https://twitter.com/GoRockford)

Partner with us



1. Submit your event information so we can help to promote
2. Invite a meeting/event to take place in our region
3. Become an 815 Ambassador (share the good news)
4. Share a LunchChat idea or partner with us
5. Volunteer for Stroll on state
6. Attractions, retailers, hotels, and restaurants share up to date information for the website
7. Planning a large event, (family reunion, cultural fairs) include us

Q&A

Connect. Inform. Help.

UnitedWayRRV.org/covid-19

OR

Text TOGETHER to 40403

Thank You

Connect with Us to Partner

Facebook: Go Rockford

www.gorockford.com

covid19@gorockford.com

info@gorockford.com

LunchChat

Connect. Inform. Help.



Tuesdays & Thursdays @ 12 noon

www.gorockford.com/lunchchat

Rockford Area Resources

GoRockford.com/ResourceCenter

Information about local sites/attractions/restaurants, and resources for families and small businesses

GoRockford.com/LunchChat

Weekly webinars every Tuesday/Thursday



LunchChat

Connect. Inform. Help.



Thank you!