



ILLINOIS. MILE AFTER MAGNIFICENT MILE.

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism

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2010 ILLINOIS GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON TOURISM HONORS 2009 ACHIEVEMENTS WHILE ADDRESSING THE INDUSTRY'S NEW REALITY

CHICAGO – Travel industry thought leaders from across Illinois gathered at The Fairmont Chicago on February 17-19 for the 2010 Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism to discuss best marketing practices and explore the future of the state's tourism industry. Hosted by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Tourism and the Illinois Council of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, the 23rd Annual Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism brought together more than 500 tourism professionals from around the state and focused on the importance of tourism as a tool for stimulating and continuing economic development within Illinois.

A collaboration of nationally recognized speakers came together to provide attendees with 16 education sessions surrounding the travel industry including Warren Ribley, Director, Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity and Illinois Office of Tourism Deputy Director, Jan Kostner who discussed the landscape of tourism throughout Illinois during the annual "State of the State of Tourism Address" titled, "The New Reality." Both Ribley and Kostner discussed at length the Illinois tourism industry and its vital role in statewide economic development, while sharing information on where Illinois tourism stands with key economic indicators and proactive steps the state has taken in planning for the future.

Kostner's remarks were amplified with solid successes in 2008, including:

- In 2008, Illinois welcomed nearly 88 million domestic visitors, spending a total of more than \$30.89 billion, a three percent increase from 2007.
- The economic impact of tourism directly generated 303,500 jobs within Illinois in 2008, with one in ten jobs in Illinois directly or indirectly supported by travel and tourism spending.
- Travel-related spending accounted for over \$5.5 billion in federal, state and local tax revenues in 2007, a 1.1 percent increase over 2007. The additional taxes save an average Illinois household over \$1,100 in taxes each year.
- More than 1.4 million overseas visitors traveled to Illinois in 2008, ranking the Illinois the sixth most popular U.S. state for international travelers.
- Consumer inquiries for FY 09 were more than 2.3 million.
- Illinois will launch the brand new "Good Purpose" program, making them the first state to launch a social purpose campaign of this magnitude. An initiative designed to help brands create a powerful and own-able social purpose platform that will help them differentiate themselves and rise above the clutter. Through an online portal, travelers will be able to access information about how they can travel Illinois and "give back" at the same time.

A full transcript of the 2009 State of the State of Tourism Address can be found at www.ilgovconference.com.

Illinois Excellence in Tourism Award Recipients

Since its inception in 1986, each year the Governor's Conference on Tourism concludes with the Governor's Awards luncheon where various awards are given to honor innovative tourism marketing initiatives that promote outstanding destinations, attractions and events throughout the state of Illinois. This year celebrates another record breaking year for the number of entries received. The 2010 awards luncheon took place on February 19 and was emceed by Julian Crews, Assignment and Features Reporter for WGN News.

The awards, produced locally by Dolphin Creative Promotions in Skokie, Ill., were presented in 11 categories, with six of the 11 categories including two budget divisions – Division A with total marketing and operational budgets \$700,000 and above; and Division B with budgets under \$700,000. The entries were judged by a panel of 15 industry marketing and tourism professionals on creativity and innovation as well as their overall effectiveness and return-on-investment. These awards showcased the exceptional promotional and marketing efforts developed throughout the year by the Illinois tourism industry.

Best of Show: *Chicago Office of Tourism*

Best Leisure Promotion

Division A: *Alton Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau, Green Getaway Guide*

Division B: *Quincy Convention Bureau, 50 Things to See & Do*

Best Sales Promotion

Division A: *Springfield, IL Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2009 SCVB Planning Guide*

Division B: *Kankakee Convention & Visitors Bureau, Barn Quilt Tour Guide*

Best Visitors Guides

Division A: *Springfield, IL Convention & Visitors Bureau*

Division B: *City of Joliet - Visitors Bureau*

Best Tourism Marketing Campaign

Division A: *Chicago Office of Tourism, Explore Chicago – Take a Neighborhood Vacation Summer 2009*

Division B: *N/A*

Best Event or Festival: *Chicago Office of Tourism, Great Performers of Illinois 2009*

Best Creative Cooperative Partnership: *Chicago Office of Tourism, ExploreChicago.org Airport Technology Lounges Marketing Initiative*

Best Tourism Web Site

Division A: *Chicago Trolley & Double Decker Tour Co., Chicagotrolley.com*

Division B: *Streator Tourism, Streator.org*

Best Electronic Marketing

Division A: *Alton Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau, Destination All Around Alton – Groups Sales DVD*

Division B: *City of Joliet Visitors Bureau, 2009 Joliet Play Campaign Television Commercials*

Best Social Media Marketing: *Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau*

Best Community-wide Campaign: *City of Joliet Visitors Bureau, 2009 Play Campaign*

Best Media Relations Initiative: *Fleishman-Hillard, SkyDeck Chicago at Willis Tower Dares Visitors to Stand Out on The Ledge Campaign*

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Media requiring additional information on the 2009 Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism may contact Nissy Atassi at Nisreene.Atassi@edelman.com or 312-233-1310.

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents.

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Pat Quinn, Governor