



October 2018

DuMore DuPage Tourism Partners,

Two hundred travel and tourism partners joined us on September 27th for the 2018 Annual Meeting at Cantigny Park in Wheaton. As the face of tourism for more than 30 years, the DuPage CVB continues its work to elevate this critical industry to the next level. We are incredibly fortunate to have such dedicated partners who understand the importance of tourism and its significant contribution to a healthy economy for DuPage. Thank you for your continued support and commitment.



In the spring of 2016, very early in the strategic planning process, we hosted a speaker from Skift to share the “megatrends defining travel” – presenting on the three “C’s”—content, community and collaboration. Collectively, we have made monumental strides in all three areas, but it’s only the beginning. **It isn’t just about what DuPage County and the tourism industry is doing, it’s what our competitors are doing.** Now, more than ever, DuPage must remain top of mind for business and leisure travelers. We all know consumers are bombarded with an ever-increasing amount of travel experiences. Together with our 38 communities, we must continue our work to define DuPage and our distinctive offerings in this highly competitive industry.

In August we announced the [2017 visitation performance metrics](#) for DuPage County. While DuPage is growing, so too are other destinations; however, market share, a key indicator of success is declining. This is not a problem unique to DuPage County. During the Annual Meeting, three industry experts provided their insights and data about the highly lucrative global travel marketplace.

Ted Mandigo, president of TR Mandigo and Co. and a longtime friend to the DuPage CVB shared the impact of how Chicago and other regional destinations are growing their hotel inventory and dropping rates, thereby threatening our hotel partners' rates, and ultimately the annual tax collections for our state and municipalities. We must continue to create demand for our hotels.

Mitch Nichols, president of Nichols Tourism Group, Inc. provided examples of how our regional competitor destinations are making headway and offered important factors to protect DuPage’s market share.

Michael Jacobson, president and CEO of the Illinois Hotel Lodging Association (IHLA) and formerly with the Washington, DC-based U.S. Travel Association, spoke to the value that destination organizations

bring when combined with economic development offices and workforce development.

The message is clear -- we must match our competitors' level of focus and investment to remain a viable destination option. We need to work together as a County to continue to realize our goals, and to ensure this powerful economic engine can deliver massive returns.

DuMore for DuPage,

Ben Marsletti

Friend of Tourism Award Honorees

It was my sincere pleasure to present former State Representative Patti Bellock and DuPage County Board Economic Development Committee Chair and DuPage CVB board member Tonia Khouri with our Friend of Tourism awards during the Annual Meeting of Partnership.



Representative Bellock and Chairman Khouri have consistently supported the DuPage CVB's efforts to grow visitation throughout DuPage, recognizing the tourism industry as a key economic engine for the County's economy.

A longtime champion of tourism as an essential economic driver for DuPage and the state, Representative Bellock understands the challenges and opportunities associated with growing visitation to DuPage County. She has been an avid supporter, working as a leader in the General Assembly with the DuPage CVB to protect its state tourism funding - a critical element for continued development and implementation of strategic initiatives to grow business and leisure visitation throughout DuPage.

In her role as Chair of the DuPage County Board Economic Development Committee and also as a board member of the DuPage CVB, Khouri has been an active partner with the DuPage CVB leadership working to secure additional annual funding and dedicated dollars for targeted initiatives. As a small business owner herself, Khouri recognizes tourism is an essential part of a healthy economy for DuPage County, delivering a significant return on investment for residents and the business community. Chairman Khouri successfully advocated for the creation of a grant program that creates funding from the CVB, the County, and participating DuPage communities to help collectively drive group business to local hotels, and ultimately increased tax revenue to the County. This particular initiative has generated significant financial returns for the tourism industry throughout DuPage.

This is the third year the DuPage CVB has presented the Friend of Tourism award. Past honorees include Jim Elsener, founder of Ledger Publishing and Mike Feigenbaum, general manager Westin Lombard Yorktown Center in 2017, and Chris Johnson, general manager Doubletree by Hilton Chicago-Oak Brook in 2016.

DuPage CVB 2018 Annual Report

In my 19 years at the DuPage CVB, this past fiscal year marks a momentous shift in how the organization moves



forward on behalf of the 23,000 faces of tourism, DuPage's 38 communities, and its one million residents. With so much at stake, our role is no longer cemented in sales and marketing alone, but rather a role as a critical economic development engine. Throughout this report are examples of our collaborative work, partnering with leaders from sectors across DuPage to align efforts, maximize resources and determine the best solutions for economic advancement that support visitor and resident needs. As we closed out fiscal year 2018 and embraced the hard work still ahead, know that your DuPage CVB is leading the way on our industry's critical and complex issues.

Visit our Enhanced Website

The first phase of a comprehensive website enhancement with more story-telling, video and images is now complete! I encourage you to take a few moments to become familiar with our enhanced site. We are always looking for more stories to share so we can cast a wider net and amplify through marketing and communications channels. Have a story? [Send our way!](#)



DuMore in DuPage

Just 20 miles west of Chicago, discover the perfect combination of urban sophistication and small-town charm. Find something familiar, or completely unexpected, in one of DuPage County's 38 communities, each with its own personality. Recognized as the healthiest county in Illinois with an unrivaled mix of green space, each season offers a new and beautiful backdrop for exploration. With a wealth of resources - from our business climate to our natural environment - we welcome and invite you to DuMore in DuPage.

Health is influenced not only by where you live, but also where you



DuPage County Entrepreneurs Recognized

Congratulations to two of our partners -- Elmhurst's 151 Kitchen & Bar owners Jim and Kristine Blessing and Parker Restaurant Group's CEO & Founder Brad Parker (The Hampton Social Burr Ridge) upon receiving a 2018 Entrepreneurial Excellence Award from the Daily Herald Business Ledger. The full list of honorees can be found [here](#).



Upcoming Dates

Mark your calendars for the Quarterly Hotel Sales Committee webinar on October 19 from 9:30 -

