

CHICAGO'S METRO WEST
DUPAGE COUNTY
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

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DuPage takes steps to grow \$2.5 billion tourism industry

Tourism bureau welcomes new sales director ahead of strategic plan roll-out

OAK BROOK-- The DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau (DCVB) today announced that it is taking steps to grow the county's \$2.5 billion industry with the addition of a new leader, top strategist and team player, Justin Roach. Roach, a tourism and sales professional, will join the DCVB staff as the new director of sales beginning January 3.

"We are all thrilled to have Justin on our team," said Beth Marchetti, executive director of DCVB. "His experience in the hospitality industry and his portfolio of innovative engagement strategies stood out to us during the interview process. We believe his experience as a consultant to numerous convention bureaus, hotels and sports commissions will bring an edge to DuPage."

Tourism in DuPage County is a \$2.5 billion industry that creates 22,000 jobs and pumps \$42 million back into local government coffers. The most recent numbers from the state show that while tourism grew in 2015, DuPage County's market share actually fell slightly.

"Many people don't think of tourism when they think of DuPage, but we know that it has a big impact on our residents and economy," said Tonia Khouri, chairwoman of the DuPage County Board's Economic Development Committee. "Families in DuPage pay \$1,300 less in taxes each year thanks to visitors who eat in our restaurants, shop in our malls and downtowns, go see our attractions, and stay in our hotels."

Growing the county's tourism market share will be a main area of focus in 2017. As sales director, Roach will primarily be responsible for leading the DCVB sales staff in elevating the organization within the travel and tourism industry, and therefore generating additional economic impact for the county. Roach will also be in charge of developing new strategies to reach additional markets, which in turn will keep DuPage competitive with similar tourism contenders, such as St. Louis, Nashville, and Indianapolis.

"Each community that makes up DuPage County brings something different to the table," Roach said. "I'm looking forward to working with the DCVB staff to create new initiatives and grow DuPage on the local, national and even international stage."

"Justin is joining DCVB at an exciting time," Marchetti said. "This year we'll be unrolling our new strategic plan, 'GPS: A Tourism Roadmap.' Justin will be an asset in implementing this innovative strategy for luring more meetings and visitors to DuPage." The strategic plan looks to unify the 38 communities that make up DuPage in order to drive tourism and bring further economic development to the county.

Roach was selected from a competitive candidate pool of more than 25 individuals. He will join DCVB from Sports Planning Guide, where as the director of sports sales he increased revenues more than 350% in four years. Previously, Roach served for four years of active duty in United States Air Force as an airborne operations technician aboard the E-8 Joint STARS aircraft. He served in both Iraq and Afghanistan over three deployments and received three medals for meritorious success. Following his service, Roach attended North Central College in Naperville, where he earned his degree in sports management. He also currently serves as an Advisory Board Member for the United States Sports Congress.

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The DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau is the official sales and marketing organization for DuPage County. The DCVB was formed to attract business and leisure travelers to DuPage County's 38 communities and is responsible for generating billions of dollars in revenue every year in the form of hotel nights, tourist attractions, meals and more. The DuPage CVB is the only Illinois State certified not-for-profit organization authorized to represent DuPage County's tourism and convention business.