

IDA Member Success Stories

Decatur Area CVB

We are very happy to say that because of the generous grant dollars Decatur/Forsyth was able to land the APBA Poser Boat Races for 5 years starting in June 2024. This brings races from 12 states and Canada to Illinois.

Visit Springfield

The \$70 million SCHEELS Sports Park in Springfield is a direct result of local officials having confidence in the travel industry at both the state and local levels.

Visit Kankakee County

Thanks to the LTCB grand funds, we have been able to invest in a unique 3-month out of home ride-share marketing campaign in Chicago and suburbs that generated 4.2 million impressions and over 32,000 clicks to our website, and encouraging a visit to Kankakee County. We were also able to invest in SEO/SEM for our website, driving the number of #1 pages from 2 to 444, and increase clicks by over 300% in 6 months.

Jacksonville Area CVB

We recently launched a marketing campaign that has increased traffic tremendously to our newly launched website. We have more than quadrupled the traffic to our site with our google marketing campaign. These efforts would be impossible without the support of our LTCB Funding. Keeping our small community on the map would be hard to do without our match dollars.

This past year we were able to take part in Sports Huddle and sign up for a tour show and golf show. We are actively following up from 23 appointments and 3 are solid leads. The ability to fund marketing tools for this show would not have been possible without the assistance of DCEO through our LTCB Funding. We are grateful for the opportunity to sell our community.

Visit Lake County

We used a portion of our grant funds to help secure and retain 23 sports tournaments in Lake County in FY '23. One that is noteworthy was a new soccer tournament which attracted 112 teams from 8 states. Teams stayed at 10 different Lake County hotels using 700 hotel rooms and generated \$275,000 in economic impact from spending on lodging, dining, shopping and entertainment. The tournament will be returning in 2024 and expects a 20% increase in teams. We also secured a women's bowling tournament which was held for 7 weekends in February and March, 2023 utilizing 400 hotel rooms in a traditionally a slower time of year. The bowlers contributed \$158,000 to the local visitor economy.

State grant funds enabled us to enhance our fall marketing campaign titled "Spooks & Spirits" promoting a month of "frights and delights" from fall activities to our Lake County Libation Trail partners. We expanded our media buy which included Broadcast and Cable TV, radio, newspaper and digital ads in Chicago and Southern Wisconsin. We also added digital outdoor boards strategically placed to increase our reach to a wider audience and elevate brand awareness to keep

Lake County's unique and fun fall activities top of mind. Advertising drove consumers to our branded landing page. User session were up 71% and pageviews were up 53% over the previous year. We also had nearly 1,000 check-ins for our Libation Trail Check-In Challenge which ran for the month of October.

Experience Champaign-Urbana

The LTCB Grant funds have allowed Experience Champaign-Urbana to:

- 1) Create a bold, new brand that better reflects our community and leverages name recognition to visitors around the world. Grant dollars helped us share our new brand through our website and advertising that saw traffic increase by 21.8% and click-through rates nearly double.
- 2) Improve our online event calendar, our top visited page, to better inform visitors of the many brilliant events they can experience in our community.
- 3) Generate videos showcasing our inclusive and welcoming community, highlighting our diverse population and minority business owners.
- 4) Secure two US Quadball qualifier events for the first time in central Illinois creating significant economic impact for the community.

Southernmost Illinois Tourism Bureau

In addition to continuing to promote the abundance of outdoor recreation in Shawnee Forest Country of Southernmost Illinois, we are able to highlight the importance of 'getting into the path of totality' for the upcoming total solar eclipse of the sun on April 8, 2024.

Social posts and promotions are running on Facebook and Instagram; as well as digital ads targeting people that are outside the path of totality, but within an easy day's drive. 3 to 6 hours from Southernmost Illinois. Promoting the eclipse and 'getting into the path of totality' will benefit our whole region.

Visit Quad Cities

The FY23 LTCB investment supported Visit Quad Cities' efforts to regain group business by attending more tradeshow events during the year resulting in new meeting bookings and strengthening our pipeline for new business. We reached our highest website visitation since the pandemic earning more the 400,000 visitor sessions and produced 28 OC, That's Where podcasts. In addition, we hosted the International Snowmobile Congress Convention and the USA Water Polo Division III Women's Collegiate National Championship.