

# fy 17 EASTERN IOWA

*A Year in Review*

## ANNUAL REPORT



### Board of Directors

**President**

Keith Rahe  
Dubuque Area CVB

**President-Elect**

Daryl Parker  
Jackson County Conservation

**President**

Laurie Haman  
Iowa City/Coralville  
Area CVB

**Treasurer**

Aaron McCreight  
GO Cedar Rapids

**V.P. Education**

Carrie Donaire  
Clinton CVB

**Director At Large**

Laura Bandfield  
Iowa Children's Museum

**V.P. Legislative**

Rustin Lippincott  
Fairfield Iowa CVB

**V.P. Marketing**

Kim Manning  
Cedar Falls CVB

**V.P. Membership**

Spiff Slifka  
Howard County  
Business & Tourism

**EITA Executive Director**

Carrie Koelker  
carrie@easterniowatourism.org



### Eastern Iowa Tourism Association

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# GRANTS/ SCHOLARSHIPS

## Statewide Grant Program

- Updated the current scholarship grant application.
- The three Iowa Tourism Regions joined forces to provide statewide tourism educational components.
- Recommended and encouraged industry leaders to serve on the statewide review grants review process and committee.
- Awarded Tourism Conference scholarships to eleven regional members.

# COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIPS & INDUSTRY RELATIONS

The Eastern Iowa Tourism Association is funded on a successful and strong private and public partnership. Membership investments and involvement represents businesses, organizations, and individuals from every facet of the tourism industry. Membership investments and our Iowa Economic Development Authority's Iowa Tourism contract are a critical piece to our unified voice.

State Funding	\$125,600
EITA Funding	\$105,820
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>\$231,550</b>



- Secured membership in Iowa Destination Marketing Alliance and attended the bi-monthly meetings.
- Served on statewide committees.
- Maintained membership to the Iowa Group Travel Association and partnered with IGTA to host the May General Membership Meeting.
- Attended various community events, press conferences, and industry events.
- Assisted and served numerous members with technical assistance and support.

# EDUCATION

## Carrie Donaire, Vice President

- Hosted educational programs in conjunction with General Membership Meetings. Regional attendance at each meeting ranged from 65-140 industry leaders.
  - *Get Scrappy Smarter Digital Marketing for Organizations Big and Small* – Cedar Rapids
  - *Industry Network Exchange, Lobbyist Delivery & Upcoming Session Details, District Leader Training, and New Year Solutions* – Clinton
  - *Annual Town Hall Meeting - Iowa Tourism Puzzle* – Cedar Rapids
  - *Power of Travel Day/Regional Partnership Meeting* – Altoona
  - *How to Deal with Difficult People, Building Itineraries* – Cedar Falls
  - *Grit: Living Your Life with Passion, Perseverance, and Purpose* – Dubuque



# ADVOCACY/ LEGISLATIVE

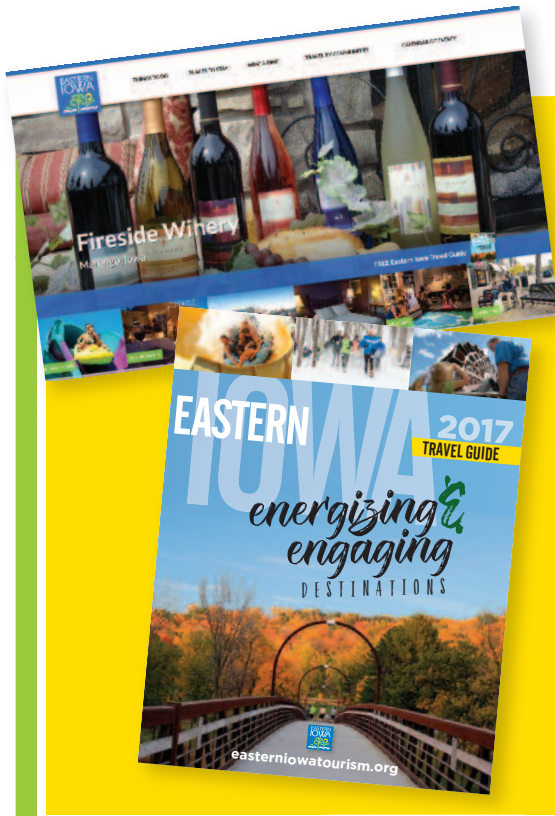
*Eastern Iowa Liaisons to the Travel Federation of Iowa Board:  
Wes Ehrecke, Aaron McCreight, Keith Rahe, Rustin Lippincott  
and Carrie Koelker.*

- Provided Leadership roles: Keith Rahe-President and Carrie Koelker-Secretary.
- Co-sponsored the annual Iowa Tourism Conference and Tourism Awards in Davenport, Iowa.
- Coordinated the Legislative Showcase in Des Moines by bringing together industry representatives with elected Iowa officials to deliver tourism information and explain the importance of Tourism to Iowa and the economy.
- Coordinated a statewide District Leader program with industry members.
- Held District Leader trainings for delegates.
- Coordinated an industry statewide survey to tabulate the legislative needs and priorities.
- Connected and communicated industry stakeholders.
- Published FAST FACT Tourism Statistics and Legislative Priorities.
- Published the TFI Fast Facts for Tourism statistics and awareness information of the elevated priorities.
- Met with elected officials to enhance and grow Iowa's Tourism Industry.
- Continued to contract lobbyists and provide electronic TFI Legislative Updates and *Capital News* to the EITA membership.
- Assisted specific needs and district leaders with talking points and contacts.
- Supported all issues of the TFI 2016 Legislative Priorities.
- Served on a variety of committees.
- Launched a new TFI website.
- Attended monthly TFI Board Meetings and various committee meetings
- Monitored and supported various issues impacting the industry.
- Served on the Destination Capitol Hill Committee.
- Continued to raise awareness, embark programs and incorporate plans from the Iowa Tourism Sector Plan, a five year industry vision for tourism in Iowa.
- Continued to serve and offer input on of the Iowa Tourism Umbrella Organization committee.
- Surveyed the industry about merging the Iowa Tourism Conference and Legislative Committee.

# MEMBERSHIP

## Spiff Slifka, Vice President

- Memberships were available to counties in the Eastern region, businesses/organizations, and others interested in tourism for Eastern Iowa.
- In 2016, EITA secured participation and contributions from 27 of the 28 Eastern Iowa counties.
- 252 members, processed 15 new memberships in FY'17.
- Continued a membership campaign encouraging communities to communicate the benefits of Eastern Iowa Tourism.
- Updated the membership section on our website and added additional region business documents and links.
- Attended numerous member events and site visits.
- Offered technical assistance to various members, committees, partnerships, and communities.
- Secured and encouraged liaisons to serve on the Iowa Tourism Awards committee.
- Appointed delegates to serve on the Iowa Tourism Conference Site Selection committee.
  - Regional attendance at each meeting ranged from 65-120 industry leaders.
  - Hosted three bonus statewide opportunities for regional members



# MARKETING

## Kim Manning, Vice President

- Printed the 2017 Eastern Iowa Visitor Guide for distribution in all Iowa Welcome Centers and mailed to ad placement and web site inquiries.
- Added four pages to accommodate members and advertising.
- Partnered with 60 tourism industry members in the 2017 Eastern Iowa Travel Guide and Region website. Ad sales totaled \$39,000. The Guide is solely supported from advertiser sales.
- Partnerships and collaboration was key to various projects, including the Visitor Guide and website.
- Launched a new website and membership portal with membership enhanced components.
- Advertisers received leads from a reader response card included in the Travel Guide.
- 22,900 Travel Guides were distributed and downloaded from the region website.
- An on-line guide with active links and advertiser links.
- Maintained membership to the Iowa Group Travel Association and partnered with IGTA to host the May General Membership Meeting.
- Secured membership in Iowa Destination Marketing Alliance and attended the bi-monthly meetings.
- Distributed 6,000 Eastern Iowa Travel Guides to the Chicago suburb households with a partnership with Journal and Topics Newspaper.
- Assisted travelers and group tour planners with their itineraries.
- Kept website updated with current contact information.
- Greeted various groups and travels that attended conferences, luncheons, and member's events.
- Handled media interviews and industry news.
- Promoted tourism events, communities, and websites on radio interviews and broadcasts.

# SPECIAL PROJECTS

Once again in FY'17 the Iowa Office of Tourism invited Iowa's three tourism regions to submit proposals to apply and manage multiple special projects. Each region was appointed \$25,000. After soliciting members of the tourism industry, four ideas were chosen by the Board of Directors of Eastern Iowa. Input was gathered for future potential regional efforts. All special projects were secured with innovative ideas and great leadership from the involved members.

## Power of Travel Day

A joint partnership between Iowa's three tourism regions and the Iowa Office of Tourism. This was held April 2017 in Altoona, Iowa.

- One day education and networking opportunity designed to energize and appreciate the tourism industry for their partnership and involvement. Perfectly timed to kick off the upcoming spring and summer travel seasons.
- Included and expanded additional breakout sessions on a variety of topics with a keynote address focused on sales, capture mindshare, and problem solving.
- Over 140 statewide attendees participated in this opportunity implemented into the afternoon session, an increase from the 2017 event.

## Website Membership Component

- Completed the membership platform based website.
- Surveyed the members and solicited input on what was needed to enhance their membership connection.
- The site is designed to serve as a portal for all members.
- Volunteers and paid professionals are able to access industry announcements, meeting materials, as well as association business.
- A viable tool for the members and the industry of Eastern Iowa.
- Additions include enhanced training, photo libraries, job postings, membership documents, and meeting collateral.
- A link to [traveliowa.com](http://traveliowa.com) to view calendar of events and Eastern Iowa's endless opportunities for the traveler.

## Customer Service/Hospitality Training

Partnered with the Iowa State University to provide training to front line employees, area leaders, and volunteers.

- Partnered with 14 communities and counties to deliver trainings within organizational territory.
- Local Hosts provided the training venue and were responsible for promoting and coordinating the session within their county or community.
- Delivered an address to a total of more than 1,000 tourism professionals with the participating areas:
  - Allamakee, Howard and Winneshiek Counties
  - Amana Colonies Convention and Visitors Bureau
  - Clayton County
  - Clinton Convention and Visitors Bureau
  - Cedar Falls Tourism Convention and Tourism Bureau
  - Fairfield Convention and Visitors Bureau
  - Fireside Winery
  - Greater Burlington Convention and Visitors Bureau
  - Jackson County Tourism Association
  - Keokuk Convention and Tourism Bureau
  - Manchester Chamber of Commerce
  - Villages of Van Buren
  - Waterloo Convention and Visitors Bureau
  - Washington Chamber of Commerce

# fy 17 EITA Partners

1st Fridays Art Walk  
 Ackerman Winery  
 Allamakee County  
 Allamakee County Economic Development  
 Amana Colonies CVB  
 AmericInn Hotel & Suites Fairfield  
 AmericInn of Anamosa  
 Anamosa State Penitentiary Museum  
 Ardon Creek Vineyard & Winery  
 Art Domestique  
 Bellevue Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Belmont Hill Victorian B & B  
 Benton County  
 Best Western Plus Longbranch Hotel  
 Bily Clocks Antonin Dvorak Museum  
 Black Hawk County  
 Blackhawk Hotel  
 Bloomsbury Farm  
 Bossen Implement, Inc.  
 Boulders Inn & Suites-Fort Madison  
 Boulders Inn & Suites-Monticello  
 Breitbach Country Dining  
 Bremer County  
 Bremer County Conservation  
 Brucemore, Inc.  
 Buchanan County  
 Buchanan County Conservation  
 Buchanan County Historical Society  
 Buchanan County Tourism  
 Buffalo Bill Museum  
 Burlington Trailways  
 Calkins Square  
 Camp Courageous  
 Cedar County  
 Cedar County Economic Development  
 Cedar Falls TVB  
 Cedar Rapids Museum of Art  
 Celebration River Cruises, Inc.  
 Century Haus Guest House  
 Chickasaw County  
 Chickasaw County Tourism  
 City of Columbus Junction  
 City of Coralville  
 City of Fort Madison  
 Clarion Hotel & Convention Center

Clayton County  
 Clayton County Conservation & Welcome Center  
 Clayton County Development Group  
 Clinton County  
 Clinton County Historical Society  
 Clinton CVB  
 Cobblestone Inn & Suites  
 Comfort Inn Dyersville  
 Community Main Street Downtown Cedar Falls  
 Cork N Canvas Iowa  
 Country Junction Restaurant  
 Cresco Motel  
 Crystal Lake Cave  
 Curtis Mansion  
 Czech Village/New Bohemia Main St. District  
 Delaware County  
 Delaware County Historical Society  
 Delmar Depot Railroad Museum  
 Des Moines County  
 DeWitt Chamber & Development Company  
 Diamond Jo Casino  
 Dubuque Arboretum & Botanical Gardens  
 Dubuque County  
 Dubuque County Conservation  
 Dubuque Museum of Art  
 Dubuque River Rides  
 Dutch Country Inn  
 Dyersville Area Historical Society  
 Dyersville Chamber of Commerce  
 Eagles Landing Winery  
 Eastern Iowa DMA  
 Eldridge-North Scott Chamber  
 Fairfield Arts & Convention Center  
 Fairfield Iowa CVB  
 Family Museum  
 Fayette County  
 Fayette County Economic Development & Tourism  
 Fayette County Tourism Council  
 Field of Dreams Movie Site  
 Fireside Winery  
 Flatted Fifth Blues and BBQ at Potter's Mill  
 Four Mounds Inn & Conf Center  
 Franklin Street Brewing Company  
 Friends of Pine Creek Grist Mill  
 Froelich's Foundation & Museum  
 Frontier Motel  
 Gateway to NE Iowa Welcome Center  
 GO Cedar Rapids  
 Grand Harbor Resort & Waterpark  
 Grant Wood Art Gallery  
 Grant Wood Studio & Armstrong Visitor Center  
 Greater Burlington CVB  
 Greef General Store  
 Grout Museum District  
 Guttenberg Chamber of Commerce  
 Hansen's Farm Fresh Dairy

Hawkeye Buffalo Ranch  
 Heartland Acres Agribition Ctr  
 Henry County  
 Henry County Conservation  
 Henry County Tourism  
 Herbert Hoover National Historic Site  
 Herbert Hoover Presidential Library & Museum  
 Historic Bonaparte Pottery  
 Holiday Inn Dubuque/Galena  
 Holiday Inn Express LeClaire  
 Hotel Blackhawk  
 Hotel Julien Dubuque  
 Howard County  
 Howard County Business & Tourism  
 Iowa 80 Trucking Museum  
 Iowa Bicycle Coalition  
 Iowa Children's Museum  
 Iowa City & Coralville CVB  
 Iowa City Downtown District  
 Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature  
 Iowa County  
 Iowa Dairy Center  
 Iowa Grape Vines Winery  
 Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission  
 Iowa PGA Section  
 Iowa State Snowmobile Association  
 Iowa State University Extension  
 Iowa Wine Trail  
 Iowa's County Conservation System  
 Iowan Magazine  
 Isle Casino Hotel Bettendorf  
 Isle Casino Hotel Waterloo  
 Jackson County  
 Jackson County Area Tourism Association  
 Jackson County Conservation  
 Jefferson County  
 John Deere Tractor & Engine Museum  
 Johnson County  
 Johnson County Historical Society  
 Jones County  
 Jones County Conservation  
 Jones County Tourism  
 Journal & Topics Newspapers  
 Kalona Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Kalona Historical Village  
 Kendrick Forest Products & Forever Cabinets by Kendrick  
 Keokuk CTB  
 Keosauqua Chamber  
 Laura Ingalls Wilder Museum  
 LeClaire Office of Tourism  
 Lee County  
 Legacy Travel Group  
 Linn County  
 Linn County Conservation

Little Brown Church in the Vale  
 Lost Island Waterpark  
 Louisa County  
 Louisa County Conservation  
 Louisa Development Group  
 Manchester Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Mandolin Inn B & B  
 Maquoketa Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Marion Chamber of Commerce & Uptown Marion  
 McGregor/Marquette Chamber  
 Midwest Old Threshers  
 Mississippi River Distilling Company  
 Monticello Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Morning Mist Cabins, Inc.  
 Muscatine Art Center  
 Muscatine County  
 Muscatine History & Industry Center  
 MVL Community Development Group  
 National Czech & Slovak Museum and Library  
 National Farm Toy Museum  
 National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium  
 National Motorcycle Museum  
 NewBo City Market  
 North Lee County Historical Society  
 Oelwein Chamber & Area Develop  
 Old Cedar County Jail  
 Old City Hall Gallery  
 Old Creamery Theatre Co.  
 Open Door Hospitality  
 Our Iowa Magazine  
 Ox Yoke Inn  
 Plaza Antique Mall  
 Promiseland Winery  
 Putnam Museum  
 PZAZZ! Entertainment Complex  
 Quad Cities CVB  
 Quad City International Airport  
 Quiet Walker Lodge  
 Rhythm City Casino Resort  
 River Arts Center/Clinton Art Association  
 River Cruises  
 Riverside Casino & Golf Resort  
 Royle Printing Company

Scott County  
 Scott County Conservation  
 Seed Savers Exchange  
 Silos & Smokestacks  
 Spook Cave and Campground  
 Squiers Manor B & B  
 St. Donatus Historical Society  
 St. Francis Xavier Basilica  
 State Historical Society of Iowa Historic Sites  
 Stauer House Bed & Breakfast  
 Stone Cliff Winery  
 Strawberry Point Development  
 Swedish American Museum  
 Tabor Home Vineyards & Winery  
 Tanger Outlet Center  
 The Granger House Victorian  
 The Hotel at Kirkwood  
 The Stone City General Store Pub  
 Tipton Economic Development  
 Travel Dubuque  
 TOMY Outlet Store  
 U of I Athletic Hall of Fame  
 Ushers Ferry Historic Village  
 Vesterheim Museum  
 Village of East Davenport Business  
 Villages Folk School of Van Buren County  
 Villages of Van Buren  
 Vinton Unlimited  
 Washington Chamber of Commerce  
 Washington County  
 Waterloo Center For The Arts  
 Waterloo CVB  
 Waukon Chamber of Commerce  
 Waverly Chamber of Commerce  
 West Branch Development Group  
 Williamsburg Area Chamber of Commerce  
 Winneshiek County  
 Winneshiek County CVB

*Thank you for your partnership.*

[easterniowatourism.org](http://easterniowatourism.org)

