

Reception honoring local Illinois-made businesses planned

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ALTON - A reception highlighting Grafton Winery and Brewhaus, 300 W. Main St., Grafton, and Buena Vista Art, 307 E. Main St., Grafton, as new Illinois makers will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, April 4 at The Loading Dock in Grafton. Original Illinois makers Mississippi Mud Pottery and Old Bakery Beer Company will also be recognized.

The reception is sponsored by the Alton Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau, which nominated both businesses to the program, and the Grafton Chamber of

Commerce. The public is invited to attend. A cash bar will be available and appetizers will be provided. Displays featuring the work of the local Illinois makers will be showcased.

The induction of both Grafton businesses increased the ranks of local Illinois makers in the region to four. Mississippi Mud Pottery and Old Bakery Beer Company, both in Alton, were named to the inaugural class of Illinois makers announced in 2016. All Illinois makers are featured on www.EnjoyIllinois.com.

The Illinois Made program spotlights the people, products and experiences which are unique to Illinois and who inspire travelers to explore off the beaten path destinations around the state. Launched in 2016 by the Illinois Office of Tourism, Illinois Made currently has over 100 makers in the program.

Research shows the Illinois Made advertising campaign had a direct impact on tourism generating nearly 21,000 hotel bookings and \$7.5 million in tourism spending from March 1 to July 31, 2017, according to state tourism officials.