

Economic Development Specialist Joins Tourism Bureau

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ALTON - Jerseyville native and former head of the Jersey County Business Association, Beth Bear, will join the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau as an Economic Development Specialist on May 1.

Bear will focus on tourism product development. The Economic Development Specialist position is new to the Bureau and reflects the transformational thinking needed to create the next great tourism destination, Cory Jobe, President/CEO of the Bureau noted.

“We are always looking ahead to ways we can grow the region,” Jobe said. “Beth has a strong background in economic development and we are thrilled she is bringing those skills to our bureau.”

As head of the JCBA, Bear advocated for businesses, created & delivered programs to drive consumer traffic, and assisted businesses and local governments in writing for grants and loans. In addition to her experience at the JCBA, Bear brings a wealth of experience working with communities at every level. She has over 20 years of experience helping both individuals and organizations advocate their positions within the wider community.

“I have always had great respect for the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau,” Bear noted. “I am excited to bring my perspective to the Great Rivers & Routes region, which is a world class destination. Every traveler has their stories of the extraordinary - memories of places and experiences which will be with them forever. I feel so incredibly fortunate to have had some of those incredibly special moments in this very place that I call home.”

Bear has worked as a Youth Affairs Coordinator with the Office of the Illinois Lt. Governor; a Legislative Analyst with the Illinois House of Representatives; and as a policy manager with several organizations in London, United Kingdom prior to leading the JCBA.

The Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau is a certified Destination Marketing Organization serving Madison, Jersey, Calhoun, Macoupin, Montgomery, and Greene counties and the City of East St. Louis in St. Clair County. The bureau is dedicated to educating visitors about the region by providing information regarding the area's history, unique landmarks, recreational opportunities, leisure attractions, special events and scenic marvels.