



For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Nanette Traetow

Phone: 630.575.8070

Email: nanette@discoverdupage.com

**DUPAGE COUNTY RETAINS HIGH RANKING IN NEWLY RELEASED
2008 ECONOMIC FIGURES FOR ILLINOIS TOURISM**

Despite the economic downturn, DuPage County holds firm to second position behind Cook County in generating revenue for Illinois' tourism industry.

Oak Brook, IL – According to figures recently released by the U.S. Travel Data Center regarding Illinois tourism, visitors to DuPage County contributed \$2.16 billion dollars to the state's economy in 2008. This is an increase of just under 1% over 2007's nearly \$2.14 billion. DuPage holds on to its ranking as second only to Cook County for domestic travel spending in Illinois.

DuPage County also ranked second in tourism industry payrolls, employment figures, and state and local tax revenues. Tourism in DuPage County was responsible for \$112.90 million in state tax receipts, up slightly from \$112.88 million in 2007, and \$36.63 million in local tax receipts, down slightly from \$36.98 million.

The tourism industry payroll for DuPage County in 2008 was approximately \$569 million, down an estimated \$9 million from 2007. Over 22,210 people were employed in the county's hospitality industry, representing a net loss of about 460 jobs.

“It is worth noting that, even in a soft economy, DuPage continues to hold its own as a desirable destination for both business and leisure travelers,” states Skip Strittmatter, Executive Director of the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau. “With our proximity to Chicago, over 16,000 hotel rooms and 1.9 million square feet of meeting space, and easy access to O’Hare and Midway,

major interstates, and commuter rail lines, we offer an attractive and affordable alternative to staying in the city. World-class shopping, dining and entertainment, combined with our rich culture, heritage and landscape, are what bring people back to DuPage County.”

For more information about DuPage County and this report, contact Beth Marchetti, Director of Development, at 630.575.8070 or beth@discoverdupage.com.

About DuPage County and the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau

DuPage County is the second most populous county in Illinois after Cook County, which borders it to the north and east. Together, the two counties account for half of the state’s population. One of the nation’s wealthiest counties, DuPage is rich in many types of commerce and is second only to Cook in tourism revenue. With its well-developed highway and mass transit system, DuPage is easily accessible from both O’Hare and Midway Airports as well as the City of Chicago, a small portion of which and primarily a part of O’Hare Airport, is located within DuPage County limits.

Established through the efforts of a coalition of DuPage area hotel executives and business representatives in 1987, the DuPage Convention & Visitors Bureau was formally certified in 1989 by the State of Illinois as the official agency to promote the county’s multi-billion dollar tourism industry and market DuPage County as a destination for business and leisure travelers in order to enhance the economic development of the county.

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