

# Annual Report

Cedar Falls Tourism & Visitors Bureau | Fiscal Year 2019



## MISSION STATEMENT

To foster, promote, market and service our community as a quality destination for visitors.

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## TOURISM DOLLARS...

### 2018 Domestic Travel-Generated Tax Revenue in Iowa

- Federal = \$489.1 Million
- State = \$517.5 Million
- Local = \$129.6 Million

### 2018 Domestic Travel Impact in Iowa - Top 5 Counties Local Tax Receipts (\$ Millions)

- Polk = \$35.2
- Linn = \$13.3
- Scott = \$10.9
- Johnson = \$6.9
- Black Hawk = \$5.2

Black Hawk County local tax receipts increased 3.3% from 2017-2018.

Source: U.S. Travel Association, September 2019



## CEDAR FALLS

Tourism & Visitors Bureau  
6510 Hudson Road | Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
319.268.4266 | cedarfallstourism.org

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fiscal Year 2019 was another outstanding year for tourism in Cedar Falls!

With construction underway for a new Hampton Inn downtown, the new Holiday Inn & Suites and Bien VenU Event Center AND the expansion of the Hilton Garden Inn and Cedar Falls Convention & Event Center, we recognized the exciting opportunities before us and enlisted help from the University of Northern Iowa Institute for Decision Making to help gather input from partners and community stakeholders. We developed this input into a strategic plan to make the best possible use of these investments.

108 partners completed an on-line survey and over 40 stakeholders attended focus meetings to discuss these unique opportunities. We collectively determined we will continue to promote Cedar Falls as a quality leisure and sports destination and we will focus on meetings and conventions for the next couple of years. We will also devote attention to our local audiences to communicate the value and impact of tourism.

We are also proud of the new Cedar Valley 365 on-line calendar of events. This subscription-based asset allows partners to add their events to our database and to display them on their website through the use of a widget. It inspires locals to participate and visitors to come and to stay longer by presenting events based on preferences shared by its users. Over 4,000 people are making use of the calendar each month and it is quickly becoming the go-to event calendar for the Cedar Valley.

This work is the result of an extremely dedicated and talented staff and a myriad of volunteers and stakeholders working together to make our city a quality destination. Cedar Falls is truly a special place.



Hampton Inn Downtown Cedar Falls  
Scheduled to open summer 2019



Hilton Garden Inn and Cedar Falls  
Convention & Event Center  
expansion to convention space  
scheduled to open fall 2019



Holiday Inn & Suites and Bien VenU Event Center  
scheduled to open fall 2019

*Kim Manning*

Kim Manning, Manager

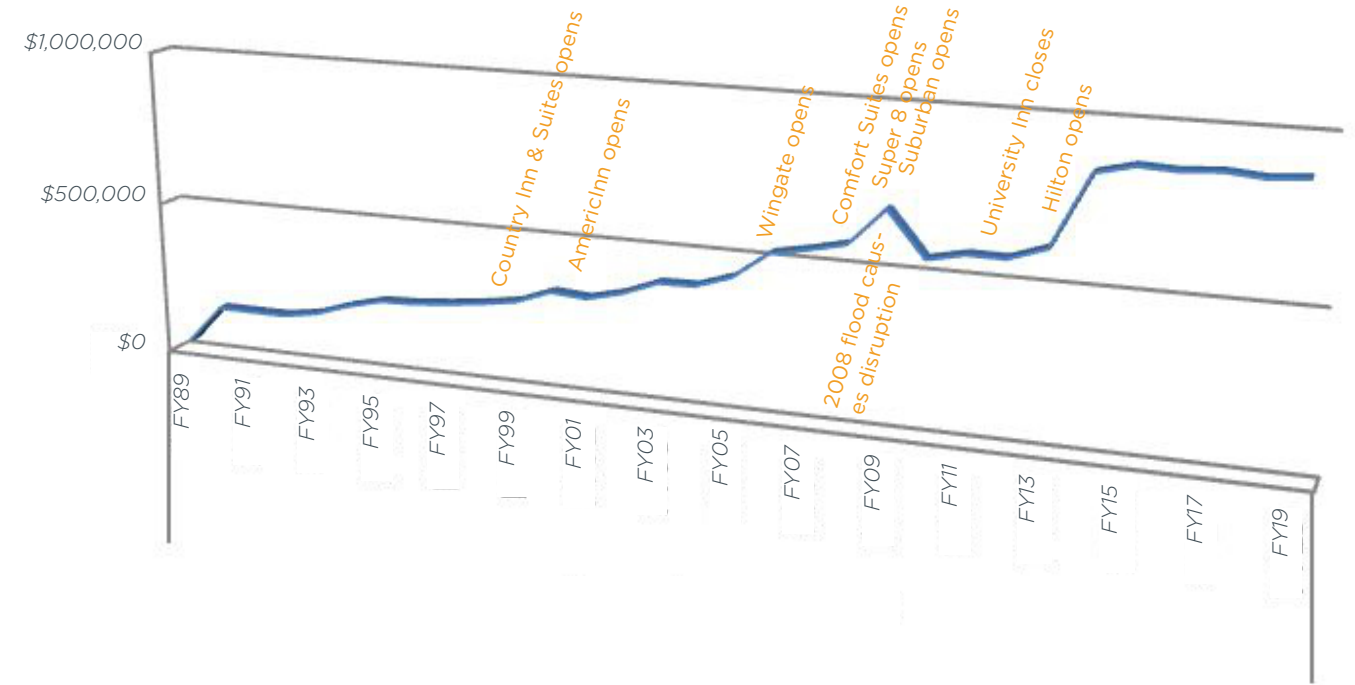
## FISCAL YEAR 2019 MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Generated \$877,873 in hotel/motel revenue, which is a 1% increase.
- Served 11,787 walk-ins, assembled 1,111 welcome bags, mailed 10,080 visitor guides and 156 relocation packets. 98,621 people visited our web site and 167,672 people engaged with us via social media. Volunteers provided 3,987 hours of service assisting with committees and allowing us to serve the public at our Visitor Center seven days a week.
- Created the new Cedar Valley 365 on-line calendar of events.
- Worked with UNI Institute for Decision Making to gather stakeholder input and create a Strategic Plan.
- Hosted inaugural DRAFT Volunteer Fair matching 80 volunteers with 26 organizations to serve in leadership roles.
- Developed a familiarization tour for meeting planners to showcase event spaces.
- Developed a new facilities guide.
- Improved on-line promotions for meeting facilities.
- Assisted in renewal of downtown as an Iowa Cultural and Entertainment District.
- Assisted in renewal of Cedar Falls and Waterloo as Iowa Great Place.
- Assisted with Iowa Group Tour Association sponsorship to host the American Bus Association Marketplace in Omaha.



## HOTEL/MOTEL TAX COLLECTIONS

Hotel/motel tax revenue has increased an average of 6% per year over the last 30 years of operations. The 2008 flood caused a dramatic spike that corrected itself the following year. Another spike occurred during FY13, shortly after the opening of the Hilton Garden Inn. The increased revenue has maintained and remained relatively flat since then.



## PROGRAMMING EXPENDITURES

### Advertising Placement Expenditures

Publication/Event	Circulation	Cost	2018						2019						
			Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
<b>LEISURE ADS</b>															
AAA Living - WI Travel Directory	360,696	\$1,304													
AAA Living - MN Bike Month	287,608	\$1,930													
Bikelowa.com	77k+	\$1,000													
Eastern Iowa Tourism Assoc. Travel Guide*	25,000	\$795	January 1, 2018-December 31, 2018						January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019						
Facebook + other Social		\$1,200													
Good Era (Monday Creations)		\$10,400	20 Micro Videos												
Have Fun Biking - IA Bike Hike Guide/Map	10,000	\$2,400													
Have Fun Biking - IA Bike Hike Guide/Ad	10,000	\$35													
Have Fun Biking - MN Bike Hike Guide/Ad	50,000	\$40													
Iowa Co-op - Digital Billboard DM	11,200	\$900													
Iowa Co-op - E-mail Marketing	50,000 x 2	\$500 x 2													
Iowa Co-op - Google Mobile Display Ads	300,000	\$300													
Iowa Co-op - Meredith Digital Network	404,040	2,000													
Iowa Co-op - Minneapolis Star Tribune	432,015	\$650													

\* indicates co-op with Community Main Street and Cedar Falls Historical Society

## PROGRAMMING EXPENDITURES (CONTINUED)

### Advertising Placement Expenditures

Publication/Event	Circulation	Cost	2018						2019						
			Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
<b>LEISURE ADS</b>															
Iowa Co-op - Omaha World-Herald	117,000	\$425													
Iowa Co-op - Pandora	633,333	\$2,565													
Iowa Co-op - Preservation Magazine	135,000	\$900													
Iowa Co-op - Travellowa.com Ads within site	1.5m	\$2,500													
Iowa Co-op - Travellowacom Sponsored Listing	1.5m	\$1,500													
Iowa Co-op - Travellowa.com Leads**	1.5m	\$600/\$1500													
Iowa Co-op - Travel Iowa Facebook Page	100,000	\$400													
Iowa Co-op - Truck Wrap			18 months paid in FY18												
Iowa Co-op - Vacation Iowa	101,970	\$600													
Iowa Co-op - YouTube	9,940	\$1,000													
Iowa Travel Guide	85,000	\$6,300	January 1, 2018-December 31, 2018						January 1, 2019-December 31, 2019						
Iowa Public Radio		\$2,225													

\*\* Indicates co-op with Experience Waterloo-advertising expenses were shared using a 40% Cedar Falls/60% Waterloo split based on the number of hotel rooms located in each community.

## PROGRAMMING EXPENDITURES (CONTINUED)

### Advertising Placement Expenditures

Publication/Event	Circulation	Cost	2018						2019					
			Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
<b>LEISURE ADS</b>														
<i>Iowa Public Television</i>		\$1,875												
<i>Iowa Sportsman</i>	198,000	\$200												
<i>Minnesota Trails</i>		\$540												
<i>Our Iowa</i>	90,000	\$3,503												July
<i>Panther Sports Properties Extended Season</i>		\$450												
<i>Panther Sports Properties Web site</i>		\$3,000												
<i>The Iowan</i>	18,741	\$1,611												
<i>ZLR - Development &amp; Digital Campaign</i>		\$15,000												
<b>SPORTS ADS</b>														
<i>Iowa High School Football Program</i>	5,500	\$200												
<b>GROUP ADS</b>														
<i>IGTA - Iowa Tour Guide</i>	20,000	\$1,355												
<i>IGTA - Website</i>		\$550												
<b>MEETING ADS</b>														
<i>ISEA Directory**</i>		\$422.50												
<i>Midwest Meetings Guide Book</i>	35,000	\$575	January-December 2018						January-December 2019					
<i>Midwest Meetings Magazine</i>	28,500	\$1,750												
<b>PUBLIC RELATIONS ADS</b>														
<i>Oster Regent Theatre Program</i>		\$320												
<i>Sturgis Falls Program*</i>		\$100												

\* Indicates co-op with Cedar Falls Historical Society  
 \*\* Indicates co-op with Hilton Garden Inn Cedar Falls

## PROGRAMMING EXPENDITURES (CONTINUED)

### Travel Expenditures

Organization	Cost
<b>GROUP TRAVEL</b>	
<i>Boomers in Groups - French Lick, IN</i>	\$2,242
<i>Iowa Group Travel Association/Central Iowa Tourism Region Guide Training - Mason City</i>	\$20
<i>Iowa Group Travel Association/Central Iowa Tourism Region Travel Iowa Marketplace - Pella</i>	\$345
<b>LEISURE TRAVEL</b>	
<i>Canoecopia Show - Madison, WI</i>	\$1,159
<i>Iowa Bike Expo - Des Moines</i>	\$306
<i>Midwest Mountaineering Outdoor Adventure Expo - Minneapolis, MN</i>	\$1,086
<b>MEETINGS TRAVEL</b>	
<i>Grow Cedar Valley - Strictly Business</i>	\$400
<i>Iowa Society of Association Executives Meetings</i>	\$8
<i>Small Market Meeting - Green Bay, WI</i>	\$2,195
<b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<i>ArtsLab</i>	\$180
<i>Cedar Valley Arts Summit</i>	\$20
<i>CenStates TTRA Conference - Des Moines</i>	\$716
<i>Eastern Iowa Tourism Association Meetings</i>	\$92
<i>Eastern Iowa Tourism Association Power of Travel Day</i>	\$180
<i>Iowa Destination Marketing Alliance Meetings</i>	\$131
<i>Iowa Tourism Conference - Des Moines</i>	\$1,140
<i>Upper Midwest Convention &amp; Visitors Bureau Conference - Lake Geneva, WI</i>	\$594
<b>PUBLIC RELATIONS TRAVEL</b>	
<i>Community Main Street Board Meetings</i>	\$108
<i>Silos &amp; Smokestacks - Golden Silo Award</i>	\$100
<i>Travel Federation of Iowa Legislative Night</i>	\$81

## PROGRAMMING EXPENDITURES (CONTINUED)

### Membership and Subscription Expenditures

Organization	Cost
<b>GROUP MEMBERSHIPS</b>	
<i>Iowa Group Travel Association</i>	\$250
<b>LEISURE MEMBERSHIPS</b>	
<i>Adventure Cycling</i>	\$45
<i>Eastern Iowa Tourism Association</i>	\$165
<i>Iowa Bicycle Coalition</i>	\$100
<i>Iowa National Heritage Foundation</i>	\$25
<b>MEETINGS MEMBERSHIPS</b>	
<i>Iowa Society of Association Executives</i>	\$130
<b>PUBLIC RELATIONS MEMBERSHIPS</b>	
<i>Cedar Valley Non-Profit Association</i>	\$200
<i>Greater Cedar Valley Alliance &amp; Chamber Ambassador</i>	\$100
<i>Iowa Destination Marketing Alliance (IDMA)</i>	\$500
<i>League of American Bicyclists</i>	\$40
<i>Volunteer Center of the Cedar Valley</i>	N/C
<b>SPORTS MEMBERSHIPS</b>	
<i>Team Iowa *</i>	\$2,500

\* Paid by the Cedar Valley Sports Commission

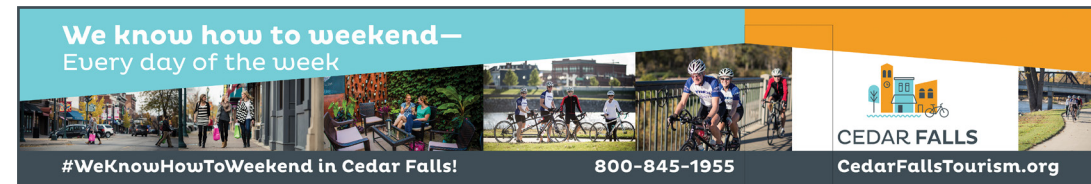
## PRINTING

### Brochures

Brochure	Quantity	Cost
<i>2019 Cedar Falls Waterloo Visitor Guide</i>	60,000	\$0
<i>Calendar of Events (Sep-Dec 2018)</i>	3,600	\$397
<i>Calendar of Events (Jan-May 2019)</i>	5,000	\$302
<i>Calendar of Events (Jun-Aug 2019)</i>	5,225	\$325
<i>Cedar Valley Metro Map Pads</i>	200	\$330
<i>Cedar Valley Metro Map Pads - New Design</i>		\$1,388
<i>Cedar Valley Metro Map Pads - New Design Printing</i>	60	\$309
<i>Other Misc. In-house publications</i>		\$1,024

\*Brochures and fliers printed at City Hall include Annual Report, Author's Festival, Black Hawk Co. Barn Quilt Tour, Cedar Falls City Map, Events & Facility Guide, Fun Things, Specialty Shops, Volunteer Recruitment Brochure, Group Tour Itineraries, Group Profile Sheet, Visitor Guide 1/2 sheet, Special Experiences for Groups, Sturgis Falls Kid's Parade

## Creative for Advertising



## GRANTS FY19

### Marketing & Tourism Development Grants

Organization	Amount Awarded	Purpose
Antique Acres Old Time Power Show 2019	\$1,000	Promotion
Cedar Basin Music Fest	\$55	Domain Registration
Cedar Valley Chamber Music Festival	150	Promotion
Cedar Valley Sports Commission	\$17,500	Sponsorship
Communication for All 2019	500	Promotion
FIRST Robotics Iowa Regional 2019	\$3,000	Facility Expenses
Graphic Edge Bowl 2019	\$1,000	Promotion
Marketing Campaign - May/June AAA Living	\$1,930	Ad
MAYBT 2019	\$800	Promotion
Panther eSports UNI CON	\$1,000	
Rod Con 2019	\$500	Promotion
Sturgis Falls Celebration 2019	\$1,000	Promotion
Telling a Peoples Story	\$675	
Thanksgiving Bluegrass Festival	\$5,000	Performance Fees
UNI Alumni Assoc.	\$1,500	Monthly Newsletter sponsorship
<b>Total Awarded</b>	<b>\$35,610</b>	



FIRST Robotics Iowa Regional



Rod Con 2019



Place to Play Park  
(Beau's Beautiful Blessings Grant)

### Community Betterment Grants

Organization	Amount Awarded	Purpose
Beau's Beautiful Blessings	\$5,000	New Inclusive Play Park
Cedar Falls Community Theatre	\$6,000	Back Stage Enhancements
Cedar Falls Historical Society	\$5,000	Development of 315 Clay St.
HusomeStrong Foundation	\$6,230	Solo Rider Adaptive Golf Cart
Volunteer Center of the Cedar Valley	\$2,500	Cedar Valley's Partners in Volunteerism Program
Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony	\$4,000	Youth Outreach Programs
<b>Total Awarded</b>	<b>\$28,730</b>	

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

### Served on the following boards and committees:

- Cedar Basin Music Festival
- Cedar Falls Authors Festival
- Cedar Falls Community Main Street
- Cedar Trails Partnership
- Cedar Valley Non-Profit Alliance
- Cedar Valley Sports Commission
- College Hill Arts Festival
- Eastern Iowa Tourism Association Board
- Experience Waterloo
- Grow Cedar Valley Ambassadors
- Grow Cedar Valley Community Image Committee
- Grow Cedar Valley Governmental Relations
- Grow Cedar Valley Management Team
- Highway 20 Association
- Iowa Department of Transportation Tourist Directional Signage Committee
- Iowa Destination Marketing Alliance
- Iowa Group Travel Association
- Reimagine Iowa's Welcome Centers Task Force
- Sturgis Falls Celebration
- Travel Federation of Iowa

## VISITOR CENTER SERVICES

SERVICE PROVIDED	FY16 RAGBRAI	FY17	FY18	FY19
Visitor Center Traffic (Door Counter)	14,880	13,494	13,976	11,787
Visitors Using Amenities of Visitor Center - Non Local Visitors	6,258	3,044	2,812	5,646
Welcome Bags	2,744	2,564	1,431	1,111
Visitor Packets Mailed (Individual, Bulk & Relocation Packets)	692	9,262	9,015	9,640
Visitor Center Meetings & Rentals	80	75	88	76
Host Motor Coach	6	12	8	8
Web Site Visits	75,811	95,678	93,247	98,621

## HOSPITALITY SERVICES

The bureau has developed an extensive volunteer database, which currently consists of 61 active volunteers. Volunteers, who are referred to as "Envoys" enable the Visitor Center to be open to visitors 7 days a week. In addition to staffing the Visitor Center, the Envoys were busy providing information to guests at the following events:

- Eastern Iowa Sports Show
- Hawkeye Farm Show
- Iowa High School Football Playoffs
- Iowa State High School Bowling
- Iowa State Trap Shoot
- Twisted Cross Cyclocross
- UNI Homecoming & Family Weekend
- UNI Orientations
- UNI Upclose
- USA Wrestling Kids & Cadets National Folkstyle Tournament

The bureau also maintains several information centers around town and quarterly distribution:

- All Cedar Falls Hotels
- Behrens-Rapp Information Station
- Big Woods Camp Ground
- Black Hawk Conservation Office
- Cedar Falls Historical Society
- Cedar Falls Library
- Cedar Falls Recreation Center
- Cedar Valley Chamber of Commerce
- City Hall
- Community Main Street Office
- Cup of Joe
- Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center
- Hansen's Dairy
- Hartman Reserve
- Hearst Center for the Arts
- Iowa State Trooper's Office
- John Deere Museum
- John Deere PEC
- Oster Regent Theatre
- Scratch Cupcakery
- UNI Sports & Event Complex
- University Book & Supply
- Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony Office
- Western Home Communities



Display at the Iowa High School Football Finals at UNI-Dome



Sid Morris and Dick Eades at the Iowa State Trap Shoot



Dr. Melissa Beall  
2019 Customer Service Training



## WHO IS INVOLVED?

### Bureau Staff

**Kim Manning**, Manager  
**Vicki Bailey** Jul-Dec  
**Bonita Cunningham** Jan-Jun  
**Deb Lewis**  
**Linda Maughan**  
**Becky Wagner**

### Advisory Board

**Annie Gougler (Chair)**, Humble Travel Service  
**Mary Carlson**, Volunteer  
**Brooke Croshier-Sidebotham**, University of Northern IA (Jan-Jun)  
**Amy Dutton**, UNI Small Business Development  
**Tavis Hall**, Waterloo Convention & Visitors Bureau  
**Ashley Johnson**, Cedar Valley Sports Commission  
**Brent Johnson**, BikeTech  
**Doug Johnson**, UNI Book Store  
**Carol Lilly**, Community Main Street  
**Jim Newcomb**, Volunteer  
**Leslie Prideaux**, University of Northern Iowa Alumni Assoc.  
**Mark Ripplinger**, Municipal Operations & Programs  
**Jim Schaefer**, Grow Cedar Valley  
**Steve Schofield**, University of Northern Iowa Athletics (Jul-Sep)  
**Andy Woodrick**, Hilton Garden Inn

\*\*Meet at 4 pm the third Wednesday of each month

### Marketing Committee

**Luann Alemao**, Luann Alemao & Associates  
**Blake Argotsinger**, Gallagher-Bluedorn Performing Arts Center  
**Rosemary Beach**, Volunteer  
**Carrie Eilderts**, Cedar Falls Historical Society  
**Kirsten Jergsen**, Hilton Garden Inn  
**Jay Koweil**, KWWL Television  
**Maria Murphy**, Western Home Communities  
**Gayle Pohl**, University of Northern Iowa  
**Sandy Thomas**, Open Door Hospitality  
**Andy Woodrick**, Hilton Garden Inn

\*\*Meet at 12:30 pm the second Thursday of each month



Cedar Falls Friend of Tourism  
Cedar Falls Parks and Public Works



Cedar Valley People's Choice  
Comfort Inn & Suites, Waterloo-Cedar Falls



Cedar Valley Outstanding Attraction & Event  
Cedar Valley Pridefest



Cedar Valley Outstanding Lodging Property  
Courtyard by Marriott, Waterloo/Cedar Falls



Cedar Valley Outstanding Restaurant  
Basal Pizza



Waterloo Friend of Tourism  
Cedar Valley Sports Commission



Cedar Valley Outstanding  
Customer Service  
Galleria de Paco



# ENVOYS & STUDENTS

We are grateful for the approximately 75 volunteers that are on our contact list. Thank you to the following Envoys and students for their assistance during fiscal year 2019. Our volunteers help make many of our accomplishments possible.

## ENVOYS

Steve Adams  
Bob Beach  
Rosemary Beach  
Mary Bozik  
Dick Brammer  
Carol Brown  
Phyllis Carter  
Dorothy Clausen  
Rich Congdon  
Rita Congdon  
Sara Dunbar

Larry Durchenwald  
Richard Eades  
Sue Eastman  
Jim Fackler  
Sharon Fackler  
Donna Falk  
John Falk  
Bobbette Fortney  
Judith Harrington  
Ron Heth  
Bob Hewlitt  
Doris Hewlitt

Fred Hoffman  
Jane Jackson  
Carlyn Juhl  
Doris Lang  
John Lang  
Bev Michael  
Alvira Morris  
Sid Morris  
Roger Neessen  
Vicki Neessen  
Troy Olson  
Cathy Reindl

Jim Reindl  
Sandy Remmert  
Dori Ressler  
Larry Ressler  
Carol Schaffner  
Mary Smith  
Gene Theis  
Joy Thiel  
Mike Tompkins  
Ron Van Der Meide  
Libby Vanderwall  
Rick Vanderwall

Bob VanGorp  
Wendy VanGorp  
Sandy Wetherell  
Kurt Wiethorn  
Lois Wishmeyer  
  
Total Envoy Hours  
1,356

## STUDENTS

Piper Fox  
Emily Schepers  
Emma Slaikeu

Interns:  
Hailey Sullivan  
Sydney Schoentag

Total Student Hours  
536



2018 Envoy Fall Potluck



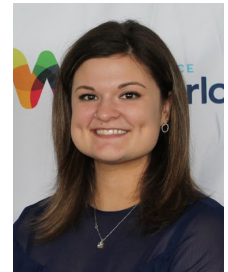
2019 Envoy Spring Coffee



Mike Tompkins staffing the Cedar Falls Tourism & Visitors Bureau and Experience Waterloo booth at the Eastern Iowa Sport Show



Mayors Volunteer Award & 8 Over 80 Recipient  
Joy Thiel with  
Mayor Brown and Mayor Hart



2019 Summer Intern  
Sydney Schoentag