



Friday, March 7, 2025

## **Blocker Receives International Travel Group Stamp of Approval**

Boone County Convention and Visitors Bureau Director Kris Blocker has received the International Inbound Travel Association's official stamp of approval as an "inbound insider" after completing the organization's four-step training process.

"IITA members are recognized as the experts in international travel to the United States. The Inbound Insider designation is awarded to travel professionals who go the extra mile to prepare themselves to work with companies and organizations that make travel arrangements for international visitors," said Boone City Councilman Terry Moorman, who is the city's representative on the BCCVB board. "It's a real feather in Kris's cap and a testament to her commitment to professional growth and dedication to Visit Boone County. The Inbound Insider recognition not only enhances her already well-respected reputation but also elevates Visit Boone County's standing."

The IITA's Inbound Insider Steps to Success training program is designed to help tourism organizations to increase their international tourism return on investment by providing tools, resources, and the expertise to help them work effectively with the travel trade. Blocker's new designation also increases her access to leading U.S. inbound operators, destination marketing organizations and suppliers.

The program's first three steps include workshops that "start with an introduction to the international side of travel and tourism and working with the travel trade," according to the IITA website. Each session delves deeper into the strategy, principles, and tactics for effectively building international business. Its final step includes guided one-on-one instruction, tailoring it to individual organizations such as Visit Boone County and customizing it to its attractions.

Blocker noted that she completed the program so that she can promote Boone County in Chicago June 14-18 at the U.S. Travel Association's IPW Conference in Chicago, which will drive an estimated \$5.5 billion in future travel to the United States. "The IPW is the travel industry's premier international event and I'm excited at the opportunities to showcase everything that Boone County has to offer to a new audience," she said.

Blocker and Visit Boone County already have experience working with international visitors. The 2024 Farm Progress Show attracted more than 200,000 visitors – including people from 46 countries – to the Central Iowa Expo site.

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