



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

NEWS

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH - GOVERNOR

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GOV. BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES ILLINOIS HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATION HALL OF FAME IS COMING TO PEORIA

Tourist Attraction Will Be A Part of New Regional Riverfront Museum

PEORIA – Governor Rod Blagojevich announced today that the Illinois High School Association Hall of Fame/Peak Performance Center (IHSAHF/PPC) will be located in Peoria. The IHSAHF/PPC will be part of the 100,000 square foot Central Illinois Regional Museum, a new facility being built on Peoria's downtown riverfront. The new museum with the Hall of Fame is expected to attract more than 250,000 visitors annually, bringing approximately \$14 million into the local economy. Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Director Jack Lavin made the official announcement in Peoria today with other state and local leaders.

"The Illinois High School Association Hall of Fame is going to be a fabulous addition to the new regional museum. This will be a very popular tourist attraction, and an important economic engine, since our state has such a rich and storied history in athletics, as well as many other interscholastic activities. The Hall of Fame and the new museum will be critical assets in helping us entice even more visitors to enjoy all that Peoria and Central Illinois has to offer. I also want to thank State Senator George Shadid and State Rep. Ricca Slone, who were both relentless in their determination to bring this project to Peoria," Governor Blagojevich said.

The IHSAHF/PPC's portion of this new facility will celebrate the heritage, spirit and significance of interscholastic athletics and activities with creative exhibits and programs that will entertain, educate, inspire and honor outstanding achievement. It will focus not only on athletic activities at the 760 Illinois high schools it serves, but will include music, speech, chess, drama, debate, cheerleading and scholastic bowl. A variety of exhibits and kiosks will be available that highlight both the participants and the activities themselves. Hall of Fame records will be made readily accessible through the use of computer kiosks. Visitors will be able to find out more about Hall of Fame inductees through text, images and videos. The kiosks will help the IHSAHF/PPC area become a place of not only exhibits and activities, but also research and scholarship.

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“We are thrilled that the new regional museum is going to be the new home for the Illinois High School Association Hall of Fame. During these challenging budget times, Governor Blagojevich and I know that we must invest in projects that will continue growing our economy and creating more jobs. This commitment we are announcing today will help pump \$14 million annually into our economy. I call that a great return on our investment,” State Senator George Shadid (D-Pekin) said.

“This is a great day for Peoria and our entire region. We are welcoming the Illinois High School Association Hall of Fame to the museum project, and the more than 250,000 visitors they are expected to annually attract, with open arms. Governor Blagojevich and I will continue working together with our local partners to ensure the success of this project and the regional museum. This is only the beginning of a partnership that will enhance our region culturally, as well as providing a powerful economic boost,” State Rep. Ricca Slone (D-Peoria) said.

The Central Illinois Regional Museum is a partnership of local museums, educational institutions, community organizations, governments and businesses, headed by Lakeview Museum, which has been working since 2000 to design a museum that focuses on interdisciplinary, lifelong learning. The new regional museum will present exhibits and programs that cut across the disciplines of art, history, science and nature.

"The Illinois High School Association is a very appropriate partner in this museum project. It joins Lakeview Museum, the Peoria Historical Society, the African American Hall of Fame Museum, the Peoria Regional Museum Society, The Nature Conservancy, Caterpillar, the City and County of Peoria, and countless community leaders, volunteers and others, in making this a truly inter-disciplinary museum that will draw tourists and visitors from throughout the U.S.," Lakeview Museum President and CEO Jim Richerson said.

“We are so pleased that Peoria is going to be the home for the Illinois High School Association Hall of Fame. I know that partnering with the new regional museum, which has such strong local backing, ensures that this ambitious effort will be a tremendously successful,” Illinois High School Association Executive Director Dr. Marty Hickman said.

“The Illinois High School Association Hall of Fame will not only capture the exciting past, present and future of high school athletics and other interscholastic activities, but it will also draw thousands and thousands of visitors each year to the innovative regional museum being built on Peoria’s revitalized riverfront. Governor Blagojevich will continue supporting important tourism projects like these that will help the economic revitalization of Peoria and Central Illinois,” DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

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