

# DCCVB View: Volunteers needed for IHSA football championship games

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It's getting close.

The countdown stands at 51 days until DeKalb County hosts its second IHSA state football championships on Nov. 27 and 28 at Northern Illinois University's Huskie Stadium.

The IHSA Destination DeKalb Committee, led by chairwoman Wendy West-Krauch, the DeKalb County CVB and NIU are busy planning to welcome an anticipated 30,000-plus visitors. In 2013, that many fans cheered on the teams competing for football's top spots in the state in eight classes.

Sixteen teams will compete for a title. Eight teams play each day in games scheduled to kick off at 10 a.m., 2 p.m., 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. on both Friday and Saturday. It definitely will be the place to be on Thanksgiving weekend. Our goal is to provide the visiting schools, coaches, players and fans with the best possible championship experience again this year. We set the bar high in 2013 as we received glowing reviews from IHSA officials, teams, coaches, fan and media.

The "Spirit Zone" will have a main hospitality tent and team tents will be provided for the fans of the teams playing. There also will be a performance area for the competing schools' bands and cheer groups to help pump up their teams' fans prior to the games.

Fans will compete in the much anticipated "Spirit Zone" tent decorating contest between the competing teams from each of the designated classes. The winners will be selected by our community judges based on the following criteria: creativity, sportsmanship, overall use of decorations and school colors.

We expect the IHSA state football championship weekend to generate from \$800,000 to \$1 million for the local economy. It's a valuable opportunity for the area, in terms of economics and exposure. In 2013, 475 hotel rooms were booked, 14 catering events were booked, gas sales increased and local restaurants reported sales increases by as much as 50 percent.

Local volunteers played a big role in the success of the IHSA state football championship. Everyone that volunteered in 2013 said they were eager to help again because it was a fun and fulfilling experience.

We are reaching out to area residents, booster clubs and service clubs to help welcome everyone and assist with the event to provide another memorable and first-class experience in 2015. Volunteers are needed to help with game-day operations such as ticket scanners, ushers

and parking attendants. Nov. 18 and Nov. 24 have been set aside for training for game day operations. Volunteers will be treated to a complimentary ticket to a Huskie football game when they report for training on either day. More details are available online through the automated volunteer registration. To sign up for the IHSA Destination DeKalb volunteer team, go to [destinationdekalb.com](http://destinationdekalb.com).

Volunteers must be 18 or older and not enrolled in high school. Please join our team on Nov. 27-28 and help make the 2015 State Championships another big win for DeKalb County.

The IHSA Destination DeKalb Committee is still seeking sponsorships for the state championships to help with the cost of hosting the event. Benefits and sponsorship levels are available at [ihsadestinationdekalb.com](http://ihsadestinationdekalb.com) or by contacting Brad Hoey at [bhoey@niu.edu](mailto:bhoey@niu.edu) or me at [darmstrong@dekalbcountycvb.com](mailto:darmstrong@dekalbcountycvb.com).

- Debbie Armstrong is executive director of the DeKalb County Convention and Visitors Center.