



# Ambassador Playbook

Share how you live, work and play greater

CHOOSE GREATER >  
**PEORIA**



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## **WELCOME TO THE CHOOSE GREATER PEORIA MOVEMENT**

It began with the vision of one man. Bob Gilmore, former CEO of Caterpillar and founder of the Gilmore Foundation, wanted to align the business community around a common goal that would keep the Greater Peoria region vibrant and growing.

In 2022, the Gilmore Foundation convened more than two dozen community leaders in a series of workshops. Out of these discussions, three priorities rose to the surface: talent attraction, Greater Peoria's branding and a unified message for local residents.

## WHO'S INVOLVED?

Choose Greater Peoria is a collaboration among local businesses, civic organizations and members of the Greater Peoria community. Businesses participate by reviewing candidates for open jobs who meet their criteria. Civic organizations participate by spreading the word about the movement. Community members are encouraged to become ambassadors for the movement.

Choose Greater Peoria Ambassadors support the mission by publicly sharing what makes Greater Peoria great. Ambassadors will share their "Positive Peoria" message with others, who will share their own "Positive Peoria" message with their people and so on. As the news spreads, we hope to make Peoria greater, one step at a time.

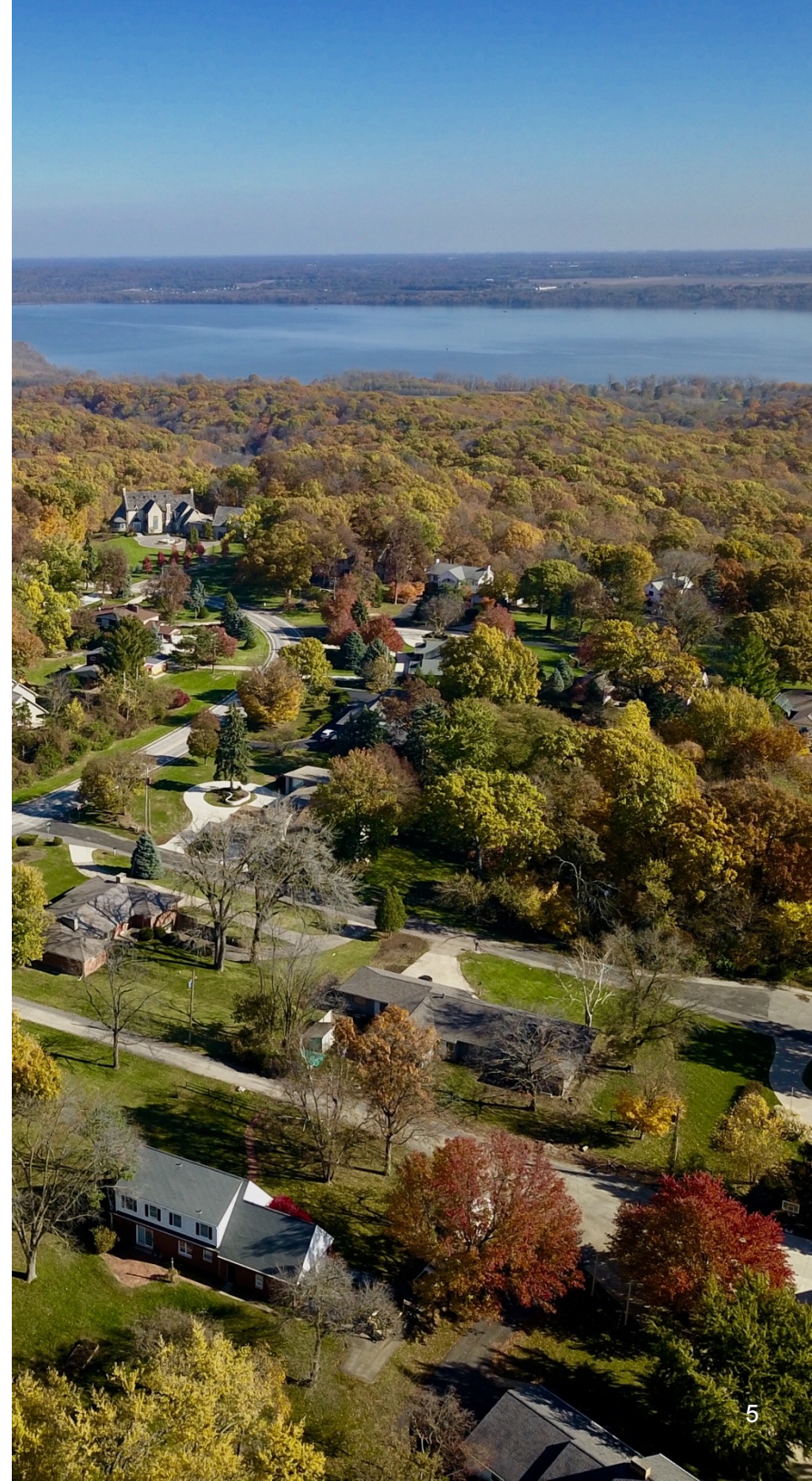


## MAIN OUTREACH APPROACH

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Talent attraction and retention are top drivers of regional economic growth. In fact, the ability to attract talent has been called a region's greatest economic asset. At the same time, research indicates that people are re-evaluating their high-pressure jobs after the pandemic — seeking to focus more on life outside of work.

This is good news for our region. The Greater Peoria area offers residents the quality of life and amenities they're seeking — the arts, outdoor experiences, family time, hobbies, volunteer opportunities, career options and much more. Now we just need to tell that story!





The Choose Greater Peoria movement seeks to attract top talent to our area, keep Greater Peoria vibrant and growing, and help secure our community's future economic health. As a Choose Greater Peoria Ambassador, your mission is simple: promote the Greater Peoria region as a great place to live, work and play, and shed light on opportunities to [join the community](#) and make it even greater!

“Greater Peoria isn't just about work — it's also a fantastic place to raise a family and pursue your passions. I get to play my favorite sport, cricket, enjoy outdoors walking the trails, and connect with like-minded professionals to exchange ideas and drive growth.”

**Ravindhar Uddavolu**

Senior VP – Automotive and Industrial Solutions, Tada Cognitive Solutions



## AMPLIFYING OUR MESSAGE

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Whether you call yourself an ambassador, an enthusiast or a superfan, you are a critical part of spreading the Choose Greater Peoria message. By taking the time to showcase the good in our community, this movement will go even further.

Research shows that brand messaging goes 561% further when it comes from individuals as opposed to official channels.\* That's why we want real people, telling real stories. Your stories create authentic social proof. One study reports that 3 out of 4 people believe content is more honest when posted by individuals rather than advertisers.\*\*

So be real! And have fun as you share what makes living, working and playing in Greater Peoria truly greater.

\* MSL Group Study

\*\* Global Report: Consumer Trust: Keeping It Real



Brand messaging goes  
**561% further**  
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individuals



## **JOIN THE GREATER COMMUNITY** **WHERE THERE'S A PLACE FOR EVERYONE**

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Everyone is welcome to serve as a Choose Greater Peoria Ambassador. We want to hear your experiences and insights about what makes Greater Peoria great — and how we can all work together to make it even greater!

As a community member, you can support the mission by sharing what you love about living, working and playing in Greater Peoria — and inspire others to do the same. All of us have a story to tell. Whether it's how you came to the region, how you got connected to the community or how you're working to improve it, your voice matters.



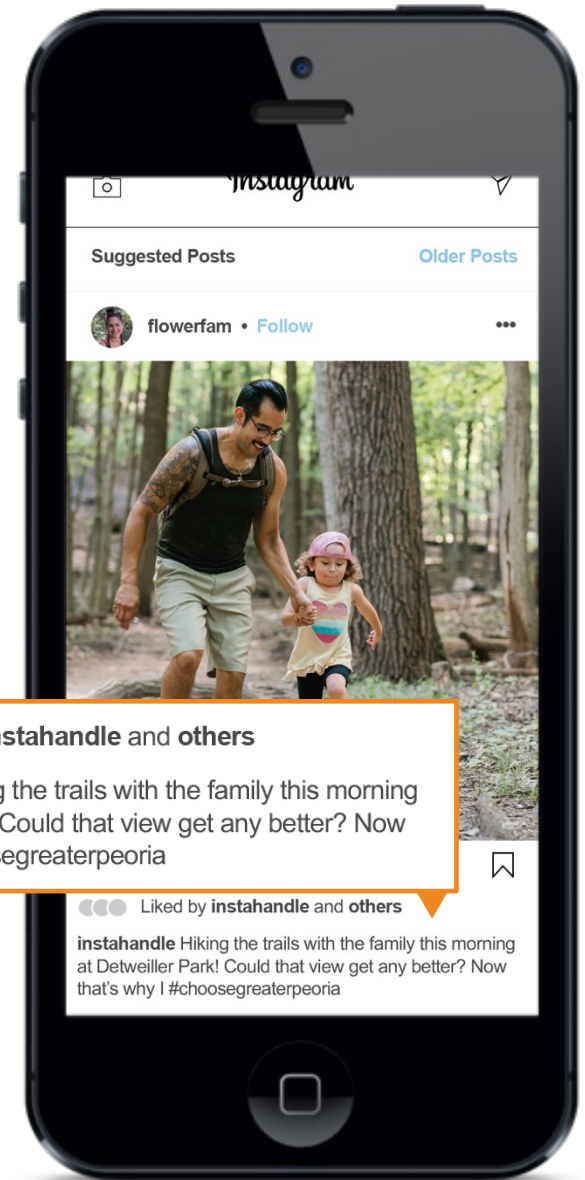
# AMBASSADOR EFFORTS >

To make your efforts as an Ambassador most effective, we ask that you:

**USE THE HASHTAG  
#CHOOSEGREATERPEORIA**

Hashtags are used to aggregate social media posts from a wide range of people. When you use a hashtag in your post, it is added to a collection of others who have done the same — and made publicly searchable for others who are interested in that topic.

When people click on the #choosegreaterpeoria hashtag, they will be able to explore all that Greater Peoria has to offer, get ideas for new adventures and join the movement in their own posts. Hashtags are a great way to spread awareness and create a recognizable brand.



# AMBASSADOR EFFORTS >

## LINK TO OUR WEBSITE

By linking to our website, others will have direct access to learn more about the Choose Greater Peoria movement and life in the Greater Peoria area. For general posts about the region, linking to the homepage would be helpful. For specific content — such as a favorite amenity or place you visited — linking to the blog will help others find more ideas!

**Here are some links you can attach to your posts:**

**Homepage:** <https://choosegreaterpeoria.org>

**Work:** <https://choosegreaterpeoria.org/work>

**Live:** <https://choosegreaterpeoria.org/live>

**Play:** <https://choosegreaterpeoria.org/play>

**Blog:** <https://choosegreaterpeoria.org/blog>



# AMBASSADOR EFFORTS >

## ENGAGE WITH OTHERS ONLINE

- **Visit our website** and share the link with family and friends.
- **Like and share** our social media posts.
- **Reach out to other Ambassadors** and connect your networks by sharing with one another.
- **Leave a comment**, respond to a comment and encourage others to do the same.



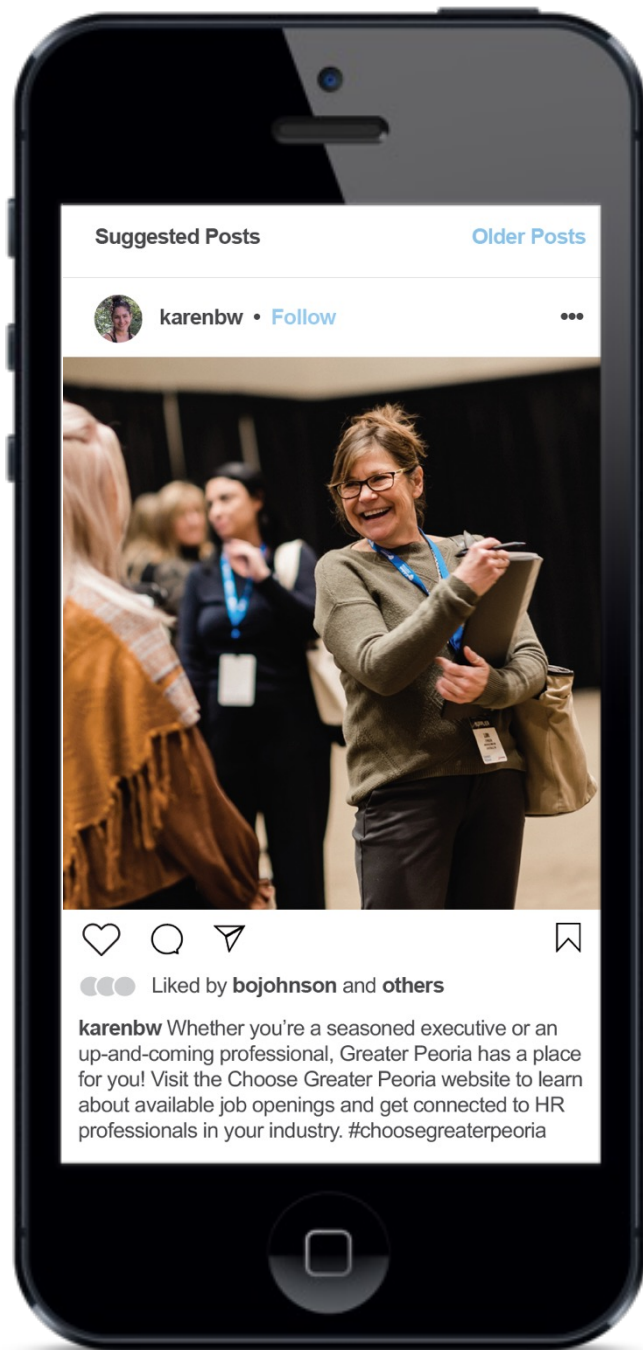


## TIPS FOR DEALING WITH NEGATIVITY ONLINE:

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When faced with negativity, lean on the facts. Politely offer another perspective, especially if the sentiment is demonstrably unfair or distorts truth. And most importantly, always be honest and respectful. Opinions will differ, and that's okay. (But don't waste time engaging with trolls.)

- Stay positive and leverage positive feedback.
- Be honest and transparent. Stay polite and respectful at all times.
- Avoid responses that sound canned or impersonal.
- Answer honest questions whenever possible.
- Evaluate negative comments case by case. Not every comment deserves a response.
- Keep responses short and to the point.
- Address constructive criticism with data or an explanation whenever possible.
- Don't feed the trolls. Ban those who repeatedly post offensive or inappropriate comments.



## READY TO DIVE IN?

Here are some prompts to get you started:

- When did you know that Peoria was home for you?
- What surprised you most about the area?
- What misconceptions did you have at first that are now dispelled?
- How would you describe Greater Peoria to someone who doesn't know anything about it?
- For someone visiting Greater Peoria for the first time, what is one thing they can't leave without seeing/doing/eating?
- What volunteer opportunities or community projects have you participated in recently? How have you made an effort to improve Greater Peoria, as part of a group, or on your own?

Share your answers on your social media channels, on a blog (if you have one) or in conversations with friends, coworkers or other community members.

## USE OUR IMAGE LIBRARY

We encourage you to post personal photos of yourself, your family and friends enjoying Greater Peoria. When those photos aren't available, our [image library](#) is full of photos of things to do, places to explore and sights to see. Some photos require attribution to the original creator — be sure to check before using it.

### IMAGE SELECTION

When using your own photos, make sure:

- 1 They are high-quality, in focus and easy to view.
- 2 They are appropriate for sharing with a wide audience of all ages. (Remember, you are participating in a movement!)
- 3 Be sure the people featured in the photos have given their permission to be posted online.





### READ THE AMBASSADOR PLAYBOOK

The Ambassador Playbook is your go-to resource for sharing your stories about the Greater Peoria region and the places that make it special. It's a place to work, live and play.

DOWNLOAD



### EXPLORE IMAGES

Check out ready-to-use images from a variety of locations and events throughout the Greater Peoria region.

DOWNLOAD



### UTILIZE SOCIAL MEDIA TEMPLATES

Sharing about the Greater Peoria region is even easier with ready-to-use templates for your social media channels.

DOWNLOAD

## UTILIZE OUR TEMPLATES

Templates are frames that connect your photos to the Choose Greater Peoria movement. This allows us to spread the word across platforms, creating an easily recognizable brand around the movement. When you see this template, you know they're choosing Greater. [Templates are downloadable](#) to your device.

## VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME

Are you passionate about a cause? Do you see a problem that needs to be addressed? Don't just criticize — be part of the solution! Volunteer for your favorite nonprofit or organize your own initiative. Start a neighborhood cleanup effort. Increase awareness. Raise funds. The work of community improvement is never-ending but incredibly gratifying. Even the smallest improvements can add up to big change for all.

While we're committed to spreading the "Positive Peoria" message, we don't want to minimize or dismiss the challenges our region faces. We encourage you to share your own volunteer experiences and how you're working to improve the community with your networks.





## WRITE ONLINE REVIEWS

When people are interested in a community, they go online first to research schools, neighborhoods, employers and public safety. They look for things to do and places to go. Whether endorsing your realtor or reviewing your favorite restaurant on Yelp, people want to hear from people! Your words matter, and every little bit helps make the case for the community at large.

“I’ve been afforded great opportunities to raise a family and build a wonderful career in Greater Peoria — and you can, too! Connect with us today... and create the future you want.”

**Leanne Skuse**

President, River City Construction





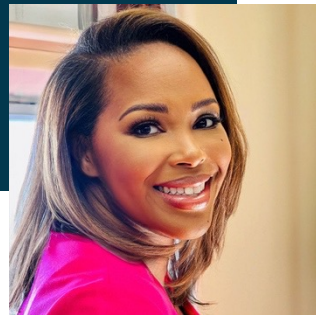
## LOOK FOR WAYS TO PROMOTE THE REGION TO OTHERS

Whether in person or online, you're likely to come across opportunities to "sell" Greater Peoria every single day. Sometimes it's as simple as being friendly to a stranger! A helpful opinion or warm gesture may even be the tipping point in determining whether someone decides to join our community or not.

"I was born in Chicago and I've lived in cities all over the country. Of all the places I've lived, this is truly the place that feels most like home. We are proud to live and raise our daughter here in Greater Peoria!"

### **Nikki Romain**

Co-Founder and Executive Director, Artists ReEnvisioning Tomorrow (ART Inc.)





## ENCOURAGE YOUR EMPLOYER TO PARTICIPATE

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Whether you're a business owner, mid-level manager or entry-level employee, there are many ways for businesses and organizations to support Choose Greater Peoria. Here are just a few ideas:

- Contact the Gilmore Foundation and learn the benefits of becoming an investor
- Link to and use Choose Greater Peoria messaging on your company website
- Leverage materials in your recruitment and marketing efforts and tailor them to your specific needs
- Brand your events with the “Greater” theme
- Spread the “Positive Peoria” message among your staff and encourage them to be active in the community

## GIVE PEOPLE A NUDGE

Do you know someone who previously lived in the region but left? Or others who would grow to love the region as much as we do? Many people don't even think about moving until someone makes the suggestion. Those who see there is a place for them are much more likely to consider a move — so plant that seed. Let's put Greater Peoria on their radar! Point them to the website and remind them of all that our region has to offer.



## HAVE OTHER IDEAS?

Reach out to us at [info@choosegreaterpeoria.org](mailto:info@choosegreaterpeoria.org) and let us know!

We're always looking for new ways to bring the community together.



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