

VISIT BELOIT'S NEWLY REBRANDED 'ROCKSTARS' TO SHOWCASE CITY

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Hillary Gavan/Beloit Daily News (From left): Visit Beloit "Rockstars" Lisa Martinez, Rebecca Garvey, Kylie Thompson and Salma Ali are eager to share the good news about Beloit this summer. Visit Beloit is rebranding its promotional team and vehicle for summer of 2018.

BELOIT - If you are watching the Memorial Day Parade this year, be on the lookout for Beloit's new RockStars.

Beloit's ambassadors, four college students, will be promoting Beloit this summer and will be showing off Visit Beloit's rebranding efforts. Formerly know as the Go To Crew, the employees shall henceforth be called the RockStars. New marketing efforts also include a new logo, mobile welcome center vehicle wrap and apparel.

Kylie Thompson, a veteran RockStar for the past three years, and new RockStars Lisa Martinez, Rebecca Garvey, Kylie Thompson and Salma Ali, shared a little bit about their work this summer.

This year the RockStars will spend 75 percent of their outreach efforts promoting the Beloit region outside of the Stateline Area. While Thompson said the RockStars loved going to the Beloit Farmers Market and other local activities last year, the people in Beloit already know how cool it is.

They said it's time to spread the word to other destinations such as Kenosah, Madison, Milwaukee, Dubuque, Iowa and both the Chicago suburbs and northern portions of Illinois handing out information about local travel-related businesses and talking about Beloit as a destination to visit.

The RockStars will use a photo booth with props to drive interaction with potential visitors, as well as to generate traffic to the Visit Beloit social media accounts. Additionally, three monthly drawings will be available for a few lucky people to win a \$500 prize package to visit Beloit on their own. To follow along with the Beloit RockStars and their tour dates, go to visitbeloit.com/rockstars.

Last year was the trial year for the photo booth and Thompson said people were intrigued, including kids.

"People realize all the cool things they can do with the props and they get really into it. It's the selfie generation. They are all for it," Thompson added.

Sometimes, the RockStars run into people with perceptions of Beloit having too much crime, others thinking it doesn't offer anything to do or some not even knowing where the city is located. However, after a chat with the RockStars they are usually impressed with what they learn about the city.

The RockStars, all current college students, work part-time and love the opportunity to promote the city they love.

"You have to be outgoing, have strong social skills and love this city," Thompson said.

Ali, who just finished her freshman year at Beloit College, said Beloit is a great mix of historic and modern, with museums, restaurants and entertainment options.

"Beloit offers the whole package and is a good place for hanging out with friends and family," she said.

Martinez's favorite thing about Beloit is its diversity and booming downtown.

"There's a lot of great things happening that I'm intrigued to try and experience," Martinez added.