

# CHICAGO AUTO SHOW

February 8-17  
McCormick Place



## Show Update 3

### 2025 CHICAGO AUTO SHOW CONTINUED STRONG PRESENCE FOR 117TH EDITION

The 2025 Chicago Auto Show came to a successful close on Monday, Feb. 17, after a 10-day run at McCormick Place. The 117th edition of the show welcomed nearly 217,000 attendees to experience the latest cars, trucks and SUVs, automotive technology and electric vehicles—producing a record number of in-vehicle experiences of more than 100,000.

The 2025 show featured an array of vehicles new to show attendees including the debut of the 2025 Subaru Forester Hybrid, 2026 Subaru Forester Wilderness and the 2025 Jeep Wagoneer S Limited. Manufacturers including Polestar, Rivian and VinFast participated in the Chicago Auto Show for the very first time.

Other notable new vehicles at the show included the Cadillac Optiq, Cadillac Vistiq, Chevrolet Corvette ZR1, Ford Expedition, 2026 Honda Passport, 2026 Hyundai IONIQ 9, Lamborghini Revuelto, Lucid Gravity, Nissan Murano, Nissan Armada, Toyota 4Runner, Rivian R2, Rivian R3X and Volkswagen Tiguan. Concept vehicles also graced the show floor including Chrysler's Halcyon and Acura's Performance EV along with several custom concept SEMA builds from Kia, Jeep and Toyota.

Four indoor test tracks provided consumers ample opportunities to experience the latest vehicles. The fan-favorite Camp Jeep track returned and celebrated its 20th anniversary at the 2025 Chicago Auto Show. Without even leaving the show floor, attendees experienced Camp Jeep's thrill rides on an interactive indoor off-road course featuring Cherokee, Gladiator, Wagoneer and Wrangler. A Chicago Auto Show staple since 2005, Camp Jeep has provided more than 600,000 test rides at the show.

Ford also brought back its popular "Built Wild" indoor test track which featured the Bronco family of vehicles and gave attendees the thrill of conquering "Bronco Mountain," a 38-degree hill inside of the show. Powered by ComEd, Chicago Drives Electric's indoor EV track expanded from one track to two this year and featured a dozen total brands offering ride-alongs in 25 different models.



"The Chicago Auto Show is designed with consumers at the forefront, and the 2025 show was a true testament to our commitment to delivering a dynamic and engaging experience for every attendee that comes through the doors," said Chicago Auto Show General Manager Jennifer Morand. "From hands-on experiences to showcasing the most innovative advancements in the industry, the show is all about connecting people with the technology and vehicles that are shaping the future."

Between the show's four indoor test tracks as well as outdoor test drive experiences by Alfa Romeo, Chrysler, Dodge, Fiat, Ford, Jeep, Ram, Subaru and Tesla, the show produced more than 100,000 in-vehicle driving experiences, a new record.

This year's themed days and special events drew large crowds and attracted new audiences to the show. The Toyota Miles Per Hour run once again provided a unique twist for a winter race. Held indoors at the Chicago Auto Show and organized by the Chicago Area Runners Association, more than 700 runners paced a 60-minute run through the show floor for participants to record their own miles per hour. Toyota awarded the top three winners for men's and women's times at its post-run celebration. Over the course of four years, Miles Per Hour logged more than 15,000 miles indoors at the Chicago Auto Show. Also returning to the show was the popular Chicago Friday Night Flights craft beer sampling event. This one-of-a-kind indoor event drew nearly 400 attendees that sampled different craft beers from more than 20 local breweries as they took in the show.

Presented by Powering Chicago, Rivian and the U.S. Army, the second annual Automotive Career Day hosted more than 700 students for a lively morning filled with educational panels, networking and a career fair featuring local automotive employers and student-led engineering organizations. Moderated by ABC 7 Chicago's Diane Pathieu, students heard from a range of speakers from manufacturers, such as BMW and Rivian, to local universities featuring the Illini Solar Car Team, Illini EV Concept and UIC Society of Engineers.

The 2025 show saw the success of two new exhibit additions to the show floor. Overlanding Chicago drew consumers into a specialized space focusing on overlanding vehicles and an outdoors adventure-seeking lifestyle. Plus, the Family Zone garnered high foot-traffic, offering families a safe and fun environment that allowed kids to enjoy themselves while being immersed in the auto show experience.

"What's unique about the Chicago Auto Show is its ability to draw audiences spanning a variety of backgrounds, whether or not they are in the market to purchase a new vehicle," said 2025 Chicago Auto Show Chairwoman Kelly Webb Roberts. "The Chicago Auto Show is much more than a showcase of vehicles; it's a dynamic experience that brings together automotive enthusiasts, industry professionals and everyday consumers, creating a space where innovation, passion and curiosity collide."

Fans' engagement translated to social media as well. Initial Meltwater data reports the Chicago Auto Show's message reached more than 93 million over the last 90 days with more than 600 YouTube videos produced to date. Chicago Auto Show social channels alone generated more than seven million impressions with the overall sentiment being positive. Many fans have been excited about the return of manufacturers and new spaces at the show across all social platforms.

Finally, the show saw support from new and returning sponsors. 2025 premier partners included Cars.com and ComEd along with supporting sponsorships from NASCAR Chicago, AT&T, Shell Recharge and U.S. Army. Joining the sponsorship line-up in 2025 were Drive Chicago, Bally's Chicago and the Griffin Museum of Science and Industry.

The Chicago Auto Show is already gearing up with plans to return to McCormick Place in February 2026. Tentative dates for the 2026 show are Feb. 5-6 (Media Preview); Feb. 6 (First Look for Charity); and Feb. 7-16, 2026 (public show).

For more information on the Chicago Auto Show, visit [www.ChicagoAutoShow.com](http://www.ChicagoAutoShow.com).



# Media Preview

## Hyundai Ioniq 5 N Clinches Top Spot as 2025 MAMA's Favorite Vehicle



The Midwest Automotive Media Association (MAMA) named the Hyundai Ioniq 5 N as the winner of the 2025 MAMA's Favorite Vehicle Awards—selected by nearly 200 automotive media experts who drove more than 100 vehicles at the association's signature events.

"We experienced an incredible variety of new, redesigned, and refreshed vehicles throughout 2024 at events like the MAMA Spring Rally, Favorites Fall Fest, and Chicago Drives Electric," said Jim O'Brill, MAMA President. "Each winner represents the pinnacle of innovation and quality in its class, but ultimately, one vehicle stood out above all—the Hyundai Ioniq 5 N. It's a true performance marvel that captures the spirit of what MAMA loves most about driving."

The event also featured keynote speaker Jamie Gladstone, Executive Creative Director at Czarnowski Collective. In his role, Jamie leads the creative team with a focus on innovation, storytelling, and immersive experiences, consistently elevating brands across industries. Having more than 36 years of experience in design, Jamie shared highlights from his career including his time at Ford designing iconic displays worldwide, and helping Lincoln overhaul their brand in the early 2010s.



For more information about MAMA and the full listing of category winners for the 2025 Favorite Vehicle Awards, please visit [www.mamaonline.org](http://www.mamaonline.org).

## Economic Club of Chicago

Jason White, Assistant Professor at College for Creative Studies, delivered the keynote address at the annual Economic Club of Chicago (ECC) luncheon at the 2025 Chicago Auto Show Media Preview.

Addressing 400 members, guests, automotive journalists and manufacturers, White spoke about his background in automotive and the creative journey of American car design.



## City Club of Chicago

Formulating a new partnership in 2025, the Chicago Auto Show and the City Club of Chicago provided an exclusive insider's look at the 2025 Chicago Auto Show with a dynamic panel of industry experts that featured a special welcome by Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton and Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority CEO Larita Clark.

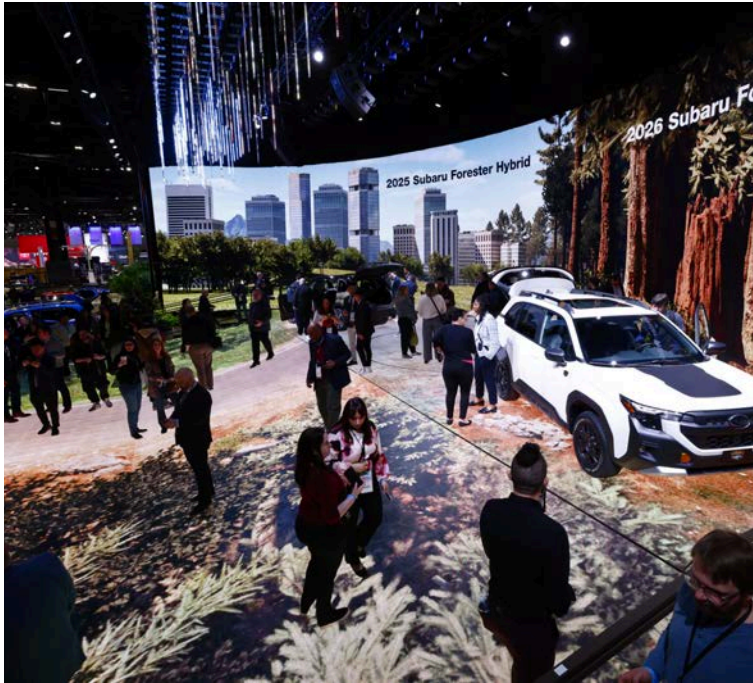
The engaging discussion, held during the Media Preview, explored the latest trends in the automotive world, from evolving buyer demographics and advancements in energy-efficient vehicles to the economic impact of the auto industry on Illinois, including job creation and spending. Panelists included Alex Vetter, CEO of Cars.com and Jennifer Morand, President of the Chicago Automobile Trade Association and General Manager of the Chicago Auto Show with City Club CEO Dan Gibbons as moderator.





# Media Preview: Vehicle Debuts and Walkarounds

## Global debut of the 2025 Subaru Forester Hybrid and the 2026 Subaru Forester Wilderness



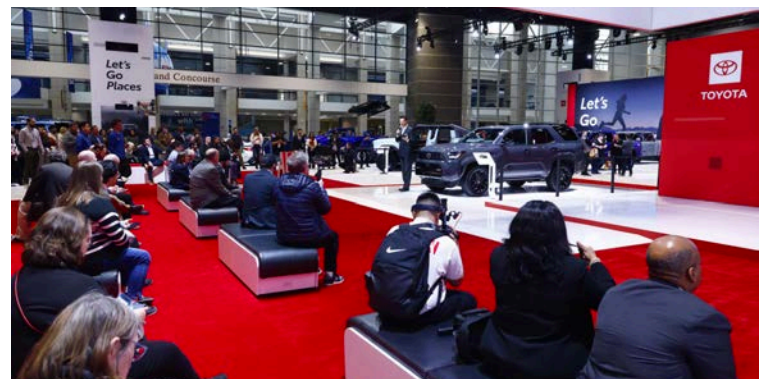
## Debut of the 2025 Jeep Wagoneer S Limited



## Rivian R2



## Toyota 4Runner





# What Drives Her Winners Announced



Chicago Auto Show organizers, in partnership with A Girls Guide to Cars, held the eighth annual What Drives Her program during the show's Media Preview on Thursday, Feb. 6. Industry leaders from across the country came together for a robust discussion and award recognition ceremony to highlight women in four different categories: Industry Trailblazer, Best in Craft Media, Automotive Ally and Best Retailer. This year's awards also honored an award-winning journalist with the 2025 Lifetime of Inspiration award. The program gives industry leaders a stage to share trends, stories and personal anecdotes of the integral role that women hold in the auto industry.

This year's program, sponsored by A Girls Guide to Cars and CDK Global, brought female executives to the Chicago Auto Show stage for a program centered around female purchasing power and trends. The panel, titled "What Drives Her...To the Off-Road Trail," was moderated by Scotty Reiss, founder of A Girls Guide to Cars. Panelists included Kelsey Gerken, Cause Marketing & Bronco Off-Road Manager for Ford Motor Company, and Bridget Kramer, Jeep Wrangler Brand Manager for Jeep.

"It's incredible to think that an inkling of an idea to spotlight amazing women in the industry has grown into what is today," said Jennifer Morand, co-founder of the What Drives Her program and general manager of the Chicago Auto Show. "What Drives Her isn't just about celebrating the women who've made it—it's about inspiring the women who are still climbing, the ones who are just beginning their journey, and the ones who, years from now, will lead the industry to places we can't even imagine yet."

The 2025 winners for each category are as follows:

## **Industry Trailblazer Award: Audrey Moore, vice president and chief engineer – North America Sedan Programs, Stellantis**

Audrey Moore has served in a variety of roles during her 25-year career with Stellantis, including as chief engineer for the all-new Dodge Charger multi-energy lineup, which includes the Dodge Charger Daytona R/T and the 670-horsepower Dodge Charger Daytona Scat Pack. Moore is also leading development of the four-door Dodge Charger Daytona models that will arrive in the U.S. in the first half of 2025. Colleagues recognized Moore for her deep technical knowledge that provides confidence within the team and enables them to execute flawlessly.

Industry Trailblazer finalists included: Claudia Marquez, chief operating officer, Hyundai Motor America and Tricia Morrow, global vehicle safety strategy manager, General Motors.



# Chicago Auto Show's What Drives Her Winners Announced (cont.)

## Best in Craft Media Award: Emme Hall, freelance journalist

Emme Hall is an award-winning automotive journalist who has been testing and reviewing vehicles for more than 15 years. Hall has written for a plethora of automotive media outlets including the Car and Driver, MotorTrend, TechCrunch, The Verge, Jalopnik, and Motor.

Hall was unable to attend and sent a video message in her absence stating, "Thank you so much for this award for What Drives Her, excellence in automotive journalism. I am so excited; it is such an honor."

Best in Craft Media finalists included: Elana Scherr, senior features editor, Car and Driver and Nicole Wakelin, editor at large, CarBuzz.

## Automotive Ally: Joel Feder, senior producer, Internet Brands

Joel Feder is Internet Brands Automotive Group's Senior Producer. He helps oversee day-to-day operations along with social, video, OEM relations, and syndication partnerships along with annual Best Car to Buy Awards. Feder has worked in the auto industry for more than 14 years. Frequently a guest on Drive Chicago's radio program, various podcasts, and appearing on Cheddar along with Fox News, Feder is regarded as an industry insider. Feder was nominated by colleagues and recognized as a point-person and leader in the industry by both automotive journalists and manufacturers.

Automotive Ally finalists included: Dean Case, communications consultant, and Kimatni Rawlins, president and publisher, Automotive Rhythms Communications.



## Best Retailer: Kelly Donku, sales manager, Bill Jacobs BMW



Kelly Donku was nominated by her colleagues for her success through strong leadership and mentorship. In her role as Sales Manager, Donku has fostered a culture of mentorship and development. Recognizing the value of internal growth, she has been instrumental in the company's strategy to cultivate talent from within. Donku was commended for her dedication to identifying, nurturing and empowering talent as 64 percent of the sales team at Bill Jacobs BMW is comprised of employees promoted internally, an achievement tied to Donku's leadership. Her influence extends beyond her immediate team; she is recognized as a steadfast advocate for diversity and inclusion, fostering an environment where all voices are valued. She actively participates in initiatives aimed at developing future leaders, sharing her insights and experiences to inspire others to achieve their full potential.

Best Retailer finalists included: Valerie Nazimek, general manager, Smith Chevrolet of Hammond; Angel Pieniazek, office manager, Hopkins Ford of Elgin Inc.; and Maggie Webb, business development manager, Packey Webb Ford.

## Lifetime of Inspiration: Roz Varon, 2025 honoree

Roz Varon was presented with the award to honor her dedication and longevity in reporting from the Chicago Auto Show floor. Roz began her career with ABC 7 Chicago in 1989 and started covering the Chicago Auto Show soon thereafter. Roz retired from the station soon after covering her last Chicago Auto Show in February 2024.





# First Look for Charity

## First Look for Charity Raises More Than \$2.4 Million for Local Charities



The Chicago Auto Show raised more than \$2.4 million benefiting 18 local charities at the First Look for Charity gala. The black-tie benefit, held the evening before the show opened to the public, raised a total of \$2,457,808. The fundraiser's 33-year event now tallies more than \$65 million raised.

"The 2025 Chicago Auto Show is the perfect backdrop for Chicagoland new-car dealers to host this wonderful gala," said Kelly Webb Roberts, 2025 Chicago Auto Show chairwoman. "This night is all about raising funds to support 18 local charities that do so much good within our communities."

First Look for Charity provides attendees with an exclusive viewing of the Chicago Auto Show a day before it opens to the public. Tickets to the fundraiser are \$325 each, and purchasers may elect to have their proceeds equally benefit all participating charities, or any one charity of their choosing. The show floor is filled with gourmet food from local Chicago restaurants, live music and premium drinks.

This year, two brand-new vehicles were given away to attendees. Michael Schultz was the lucky winner to walk away with keys to a new 2025 Chevrolet Equinox EV, compliments of Chicagoland and Northwest Indiana Chevy Dealers. Marco Onofre had the winning ticket for the second vehicle, a 2025 Hyundai Palisade, compliments of Chicago and Northwest Indiana Hyundai Dealers.

The 2025 First Look for Charity beneficiaries include:

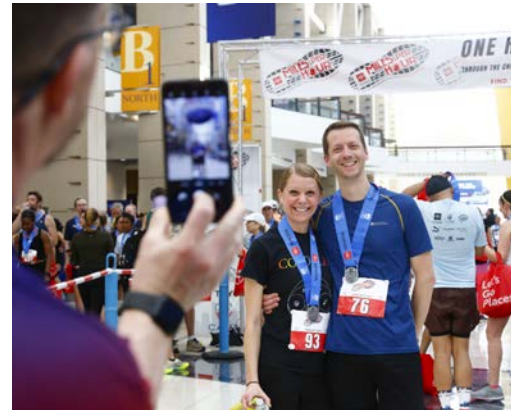
- 100 Club of Illinois
- Advocate Health Care
- ALS United Greater Chicago
- Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago
- Cal's Angels Pediatric Cancer Foundation
- Folds of Honor
- Franciscan Community Benefit Services
- Glenwood Academy
- Habitat for Humanity
- Jesse White Tumbling Team
- Lydia Home & Safe Families for Children
- Misericordia
- Sertoma Star Services
- Special Olympics Illinois
- Susan G. Komen, Chicago
- Turning Pointe Autism Foundation
- Violet Foundation for Pediatric Brain Cancer





# Specialty Days and Attractions

## Toyota Miles Per Hour



The Toyota Miles Per Hour run once again provided a unique twist for a winter race in Chicago—at 72 degrees indoors McCormick Place! Held inside the Chicago Auto Show and organized by the Chicago Area Runners Association, more than 700 runners paced a 60-minute run through the show floor for participants to record their own miles per hour. Toyota awarded the top three winners for men's and women's times at its post-run celebration in its display. Since its inception, Miles Per Hour has tallied 15,000 miles over the course of four years at the Chicago Auto Show.

## Automotive Career Day

The Chicago Automobile Trade Association (CATA), producers of the Chicago Auto Show, hosted the second annual "Driving Future Leaders: Automotive Career Day" at the 2025 Chicago Auto Show on Wednesday, Feb. 12. This educational event is geared towards students, primarily in secondary education, and aims to highlight the vast career opportunities available across the dynamic auto industry.

The 2025 Automotive Career Day hosted more than 700 students for a lively morning filled with educational panels, networking and a career fair of local automotive employers and student-led engineering organizations. Attending students had the opportunity to learn more about a wide range of career opportunities and ways to get involved in the automotive industry.



## Friday Night Flights



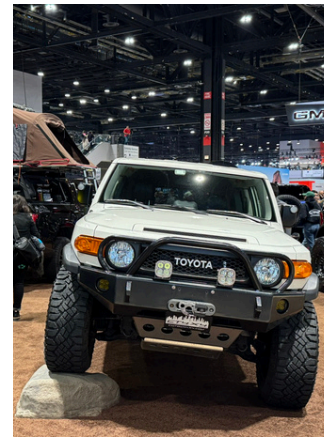
Returning to the 2025 Auto Show was the popular Chicago Friday Night Flights craft beer sampling event. This one-of-a-kind indoor event drew nearly 400 attendees this year. Participants had the opportunity to explore the show while utilizing their tasting pass to enjoy craft beers from more than 20 different participating local breweries. Over the course of the evening, brewers poured samples from more than two dozen local craft beers ranging from hazy IPA to stout to mead.



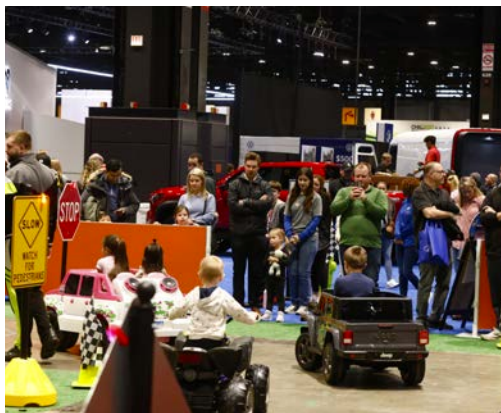
# New On the Show Floor In 2025

## Overlanding Chicago

Overlanding Chicago drew consumers into a specialized space focusing on overlanding vehicles and an outdoors adventure-seeking lifestyle. With a focus on the overlanding lifestyle, the space featured manufacturer displays of specialty vehicles, upfitting vendors, off-road accessories, and much more.



## Family Zone



New to the show floor this year was the Family Zone. This dedicated area on the show floor was designed to entertain families and allow kids to enjoy themselves while being immersed in the auto show experience.

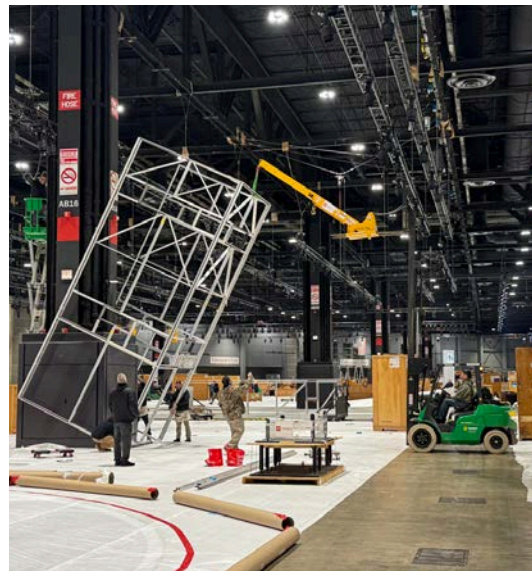
In the new Family Zone, kids had the opportunity to hop behind the wheel on the power wheels track. Plus, they enjoyed plenty of hands on activities including the Toyota Tacoma fishing activity, Rivian coloring activities and origami, and the Chicago White Sox pitching machine. Kids had the change to get their own drivers license through the Secretary of State as well as check out the full-size Chevrolet Silverado toy replica made from 334,544 plastic pieces.



# Chicago Auto Show Pivots to New Show Contractors: A Strategic Move for 2025 and Beyond

Coming out of a nearly two decade-long partnership with a former general show contractor, the Chicago Auto Show made the strategic decision to award the show contractor duties to a few new partners who manage freight, decorating and electrical services for the 2025 Chicago Auto Show with the goal of helping exhibitors operate more efficiently and trimming overhead costs by as much as 20%.

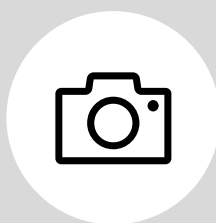
The breakaway departure from the “traditional” show contractor model where one company handled all aspects of the show—including freight, rigging, decorating and electrical—was transformed to a segmented operation where divisions of the contractor’s responsibilities were broken out. The specific contractor pieces were awarded to three different entities: Event Design Group, Prime Electrical and Exhibition Services and Absolute Productions. In addition to lowering rates, this strategy provided exhibitors a more “personal touch” as many of the new individuals managing the exhibitor’s business formerly served as exhibit appointed contractors (EACs) for the manufacturing exhibitors.



Director of Auto Show Operations Chris Konecki summarized, “Who better than veteran former EAC personnel would have the ability to instinctively understand and accommodate the needs of our current exhibitors? Having personally been through many of the frustrations that can come from dealing with the former outdated model, our new partner’s approach was refreshing; they better understood our exhibitor’s needs and were more in tune to the timelines facing them.”

“Now that the show is in the rearview mirror, we are confident that we made the right decision with making these changes and are happy with the outcome,” added Konecki. “All new ideas and processes come with some learning, which was certainly the case for us this year, but our intention is to build on those lessons heading into 2026 and beyond.”

## 2026 Chicago Auto Show Dates



**Media Preview**  
Feb. 5-6, 2026



**First Look for Charity**  
Feb. 6, 2026



**Public Show**  
Feb. 7-16, 2026



## Show Staff and Contact Information

**Jennifer Morand,**  
General Manager  
jmorand@drivechicago.com  
630-424-6084

**Chris Konecki,**  
Director of Auto Show Operations  
ckonecki@drivechicago.com  
630-424-6075

**Jim OBrill, Senior Director of Marketing, Sponsorship and Strategy** | jobrill@drivechicago.com | 630-424-6085

**Hayley Feichter, Communications & Marketing Manager** | hfeichter@drivechicago.com | 630-424-6002

**Patrick Ziegenfuss, Membership, Operations & Events Manager** | pziegenfuss@drivechicago.com | 630-424-6035

**Megan Plahm, Communications Project Manager** | mplahm@drivechicago.com | 630-424-6065