



WHERE BUSINESS AND ALOHA MEET™

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**HAWAI'I TEAM SEEKING NEW BUSINESS AT NATION'S LARGEST ONE-DAY MEETINGS EXPO IN WASHINGTON, D.C., MAY 27**

**HONOLULU** – A team led by the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) and Hawai'i Convention Center is in Washington, D.C. this week seeking new meetings business for the Hawaiian Islands in conjunction with the industry's largest one-day tradeshow.

The 2010 Springtime Expo takes place Thursday, May 27, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center and is expected to draw more than 4,000 meeting planners and industry professionals from the surrounding Washington, D.C. region.

"We are working hard to sell the business advantages of the Hawai'i meeting experience in the critically important Washington, D.C. market," said Michael Murray, CMP, CMM, CASE, vice president of sales and marketing for HVCB's corporate meetings and incentives division. "This year's outlook for the meetings industry is brighter than 2009 and people in the business are telling us they are eager to travel again, so we're promoting Hawai'i's universal appeal to organizations wanting to broaden their interests internationally."

Murray added that Washington, D.C. is the nation's largest association market, being headquarters to 3,500 national and international associations. "We're confident that planners will be very receptive to our message and that new sales leads will be generated for Hawai'i's meetings industry," said Murray.

"We look forward to this important event and feel very confident that we will be able to secure some new business in this very strong market area," said Neil Mullanaphy, executive director of sales and marketing for the Hawai'i Convention Center. "Hawai'i has a lot to offer for meetings and we've been fortunate that some of these groups that are based in the Washington, D.C. area have already experienced that."

In addition to the Springtime Expo, HVCB and the Hawai'i Convention Center are networking Hawaiian-style this evening with current and prospective clients at its "Hawai'i East Coast Springtime Reception" *pau hana*. Attendees will enjoy live Hawaiian music, food and beverages, and make their own fresh flower lei. During the remainder of the week, the HVCB team will be making sales calls throughout the region.

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Organizing the sales efforts are Meredith Parkins, HVCB regional sales director, and Sherri Thadeus, regional director of accounts–east for the Hawai'i Convention Center. Both sell Hawai'i from their base in the Washington, D.C. area.

Joining them are representatives from the Grand Wailea, Hilton Hawaiian Village Beach Resort & Spa, Hilton Waikoloa Village, Hyatt Regency Maui Resort & Spa, Hyatt Regency Waikiki Beach Resort & Spa, Sheraton Keauhou Bay Resort & Spa, Sheraton Waikiki Hotel, The Fairmont Orchid, Hawai'i, Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa, Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort & Spa, and Westin Maui Resort & Spa.

A message that HVCB will be promoting to meeting planners during the week is the extension of cost-savings and incentive benefits being offered to their clients through 2011 via HVCB's Added Value Resource Center. Available online at [BusinessAloha.com](http://BusinessAloha.com), the Added Value Resource Center features seven programs to help make the Hawai'i experience more affordable for meetings and conventions.

HVCB is contracted by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), the state of Hawai'i's tourism agency, to provide marketing management services for the conventions, meetings and incentives market segment. HTA was established in 1998 to ensure a successful visitor industry well into the future. Its mission is to strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with the state of Hawai'i's economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs.

*-pau-*

**Special note to media:** HVCB recognizes the use of the 'okina ['] or glottal stop, one of the eight consonants of the (modern) Hawaiian language; and the kahakō [ā] or macron (e.g., in place names of Hawai'i such as Lāna'i). However, HVCB respects the individual use of these markings for names of organizations and businesses.

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For information about hosting corporate meetings and incentives in Hawai'i, visit HVCB's website at [BusinessAloha.com](http://BusinessAloha.com) or call 1-888-424-2924.

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For more information about the Hawai'i Convention Center, visit [www.hawaiiiconvention.com](http://www.hawaiiiconvention.com) or call (808) 943-3500. For additional information about SMG, visit [www.smgworld.com](http://www.smgworld.com).