



CARIBBEAN
HOTEL & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

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**CARIBBEAN SOCIETY OF HOTEL ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES' (CSHAE)
ANNUAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE CONCLUDES IN SAN JUAN**

Hotel & Tourism Association Professionals Undergo Intensive Training

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO (May 18, 2010) – The challenges facing the region's tourism industry and the leadership role which the private sector-led hotel and tourism associations play and must continue to play in the industry's development was the primary focus of the Caribbean Society of Hotel Association Executives' (CSHAE) Annual Leadership Conference held this week in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Staff and volunteer professionals from 21 destinations throughout the Caribbean spent two days in intensive training sessions, assessing their roles as private sector organizations as well as discussing ways to be more effective as agents of change within the industry and their destinations. Attendees shared success stories and best practices to help one another to solve problems and become more efficient organizations.

“At no other time in our industry's history has it been as essential for the private sector and private sector organizations like our hotel and tourism associations to be a primary force for affecting positive change in our industry and our communities,” noted CSHAE President Frank Comito who serves as full time staff executive for the Bahamas Hotel Association.

The conference provided the association professionals with a backdrop of the challenges facing the industry and their organizations which have been exacerbated by the global recession. Executives are tasked with doing more with less financial resources. Most governments in the region have slashed tourism budgets, adding even more pressure to the industry to fill gaps and find

creative ways to leverage limited resources and partner with the public sector to address tourism's marketing and product development challenges.

Conference sessions focused on developing strategies for successful association programs, addressing budget challenges without compromising services, developing dedicated private sector leadership, effective government relations, improving member benefits and offering meaningful programs and educational training to association members.

Facilitating these sessions was Scott Joslove, CEO for the Texas Hotel and Lodging Association, the largest association in the United States. Drawing on his successes and challenges, and those of many other associations he's worked with over the years, Joslove was able to effectively engage the region's professionals and ensure the issues, problems, challenges and solutions were reflective of the needs and situations of Caribbean associations.

[individual hotel assns could insert quote here]

The conference was made possible thanks to the support of the CHTA and RCI, the lead event sponsors. [are there any more?]

"All of the participants came away from the two days re-energized, recommitted to working on the fundamentals which are essential to the success of their associations, and enriched with new ideas and approaches to meeting the needs of their associations and their members," stated Comito.

Hotel and Tourism Association professionals attending the conference included representatives from: Anguilla, Antigua, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Cancun, Cozumel, Belize, Bonaire, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Grenada, Suriname, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Maarten, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos and the United States Virgin Islands.

Caribbean Society of Hotel Association Executives

The Caribbean Society of Hotel Association Executives (CSHAE) is a professional association whose members include the top executives and senior managers from the region's private-sector led hotel and tourism-related organizations. It's primary focus is to serve as a network for the region's associations by supporting the professional development of the staff and voluntary leadership; facilitating the gathering and flow of information; advancing programs in support of regional advocacy and product improvement efforts; and working collaboratively with the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) in achieving mutual goals.

Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association

The Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) facilitates the full potential of the Caribbean hotel and tourism industry by serving members' needs and building partnerships in a socially responsible and sustainable manner. CHTA was founded in 1962; it is the voice of the Caribbean hospitality industry for the development of the region in the highly competitive and sophisticated environment of international tourism. Today, tourism is widely recognized as a pivotal industry in the economy of the region – and CHTA functions as the common denominator for this industry in a region of diverse nationalities, languages and styles, identifying mutual problems and marshalling the resources of the active and allied members to devise solutions. CHTA represents all facets of the hospitality industry with more than 725 member hotels and 525 allied members.

For more information, visit <http://www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com>.

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