



CARIBBEAN
HOTEL
ASSOCIATION

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Contact: Lorraine Ortiz lortiz@caribbeanhotelassociation.com
Melissa A. Rivera mrivera@caribbeanhotelassociation.com
Tel 787 725 9139/Fax 787 725 9108

Photo gallery and captions available on: <http://www.caribbeanhotels.org/photogallery/TourismOpensDoorsforWomen.htm>

SEPTEMBER IS WORLD TOURISM MONTH
CHA celebrates theme: "Tourism Opens Doors for Women"

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (September 7, 2007) – Each year, September is recognized as World Tourism Month, culminating with the celebration of the World Tourism Day on September 27th. The Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) will promote various activities throughout the region to commemorate the occasion, with special emphasis on the World Tourism Organization's chosen theme for 2007, *Tourism opens doors for women*, in recognition of women's impact on the growth and development of the tourism industry.



"The Caribbean tourism industry is blessed with a tremendous pool of strong, successful women, many of whom have climbed the career ladder one step at a time, purely on the strength of their drive and commitment," said Barbadian hotelier and CHA President, Peter J. Odle. "From those very special employees that make a stay memorable at a Caribbean hotel, to small hoteliers, executives of hotel chains, presidents and executives of national hotel associations – our Caribbean women have earned a distinguished place in the business of hospitality."

CHA's own organization reflects how the gender gap is being bridged in many critical areas, particularly human resource development; 75% of the scholarship winners from the CHA Educational Foundation in 2007 being women. Likewise, the annual culinary competition *Taste of the Caribbean* has seen a substantial increase in the number of female chefs and bartenders competing and winning medals for their performance. Most recently, Trinidad and Tobago won the honor of 2007 National Team of the Year with a culinary team where three of the four chefs in the team were women: Keirha Forde, Sabrina Rosales, and Kathryn Anne Lander. Even operationally, CHA is proud to count on a team of female professionals at all staff levels, which make up two thirds of its workforce.

On the leadership front, 45% of the executives of national hotel associations are women, while names such as Berthia Parle, MBE, president of CHA during the 2004-06 term and current chairwoman of the CHA Board of Directors; Sue Springer, president of the Caribbean Society of Hotel Association Executives (CSHAE); and the Hon. Aloun N'Dombet-Assamba, Minister of Tourism, Jamaica, are considered synonymous with excellence.



HEADQUARTERS:

1000 PONCE DE LEÓN AVENUE, 5TH FLOOR • SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO 00907 • PHONE: 787-725-9139 • FAX: 787-725-9108

MIAMI OFFICES:

2655 LEJEUNE ROAD • SUITE 910 • CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA 33134 • PHONE: 305-433-5900 • FAX: 305-569-0431

CHA hopes to engage the support of national hotel associations and its members at the national level to celebrate women in tourism.

The World Tourism Organization's campaign theme for World Tourism Month and Day seeks to address the important role of tourism in creating economic opportunities and strengthening women's economic capacity, as well as promoting women's leadership.

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About the Caribbean Hotel Association www.caribbeanhotelassociation.com

The Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) is dedicated to optimizing the full potential of the Caribbean hotel and tourism industry by serving member needs and building partnerships. The members of CHA represent the entire spectrum of hospitality industry's private sector, from over 800 member hotels with more than 126,000 hotel rooms in 35 national hotel associations, to allied members including airline executives, tour operators, travel agents, trade and consumer press, hotel and restaurant suppliers, and others. CHA is headquartered in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and maintains a marketing office in Miami, Florida.



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