

## Hotel Association Executives Of The Caribbean To Focus On Advocacy

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The Caribbean Society of Hotel Association Executives (CSHAE), which brings together the chief staff executives from hotel and tourism associations across the Caribbean, is meeting in Barbados this week for a two-day workshop on media relations and advocacy.

The training retreat, to be held September 14 and 15, 2006, at the Island Inn, is designed to guide chief executives and presidents of national hotel associations in the Caribbean in enhancing the flow and substance of accurate and timely information to the media on the tourism industry. 'The media, the Fourth Estate, shapes public opinion,' said Susan Springer, Executive Vice President of BHTA and President of the region organization CSHAE. 'It behooves the industry to be an effective facilitator that stimulates comprehensive coverage of tourism-related issues in order to sensitize Caribbean residents about the huge role of tourism to the development of healthier and wealthier communities.'

Given its topical nature, the training will make use of a current research study funded by the European Union to gauge the expenditures of Caribbean lodging establishments on locally-provided goods and services - finding their way into the local economy by supporting directly the wellbeing of workers, local entrepreneurs, professionals, small, medium and large corporations, and other economic sectors.

The interactive workshop will be led by Mr. Brian Charles, client services manager for SFA Communications, who brings a wealth of experience in various aspects of marketing and corporate communications. Mr. Charles will be supported by Emmy award-winning journalist and author Andria Hall, a former Fox News correspondent and CNN news anchor; and Mr. Bevan Springer, a freelance journalist, communications advisor, and director of the Caribbean Media Exchange for Sustainable Tourism (CMEx).

The two-day event is presented by the Caribbean Regional Sustainable Tourism Development Program (CRSTDP) in conjunction with the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) and the Barbados Hotel & Tourism Association, and the assistance of Bajan hotelier Peter Odle, President of CHA; the Barbados Tourism Authority; Island Inn; Sandy Bay Hotel; Johnson Stables; and Tall Ships.

The CRSTDP is a program supported by the European Union to contribute to economic growth and poverty through increased competitiveness and sustainability of the Caribbean tourism sector. As part of its support, CRSTDP will also sponsor the attendance hotel association executives from all ACP countries - Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Grenada, Guyana, St Kitts & Nevis, St Vincent & the Grenadines, St Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago.

Following the workshop, the members of CSHAE will stay on in Barbados to participate in a strategic planning session to ensure that the work of the grouping dovetails with that of the umbrella body, CHA, as well as with the memorandum of understanding and cooperation signed by CHA and the Caribbean Tourism Organization.

CSHAE is an independent organization for the professional development of national hotel association executives of all member countries of the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA). Member countries include Anguilla, Antigua, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Bonaire, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Mexico: Cozumel, Mexico: Quintana Roo, Puerto Rico, St. Barthélemy, St. Eustatius, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, Sint Maarten, St. Martin, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos, and United States Virgin Islands.

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