



CARIBBEAN  
HOTEL  
ASSOCIATION

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Lorraine Ortiz-Valcárcel, [lortiz@caribbeanhotelassociation.com](mailto:lortiz@caribbeanhotelassociation.com)  
Melissa Rivera Pabón, [mrivera@caribbeanhotelassociation.com](mailto:mrivera@caribbeanhotelassociation.com)  
Tel 787 725 9139/Fax 787 725 9108

**AMERICAN EXPRESS ANNOUNCES 2007 PORTFOLIO OF PROGRAMS TO BENEFIT  
CARIBBEAN TOURISM**

***Strategic partnership with Caribbean Hotel Association is officially renewed***

ARUBA (January 16, 2007) – American Express reiterated today its unvarying support of the Caribbean hospitality industry through an ongoing calendar of programs and initiatives during 2007.

“A strategic partnership is, by definition, mutually beneficial,” said Dianelys Rodríguez, vice president of destination business development, American Express Travel Related Services, at a press conference of the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) during Caribbean Marketplace 2007. “We’re here to underscore that notion with action.” Caribbean Marketplace, presented by CHA with support from American Express, is the single most important tourism marketing event of the Caribbean hotel and tourism industry. It marks the start of the year’s program of initiatives that American Express sponsors in the region.

In addition to sales and marketing, American Express has once again allocated resources to two important areas in the foundation of the Caribbean tourism product: human resource development and sustainable development.

“The role of training and education in tourism is no mystery – it’s a paramount, pervasive need at every level,” added Rodríguez. To that effect, American Express has pledged its support to continue “Total Service,” a service training methodology introduced in the Caribbean in 2006, following a decade of successful implementation in Central and South America. In addition, American Express will also focus on the CHA annual industry conference held every year in June as a vehicle to promote human resource development. The conference features a strong educational component with topical sessions on sales and marketing, operations, environmental stewardship, safety and security, finance and technology in the Caribbean hospitality industry, among others. The conference also serves as the stage where once a year American Express showcases and recognizes the stars of the Caribbean hospitality – the exceptional winners of the employee, supervisor, hotelier, green hotel, and allied member of the year awards.

Meanwhile, as environmental issues are increasingly top of mind worldwide, environmental stewardship is likewise more and more relevant for the industry. With a seat on the Governing Council of the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST) – the environmental arm of CHA – American Express contributes to programs and services for the responsible development of the Caribbean tourism private sector. Further, to foster responsible environmental and social practices, every year American Express also presents the American Express Green Caribbean Award to a small and a large property whose sustainable practices stand out and serve as role models for colleagues in the Caribbean hotel sector. In previous years, American Express worked with CAST, sponsoring various initiatives, most significantly the production of the Hurricane Preparedness Manual in two versions, English and Spanish.

- more -

**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





**AMERICAN EXPRESS ANNOUNCES 2007 PORTFOLIO OF PROGRAMS TO BENEFIT CARIBBEAN TOURISM.../P2**

Beyond human resource development and environmental stewardship, American Express announced it was committed to playing a more interactive role with the executives of the Caribbean national hotel associations. "The national hotel associations are the backbone of the Caribbean tourism private sector; they bring the necessary local perspective to the drawing board on issues that impact the Caribbean tourism industry at large – allowing CHA and American Express to act more effectively at the local level," said Rodríguez. "Because, as the saying goes, 'we are only as strong as our weakest link,' our goal is to contribute to the strengthening of the national hotel associations – thus strengthening our work in the process."

Additional projects on the drawing board for American Express and CHA include the Caribbean Tourism Development Company (CTDC) – a marketing business unit jointly created by CHA and CTO – and the booking engine under construction for [www.caribbeantravel.com](http://www.caribbeantravel.com), the official lodging website of CTDC.

American Express has worked over the years helping to strengthen the Caribbean brands, in conjunction with CHA. Longstanding initiatives have addressed diverse issues through the sponsorship of projects ranging from the scholarship program of the Caribbean Hotel Foundation, the Small Hotels Operators Reference Manual, and the a regional study on the economic impact of Travel & Tourism in the Caribbean, commissioned by CHA and carried out by the World Travel and Tourism Council in 2004, among many others.

# # #

**About American Express**

American Express Company is a diversified worldwide travel, financial and network services company founded in 1850. It is a world leader in charge and credit cards, Travelers Cheques, travel, financial planning, business services, insurance and international banking. For more information on American Express, visit our Web site at [www.americanexpress.com](http://www.americanexpress.com)

**About the Caribbean Hotel Association – [www.caribbeanhotels.org](http://www.caribbeanhotels.org)**

The Caribbean Hotel Association is dedicated to excellence in hospitality, leadership in marketing, and sustainable growth in tourism, to the benefit of its membership and that of the wider Caribbean community. It aims to be a regional forum that will advance the Caribbean hotel and tourism industry. The members of CHA represent the entire spectrum of hospitality industry's private sector, from 835 member hotels representing some 127,000 hotel rooms in 36 national hotel associations, to 520 allied members including airline executives, tour operators, travel agents, trade and consumer press, hotel and restaurant suppliers, and others.



**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