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HAWAII VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU HELPS BRING ALOHA TO HOLLYWOOD AS A SPONSOR OF THE WORLD PREMIERE OF DISNEY'S "LILO & STITCH"

HVCB Brings the Spirit of Hawai'i to a Global Stage Through Cultural Protocol and Hula

LOS ANGELES – The Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) was a proud sponsor of the world premiere of Disney's *Lilo & Stitch*, held on Saturday, 17 May at the El Capitan Theatre in Hollywood. The premiere of the live-action reimagining—written by Native Hawaiian filmmaker and screenwriter Chris Kekaniokalani Bright—attracted international attention and brought together cast, crew, and distinguished guests, including Hawai'i State Senator Lynn DeCoite and Hawai'i State Representative Shirley Ann Templo in celebration of the new movie landing in theaters 23 May.

In collaboration with Disney, HVCB ensured that elements of Hawaiian culture were respectfully and meaningfully represented throughout the event. The program opened with traditional Hawaiian protocol led by Kumu Hula Lilinoe Kaio of Hula Hālau 'o Lilinoe and Nā Pua me ke Aloha. This moment of cultural grounding set the tone for the afternoon and reflected the importance of place, respect, and intention. Jaedyn Janae Puahaulani Pavao, newly crowned 2025 Miss Aloha Hula—one of hula's most respected titles—was also present to represent Kaua'i and Hawai'i, bringing another layer of cultural significance to the event and honoring the importance of hula in the story that *Lilo & Stitch* brings to life.

“This premiere wasn’t just a celebration of a film—it was an opportunity to elevate the people, culture, and stories that define our Hawai'i,” said Dr. Aaron J. Salā, president and CEO of HVCB. “As audiences reconnect with *Lilo & Stitch*, we invite them to reconnect with Hawai'i thoughtfully—to engage with our Hawai'i in ways that deepen their understanding of our communities and values.”

As part of the celebration, HVCB member and fellow premiere sponsor, Hawaiian Airlines welcomed guests with lei and a photo opportunity. The airline recently launched [Searching for Stitch](#), an augmented reality experience that guides users through iconic sites across the Hawaiian Islands. Each stop reflects the pillars of Hawaiian Airlines' Travel Pono program, which encourages mindful, responsible travel.

The festivities began with a “blue carpet” arrival and a lively pre-party that included keiki (children) activities, Stitch character appearances, and themed refreshments, followed by the film's first public screening.

Disney's *Lilo & Stitch* opens in theaters nationwide on 23 May 2025.

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B-ROLL & PHOTOS

High-resolution images and b-roll from the red carpet, Hawaiian protocol, and premiere festivities are available for media use. B-roll includes interviews from:

- Dr. Aaron J. Salā, President & CEO, Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau
- Hawai'i State Senator Lynn DeCoite
- Chris Kekaniokalani Bright, Screenwriter
- Maia Kealoha, "Lilo"
- Jaedyn Janae Puahaulani Pavao, 2025 Miss Aloha Hula

Download here: **PHOTOS:** <https://f.io/fw8ME5n4> **VIDEO:** <https://f.io/kjLyQ90Z>

Please credit: *Courtesy of Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau*

Disney press materials can be downloaded [HERE](#).

ABOUT HVCB

The Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) is a private, non-profit membership organization founded in 1945. Contracted by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) for marketing services in the continental U.S., HVCB works in partnership with its members to promote Hawai'i as a premier visitor destination. HVCB serves the people of Hawai'i by showcasing the state's unique culture, natural beauty, and aloha spirit to the world, aiming to foster a regenerative tourism model that ensures the social, environmental, and economic balance for our island home. For visitor information, visit gohawaii.com. For more about HVCB, visit hvcb.org or follow updates on Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

ABOUT DISNEY'S LILO & STITCH

"Lilo & Stitch," the wildly funny and touching story of a lonely Hawaiian girl and the fugitive alien who helps to mend her broken family, will open exclusively in theaters May 23, 2025. A live-action reimagining of Disney's 2002 animated classic, "Lilo & Stitch" is directed by Dean Fleischer Camp, the Oscar®-nominated filmmaker behind the animated feature film "Marcel the Shell with Shoes On," with a screenplay by Chris Kekaniokalani Bright and Mike Van Waes, and stars Sydney Elizebeth Agudong, Billy Magnussen, Tia Carrere, Hannah Waddingham, Chris Sanders, with Courtney B. Vance, and Zach Galifianakis, and introducing Maia Kealoha. The film is produced by Jonathan Eirich, p.g.a. and Dan Lin, with Tom Peitzman, Ryan Halprin, Louie Provost, Thomas Schumacher serving as executive producers.

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