



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MAUI VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU ANNOUNCES NEW DESTINATION MANAGER

MAUI, HAWAII – The Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau (MVCB) announced the appointment of Meagan DeGaia as destination manager, effective today. In this newly created position being funded by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), DeGaia will be responsible for supervising, managing, implementing and reporting on the Maui Nui Destination Management Action Plan (DMAP), its Community Enrichment Program (CEP), as well as signature events within Maui County.

DeGaia will focus on creating positive contributions benefitting quality of life for Maui Nui residents. Among her tasks will be engaging members of the local communities and their residents to participate in amplifying regenerative tourism activities as well as managing the "hot spots" (highly visited tourist locations) on their respective islands at monthly community meetings to be held on Maui, Moloka'i and Lāna'i.

"We are excited to have Meagan join our MVCB 'ohana," said Sherry Duong, executive director of the Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau. "As a founding member of Makoa Quest, a culturally rooted tour company providing interactive cultural experiences for Maui's youth, Meagan has been relentless in her quest to educate and immerse visitors in our island culture to ensure that the Hawaiian culture continues to be preserved and shared for generations to come."

"In addition to launching monthly island community meetings, Meagan will also be responsible for strengthening collaboration between visitor and resident education programs committed to the Mālama Maui County Pledge in protecting the island's natural resources to garner a sense of place."

Prior to joining the MVCB team, DeGaia served as Makoa Quest's president and director of, developing positive working relationships with native Hawaiian cultural practitioners to lead culturally immersive experiences for groups. With Makoa Quest, she also built

relationships with and supported environmentally focused nonprofit community organizations, and forged relationships with Maui youth service organizations. DeGaia was also the media publisher for the *Neighbors of Wailea and Mākena* and *Neighbors of West Maui* publications, where she partnered with local nonprofits, community organizations and residents. She currently serves on the board of Maui nonprofit organization Nā Mahi'ai o Ke'anae.

“Meagan will serve an integral role as a part of our accelerated tourism management efforts, working in close liaison with the residents of Maui Nui through the DMAP implementation well underway, Community Enrichment Program and signature events,” said Caroline Anderson, HTA’s director of planning. “This new, dedicated position is a reflection of our collective commitment toward engaging with the community and putting their needs first, for a better and more sustainable future.”

The Maui Nui DMAP is a community-based initiative of HTA, in partnership with the County of Maui and MVCB, aiming to rebuild, redefine and reset the direction of tourism as determined by the residents of Maui, Moloka’i and Lāna’i over the next three years. The focus is on stabilizing, recovering and rebuilding the desired visitor industry on each island by addressing key issues surrounding tourism and mitigating visitor impacts in collaboration with lawmakers, the counties, and state and federal agencies.



Meagan DeGaia
Destination Manager, Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau

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ABOUT THE MAUI VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU

The Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau (MVCB) is a subsidiary of the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB). HVCB is contracted by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), the state of Hawai'i's tourism agency, for marketing management services in North America. The HTA was established in 1998 to ensure a successful visitor industry well into the future. Its mission is to strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with the state of Hawai'i's economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs.

The three visitable islands of Maui Nui (Maui County) offer three very distinct Hawai'i experiences. World-class resorts, award-winning cuisine, championship golf, exquisite natural beauty and the islands' host Hawaiian culture have propelled Maui Nui into the limelight. For more information, visit www.visitmaui.com or call 808-244-3530.

***Special note to media:** MVCB recognizes the use of the 'okina ['] or glottal stop, one of the eight consonants of the (modern) Hawaiian language; and the kahakō [ā] or macron (e.g., in place names of Hawai'i such as Lāna'i). However, MVCB respects the individual use of these markings for names of organizations and businesses.*

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