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MCCVB Expands Reach in China with Marketing Firm East West

Monterey County, Calif. – July 14, 2015 –Today the Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) inked a deal with Shanghai-based East West Marketing Corporation to assist in promoting tourism to Monterey County. The marketing firm will engage top tour operators within the tour and travel marketplace as well as promote the region through media and social channels to create valuable exposure for Monterey County in China. The partnership is designed to capitalize on MCCVB's investment in this market in the last three years.

"China is an incredibly important international market for Monterey County," said Rob O'Keefe, Chief Marketing Officer for MCCVB, "We started to focus on China a few years ago to ensure we were in the conversation when Chinese travelers are planning trips to the U.S. That strategy is paying off."

China represents the fastest growing international market to the U.S. Additionally, Chinese visitors tend to stay longer and spend more than other foreign visitors. These facts coupled with an easing of travel restrictions from China to the U.S. has made this market lucrative and therefore highly sought after.

The move to East West represents an acceleration of positive momentum to build upon previous marketing investment. "East West has strategically important relationships within China and ups our competitive advantage," added O'Keefe. These relationships will be leveraged by East West to improve the MCCVB's marketing effectiveness in China and generate a stronger ROI on advertising dollars.

"With over 17 years of experience in China tourism, East West has accumulated extensive connections with the Chinese travel trade and media to increase the platform of promoting U.S. destinations in China," said Daniel Chen, Manager at East West. "Monterey County has many things to offer the Chinese visitor from beautiful coastal views to fun attractions, shopping, golf and dining. East West is very excited to further elevate Monterey County's profile with Chinese travelers."

China is currently the world's number-one outbound tourist country and the fourth-largest source market for inbound tourism to the U.S., and by 2018 is expected to become the number-one source market. More than two million Chinese tourists visited the U.S. in 2014 and spent an average of \$6,000 per person – about 30 percent more than other inbound international travelers.

With regular flights from Beijing to San Jose, implemented by Hainan Airlines just weeks ago, there is no better time to capitalize on the burgeoning Chinese tourism sector. Later this month, the MCCVB will host a series of "China Ready" trainings for Monterey County businesses that will provide best practices and education to help fully recognize the growing opportunity of Chinese tourism in the area.

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ABOUT MONTEREY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is the organization that drives tourism for Monterey County and in recent years has led the destination to record levels of growth. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in the County. The MCCVB is a partnership of the hospitality community and local governments that aims to drive business growth through compelling marketing and sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to our guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was more than \$2.5 billion in 2014, representing a 4.4 percent increase from 2013, and per person/per day spending rose significantly to \$324. More than 4.3 million visitors stayed overnight in 2014, generating more than \$100 million in local tax receipts and supporting 23,850 jobs. The MCCVB is a 501(c)6 organization, visit SeeMonterey.com for more information.