

HAWAII VISITORS & CONVENTION BUREAU  
2270 Kalākaua Avenue, Suite 801  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815  
TELEPHONE: (808) 923-1811  
FAX: (808) 924-0290  
EMAIL: info@hvcb.org  
WEBSITE: gohawaii.com



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**HAWAII VISITORS AND CONVENTION BUREAU NAMES  
MARY NEISTER VICE PRESIDENT OF MEET HAWAII**

**HONOLULU** – The Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) welcomes hospitality sales and marketing veteran Mary Neister to its team as vice president of Meet Hawai'i. In this position, she will have the responsibility of leading HVCB's sales efforts for meetings, conventions and incentives (MCI), and work in partnership with the Hawai'i Convention Center team to grow the meetings market for the Hawaiian Islands.

Neister brings more than 30 years of sales and marketing leadership experience to the Bureau, most recently serving as director of sales and marketing at the Hilton Waikiki Beach hotel for the past two years. Prior to that, she held positions as director of sales and marketing for the Boston Park Plaza Hotel and Towers, and director of sales and marketing for The Milford hotel in New York City. She has also held similar positions with Starwood Hotels and Resorts in the Bahamas and Boston.

"Mary's background and experience in on-property, area and regional sales at both the hotel and ownership levels are an ideal fit for this position," said John Monahan, HVCB's president and CEO. "Her success in leading sales and marketing efforts for large group houses in various Mainland and off-shore markets will be a tremendous asset to HVCB's management team. Her ability to lead and direct sales teams in finding new MCI business, combined with her influence and industry relationships, will benefit Hawai'i greatly in the selling of the Islands' attributes as a competitive meetings destination."

Neister will focus on single-property sales efforts for Meet Hawai'i in collaboration with the Hawai'i Convention Center, which will concentrate on citywide group business. She assumes the HVCB leadership responsibilities for MCI previously held by Karen Hughes, who departed from the Bureau in September to spend time with her family on the Mainland and in New Zealand.

"It is an honor to be tapped for this prestigious leadership role," Neister said. "Karen Hughes and her team have paved the way and laid a solid foundation of MCI business throughout the Hawaiian Islands. My goal is to work closely with our industry partners to take our bookings to new heights."

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Neister continued: “I am so very appreciative of the support and *aloha* that I have received. I very much look forward to exceeding the expectations of the industry *‘ohana* in the years to come.”

HVCB is contracted by the Hawai‘i Tourism Authority (HTA), the state of Hawai‘i’s tourism agency, to provide marketing management services for the meetings, conventions and incentives, and leisure market segment. 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.

*-pau-*

**Special note to media:** The Hawai‘i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) 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, HVCB respects the individual use of these markings for names of organizations and businesses.

**Media Contact:**

Darlene Morikawa  
Director of PR/Communications  
Hawai‘i Visitors and Convention Bureau  
[dmorikawa@hvcb.org](mailto:dmorikawa@hvcb.org)  
808-924-0259

Nathan Kam  
President, Public Relations  
Anthology Marketing Group  
[Nathan.Kam@AnthologyGroup.com](mailto:Nathan.Kam@AnthologyGroup.com)  
808-539-3471

For information about hosting meetings, conventions and incentives, visit [MeetHawaii.com](http://MeetHawaii.com) or call 1-888-424-2924. For information about leisure travel, visit [GoHawaii.com](http://GoHawaii.com).