

**For Immediate Release**  
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Media Contact: Ryan Smith  
(919) 270-8346  
[rsmith@visitraleigh.com](mailto:rsmith@visitraleigh.com)

## **GREATER RALEIGH CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU SHOWS “WHY TRAVEL MATTERS”**

*Tourism’s Impact on the Greater Raleigh Area Highlighted during National Tourism  
Week, May 11-18, 2009*

**Raleigh, N.C. (May 12, 2009)** – The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau joins hundreds of cities, states and travel-related businesses nationwide in recognition of the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual National Tourism Week, being held May 11-18. In conjunction with National Tourism Week, North Carolina is celebrating with **National Travel and Tourism Day, May 12** in downtown Raleigh.

This year’s theme, “Why Travel Matters” shows how the travel and tourism industry plays a key role in our area’s economy. With business, meetings and event travel facing steep declines across America, nationwide events throughout National Travel and Tourism Week will emphasize the economic benefits travel and tourism brings to local workers and communities and demonstrate the importance of travel. This event is part of a larger effort led by the U.S. Travel Association with rallies in dozens of cities nationwide.

North Carolina’s National Tourism Day Celebration kicks off at 10 a.m. in downtown Raleigh’s Legislative Building with exhibits and demonstrations from attractions and destinations from across the state. Lawmakers and state leaders will have the chance to meet with tourism industry leaders throughout the day.

“Hotels and meeting facilities, attractions, restaurants and transportation providers are among the local businesses greatly impacted by travel to the Raleigh area,” said Denny Edwards, president and CEO of the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau. “In Wake County the industry employs more than 18,000 people, generated \$1.5 billion in direct visitor spending and an estimated \$110 million in state and local tax revenue in 2007.”

Travel and tourism is one of America’s largest industries, with \$740 billion in direct travel expenditures by domestic and international travelers. The industry also represents one of America’s largest employers with 7.7 million direct travel-generated jobs and \$189 billion in travel-generated payroll. However, according to U.S. Labor Department data, the U.S. Travel Association reported a loss of nearly 200,000 travel related jobs in 2008 and predicts a loss of an additional 247,000 travel-generated jobs in 2009.

The Greater Raleigh CVB is a non-profit agency that promotes Raleigh and Wake County to enhance the economic growth and development of Raleigh and Wake County by increasing visitor and convention business.

