

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BIG BUSINESS ON THE BIG ISLAND

ATLANTA, June 1, 2018— Connect hosted 130 attendees at the annual Connect Hawaii | Incentive, May 22-24, at Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows. The two-day event featured education sessions, networking events and one-on-one appointments.

Representatives from Meet Hawaii and Island of Hawaii Visitors Bureau welcomed the group, commending Connect for bringing in significant business to the Big Island during a state of crisis. During Marketplace, buyers and sellers met in 3,000 total appointments, exchanged RFPs, arranged future site visits and booked events. “Out of the 29 one-on-one appointments I had, I received nine RFPs,” said John Ehlenfeldt, vice president of Visit Huntington Beach. “This is one of the best ROIs our organization has had on a show in the past couple of years.” The popular Marketplace format was first introduced to the meetings industry by Connect, which produces Connect Hawaii | Incentive and other shows in the meetings and consumer travel industries.

“Connect Hawaii | Incentive provides the ideal setting for both suppliers and incentive planners to grow and nurture relationships, while collectively working on future group business,” said Peter Thoene, director of sales and marketing at Mauna Lani. “Congratulations to the Connect Hawaii | Incentive team for developing a venue to allow for these opportunities and for a job well done.”

“The intimate setting, combined with the open evenings, made time for creating new relationships and renewing longtime friendships; perhaps the most important aspect of what we do,” said Mary Craig, director at Balboa Meeting & Event Solutions. “There was also time to site some Big Island properties and learn what’s new on the horizon for all of the islands regarding new venues and property updates. I came away with renewed relationships and updated product knowledge as well as completely motivated to bring new business to Hawaii!”

All attendees had the opportunity to attend general networking events and keynote presentations by Darrell Hammond of Higher Ground Consulting. During the last general session, the world-class facilitators and musicians of SongDivision captivated the audience by writing and performing a song based on attendees’ reactions to the event.

“This is one of my favorite events each year,” said Connect President Chris Collinson. “Connect Hawaii brings executives together in a location where its natural beauty can’t help but inspire and motivate. One of the lines by SongDivision captured the overall sentiment of the event, ‘We are getting business done, but that don’t mean we can’t have fun.’”

For more information, contact Vice President of Sales Matt Johnson at mjohnson@connectmeetings.com, or visit connectmeetings.com/events.

ABOUT CONNECT

Connect is a leader in the meetings, events, travel and tourism industry. Specializing in destination marketing, the company produces digital programs, online and mobile

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solutions, meetings business and travel magazines, trade shows and consumer events, travel guides for newspapers and leisure magazines and destination information, which is distributed through broadcast and custom programs. Connect, formerly known as Collinson Media & Events, introduced the popular Marketplace format to the meetings industry and now produces national shows for meeting planners in the Corporate, Expo, Sports, Diversity, Association and Faith sectors as well as other state- and region-specific meetings- and hospitality-focused events. More information about the company's brands and services is available at connectmeetings.com.

Media contact: Director of Content Marketing Mindy Hylton, mhylton@connecttravel.com.