



**For Immediate Release**

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## SEATTLE CELEBRATES TOURISM THIS WEEK

*Hundreds Rally in Westlake Park, Raise Flag Atop the Space Needle, Release Latest Tourism Impact Data and Present 2010 Tourism Ambassador of the Year*

SEATTLE – This week, thousands of Seattle area tourism industry professionals will proudly recognize the importance of their industry during the 27<sup>th</sup> annual National Travel and Tourism Week.

Throughout the week, businesses that benefit from tourism will feature “Tourism Matters” signage and marquis displays and will participate in a host of special industry events.

Industry leaders will raise a flag on top of the Space Needle early Tuesday morning to commemorate the week and celebrate the importance of tourism.

Also on Tuesday, Seattle will host one of the largest tourism rallies among those in some 30 other U.S. cities participating in U.S. Travel Rally Day. The rallies demonstrate in human terms the value of travel to the local community. Professionals from major sectors of the tourism industry will attend in a show of support for the jobs and economic impact created by visitors.

An expected 300 rally participants will also pose for a photo in support of the U.S. bid for the FIFA World Cup of soccer, which includes the City of Seattle and will be submitted later this week. Hoteliers and other segments of the tourism industry invested in hosting Seattle's largest-ever event will be on hand. The rally will also feature the presentation of the Seattle tourism industry's 2010 Tourism Ambassador of the Year, an annual award for outstanding professionalism and service. Last year's recipient, Justin Hall of the Pike Place Fish Company, will present the award to this year's recipient.

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### **Highlights of Seattle's Tourism Week include:**

- Flag raising ceremony on top of the Space Needle, Tuesday at 6:30 a.m.
- Carnival Cruise Lines, the world's largest cruise line, arrives for its first Seattle homeport sailing, Tuesday at 7 a.m.
- Tourism Rally in Westlake Park expected to draw more than 300, Tuesday Noon - 1 p.m.
- FIFA World Cup tourism photo op in support of the U.S. bid submission later this week, Tuesday Noon - 1 p.m. at the tourism rally
- Seattle's 2010 tourism professional of the year award presentation, Tuesday Noon - 1 p.m. at the tourism rally
- Seattle's latest visitor volumes, expenditures and other statistics announced, Tuesday
- World Cup Citywide "Tweet Up," promoted by the City of Seattle, Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau and Seattle Sports Commission; simultaneous tweets are hoped to achieve a Twitter "trending topic"
- *Tourism Matters* flag continues to fly atop the Space Needle, Tuesday through Thursday

Direct spending by domestic and international travelers generated \$704 billion in the nation's economy last year, according to the U.S. Travel Association. The industry also represents one of America's largest employers, accounting for more than 10 million direct and indirect jobs.

Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau will present its annual tourism industry report card on Tuesday, May 11. The annual research report will feature the latest city and county visitor volumes, visitor expenditures, tax contributions and other key metrics.

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### **About Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau**

Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau is a private, non-profit economic development agency responsible for competitively marketing Seattle as a destination for meeting and convention groups and leisure travelers. As a membership-based organization, SCVB connects more than 900 local businesses with the lucrative visitor market. SCVB works with other convention and visitor bureaus, the Washington State Tourism Commission and Washington State Tourism office to jointly position the state as a premier travel destination.

### **About the Why Tourism Matters Campaign:**

The nonprofit public outreach campaign educates and engages Seattle and Washington State citizens about the importance of the tourism industry. The program's web site features the latest tourism statistics for Seattle and many communities throughout Washington State, as well as industry news and links to national initiatives. Visit [www.whytourismmatters.com](http://www.whytourismmatters.com) to learn more.