



Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau President and CEO Jorge Pesquera Selected as One of “25 Most Extraordinary Minds in Sales and Marketing” by Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International

—CEO honor marks the CVB’s second recognition of successful marketing in HSMAI’s esteemed annual industry awards—

THE PALM BEACHES, Fla (Jan. 12, 2012) - The Palm Beach County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) announced today that its President and CEO Jorge Pesquera has earned the distinction of one of the “Top 25 Most Extraordinary Minds in Sales and Marketing” as awarded by the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMAI) for 2011. In the award’s ninth year, a panel of carefully selected industry experts reviewed nominees for their example of leadership in specific sales and marketing initiatives. Seven Destination Marketing Organization leaders- including Pesquera- met the criteria.

“We are thrilled that Jorge Pesquera has been recognized by our industry voice, HSMAI, as a leader in destination marketing,” said CVB Board Chairman and Director of Sales for The Breakers Palm Beach, Jim Mostad. “Jorge’s leadership, vision and creativity have been incredibly beneficial to Palm Beach County, and I’m sure he would agree that this honor would not be possible without the entire dynamic team of professionals at the CVB who share his passion and standards for excellence.”

A 30-year travel and tourism industry veteran, Pesquera joined the Palm Beach County CVB in October 2007. Surviving a global recession that hit hardest in the tourism sector among luxury travel destinations, Pesquera’s strong leadership and innovation helped steer the CVB through a major reorganization and allowed Palm Beach County tourism to thrive in a weakened economy. The county enjoyed 20 straight months of positive occupancy beginning in November 2009— earning the position of the state’s leading destination in occupancy growth from 2009 to 2010 with a 9.5 percent overall increase, more than twice that of the state. Palm Beach County has since enjoyed notable recognitions from leading group and consumer publications, including the ranking just this year as ‘11th Best Summer Vacation in the World’ and ‘9th Best U.S. Luxury Destination’ by *U.S. News & World Report*, 2011 (West Palm Beach). The Palm Beach County CVB became one of the first 100 DMO’s to be accredited by the Destination Marketing Association International and was recognized by the Board of County Commissioners through a proclamation in July 2009.

Prior to his current position, Pesquera was president and CEO of the Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association and spent 10 years as president and CEO of the Puerto Rico Convention Bureau, spearheading the construction of the \$450 million Puerto Rico Convention Center and surrounding district. Pesquera is a member of the accreditation board of Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), the Board of Visit Florida, Advisory Board of the Palm Beach County Historical Society, the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) and Meeting Professionals International (MPI).

“I am surprised, humbled and thrilled by this recognition as it truly validates the tremendous efforts by a very hard working team of professionals at the CVB with the support of a highly engaged board of volunteer leaders. Together we have successfully lifted The Palm Beaches and Boca Raton to a new level in destination marketing and brand awareness,” said Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau President and CEO Jorge Pesquera. “We have had a very successful year leading the state in occupancy growth and will continue to work diligently to increase visitor awareness of the destination and deliver exceptional experiences.”

In addition to Pesquera's Top 25 Minds recognition, the Palm Beach County CVB's *1909 Founders Package campaign* also earned the organization a 'Gold Adrian Award' in the 2011 HSMAI competition, making it eligible for the competition's highest honor of the Platinum Adrian Award and the Best of Show Award, which will be announced at the 55th annual Adrian Awards dinner in New York in February.

Originating as Pesquera's brainchild, The 1909 Founders Package campaign was a value-driven initiative for both leisure and group markets, themed after Palm Beach County's centennial anniversary, which successfully helped to stimulate and revitalize the county's tourism industry after a hard-hitting global recession. With nearly 1,000 entries, the CVB's digital marketing entry was selected as one of the top 50 initiatives based upon its strong brand messaging, effective communication, and overall integrated campaign.

"The bar is continuously set higher each year in regards to the quality of Adrian Awards submissions we receive," said Fran Brasseur, HSMAI executive vice president. "This year's winners have made their mark in travel advertising, public relations, and digital marketing. We look forward to showcasing this exemplarily work with the industry and recognizing the remarkable winners at the Adrian Awards Gala."

About Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau: The Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau is the official destination marketing organization for Palm Beach County, Fla. Tourism is among Palm Beach County's major industries generating a direct annual economic impact of \$2.8 billion in the local economy, producing \$23 million dollars in bed-tax revenue and lodging sales of approximately \$623 million.

About Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International: The Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMAI) is committed to growing business for hotels and their partners, and is the industry's leading advocate for intelligent, sustainable hotel revenue growth. The association provides hotel professionals & their partners with tools, insights, and expertise to fuel sales, inspire marketing, and optimize revenue through programs such as HSMAI's Affordable Meetings, Adrian Awards, and Revenue Management Strategy Conference. HSMAI is an individual membership organization comprising more than 7,000 members worldwide, with 40 chapters in the Americas Region.

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