NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK SPOTLIGHTS BENEFITS OF TRAVEL

Americans tout travel’s positive effects on economy, business and communities nationwide

As part of the 30th annual National Travel and Tourism Week, approximately 100 cities nationwide are expected to hold rallies to champion travel as a jobs creator and economic driver. Many events will be staged under the “Travel Effect” theme, which is part of the U.S. Travel Association’s multiyear campaign to prove through authoritative research the real and meaningful impact the travel industry has on our lives, businesses and economy.

“Travel supports close to 8 million jobs directly involved with the travel industry across the nation, including 1 million right here in Florida. Approximately 89 million people from throughout the world visited Florida in 2012 and it is considered the third most popular destination in the country after New York and California,” said Stephanie Thorn, Program Manager of the Eric Friedheim Tourism Institute. “The United States is second only to France in terms of numbers of international arrivals. However, the United States is number one in regards to spending dollars.”

Travel and tourism is a $65 billion industry for Florida, making tourism Florida’s No. 1 industry. Travel employs a broad and diverse workforce, from airline and hotel employees to restaurant, attraction and retail workers. Travel further supports employees in other industry sectors, such as construction, manufacturing and finance.

“Travel is a force that can drive our nation’s economic recovery. It is one of the healthiest sectors in terms of job creation and hiring, employing one out of every eight Americans,” said Roger Dow, president and CEO of U.S. Travel, the umbrella organization representing the U.S. travel industry. “We are galvanizing support to spread awareness of the Travel Effect to showcase the power of our industry and its impact on not only our economy and businesses, but also on our health, education and relationships.”

Travel Effect research proves that along with its economic benefits, travel has the power to improve relationships and to create lasting family memories. Additional studies include measuring the bottom-line impact of business travel and the impact of government meetings on public- and private-sector development and local communities. More information is available at www.traveleffect.com.

According to the U.S. Travel Association, travel and tourism generated $2.0 trillion in economic output for the U.S. economy in 2012. The industry also represents one of America’s largest employers, supporting 14.6 million jobs (including 7.7 million directly in the travel industry and 6.9 million in other industries). Direct spending by domestic and international travelers averaged $2.3 billion a day, $97.7 million an hour, $1.6 million a minute and $25,125 a second.

“Many people in Florida have worked in the travel industry for many years and some have been involved with the industry for their entire career. They depend on visitors to make a living,” said Thorn. “When people make the choice to travel to Florida, it makes an enormous impact on the residents who live, work, and play here.”

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