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U.S. TRAVEL RALLY DAY CELEBRATED THROUGH LAUNCH OF NEW WEBSITE

Montgomery County CVB doubles website visits, promote tourism in county

[May 11, 2010, Rockville, Maryland] – To celebrate National Travel and Tourism Week, the Montgomery County CVB has formally launched a new, user-friendly website that has already generated more visitors to the county, www.visitmontgomery.com.

“Travel and tourism is one of the most reliable generators of jobs at all levels of the American economy, including right here in Montgomery County. We aim to show the powerful role of travel in this community.” said Kelly Groff, Executive Director of the Conference and Visitors Bureau of Montgomery County, Maryland.

It features more than 700 restaurant listings with the option to make reservations on OpenTable, all major County hotels with the option to make hotel, airline, and car rental reservations with Expedia, and an interactive map of the county featuring twenty-five pages for municipalities and towns in the county. Event planners and sports planners can submit request for proposals (RFPs), CVB members can update business listings and organizations can submit event calendar listings.

“The fresh new design communicates the diverse appeal of the county. Our county offers natural beauty and outdoor activities, close proximity to D.C., restaurants & shopping, family friendly events, multicultural & historic sites, vast parks and sports events. Traffic to the site has at least doubled in the last six weeks. Visitors are spending more time on the site, viewing more pages, and fewer are leaving right away.” said Rick Southard, CVB board president and Director of Sales, Doubletree Hotel Bethesda. The site was designed by local Rockville web strategy firm, CDF Web Solutions.

Travel and tourism is a \$2 billion industry for Montgomery County, Maryland, employing over 30,000 workers and generating over \$17 million in local hotel tax revenues. Travel is a broad and diverse industry employing a vast workforce, from airline and attraction employees to restaurant, hotel and taxi workers.

The U.S. Travel Association reports that travel and tourism is one of America’s largest industries. Direct spending by domestic and international travelers generated \$704 billion in the nation’s economy last year. The industry also represents one of America’s largest employers, accounting for more than 10 million direct and indirect jobs. Though the travel workforce has declined as a result of the prolonged recession, the industry expects to add 90,000 new American jobs due to modest gains in travel expected in 2010. U.S. Travel projects 1.95 billion domestic person-trips will take place this year, up 2 percent from last year. International arrivals are expected to total 56.5 million in 2010, an increase of nearly 3 percent over 2009, according to U.S. Travel.

“In these times more than ever, everything we can do to support our travel and tourism industry helps Montgomery County,” said County Executive Leggett. “It is vital that we continue to remember the value of encouraging travel to our great destination and showing visitors all that it has to offer.”

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