

COMUNICADO DE PRENSA

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THE PUERTO RICO CONVENTION CENTER WELCOMES VISITOR ONE MILLION

Since its opening two and a half years ago, the Puerto Rico Convention Center welcomed today visitor one million during the *Colegio de Químicos de Puerto Rico* Convention (PRChem 2008), announced Puerto Rico Convention Center District Authority's (PRCCDA) Executive Director, Manuel Sánchez Biscombe.



Left to right: Teresa Martinez – Director of Communications - PRCB - (Puerto Rico Convention Bureau) Manuel Sanchez Biscombe - Executive Director of the PRCCDA (Puerto Rico Convention Center District Authority) Lcda. Hilda Aponte - 1,000,000 Visitor Thom Connors - Sr. Regional VP SMG Latin America - PRCC (Puerto Rico Convention Center)

“Since operations began in late 2005, we established a goal of turning Puerto Rico into the best destination for business and entertainment tourism in North America”, said Sánchez Biscombe. “Today, we have succeeded in positioning the Puerto Rico Convention Center among the best convention centers in the world”, added the Executive Director of the PRCCDA.

In its first year of operation, the Convention Center was recognized with the **Prime Site Award** a prestigious award granted by the *Facilities & Destinations* magazine, an American publication that covers the convention industry, exhibitions and reunions. In addition, last June, the Center obtained the first place among the eight best Convention Centers of the world, according to the specialized magazine in the tourism and business industry, *Travel Plus*.

“The Puerto Rico Convention Center has been a key component to strengthen the bid of our Island in the groups and conventions market, increasing our convention space to 1.2 million square feet”, commented Ana María Viscasillas, president & CEO, Puerto Rico Convention Bureau. “During the past fiscal year, we provided support to the Center in welcoming various groups that due to their size, logistics and activities held have impacted enormously our economy with an injection of \$20 million, over 15,550 delegates helped us reach today the grand million. Congratulations!” concluded Viscasillas.

Since its beginnings, the Convention Center has celebrated 1,069 events, serving as host to important international conventions such as: Interphex, United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the National Guard Association Convention, among others plus the local events: *Expoalimento*, Boat Show, and the San Juan Beauty Show, generating over \$30million in sales since its opening.

“We feel honored to contribute to the Convention Center’s success”, stated Thom Connors, regional vice president, SMG, management company of the Convention Center. “Having obtained so many achievements in just two years evidences the extraordinary effort, professionalism and experience of our work team to create a world-class operation”, concluded Connors.

The recognition to visitor one million was granted to attorney Hilda E. Aponte, delegate of the PRChem 2008 Convention. A commemorative plaque of the Convention Center along with a certificate of the restaurant Ficus Café, among other gifts was presented to the delighted winner.

The Convention Center - which boasts 580,000 square feet of construction space – is the largest facility of its kind in the Caribbean and has the most advanced technology of the Caribbean and Latin America.

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