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Student Debate Competition to Highlight Opening Day of Global Tourism Summit 18 Teams, 10 from Outside Hawai'i, to Address Tourism's Ability to Preserve Culture

HONOLULU – Perpetuating sustainable tourism and encouraging young people to become more involved in determining the travel industry's future, both in Hawai'i and internationally, is a key objective of the Global Tourism Summit, September 19-21, at the Hawai'i Convention Center.

The 2017 Global Tourism Summit Student Debate is a highlight event fulfilling that need. Featuring 18 debate teams, 10 teams from outside Hawai'i and eight within the State, the round-robin tournament is taking place on the Summit's opening day, September 19. The central topic for the debate program is "*Resolved: Tourism Helps to Preserve Culture.*"

Presented by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), the Global Tourism Summit offers a diversity of sessions covering topics and trends vital to Hawai'i's future, including Hawaiian culture, eco-tourism, innovation and technology. According to George D. Szigeti, HTA president and CEO, the Student Debate is an essential program because of how it brings teens into the discussion on tourism's future.

"We need to provide our young people with the incentive and opportunity to express their views on how to make tourism better for all of society" said Szigeti. "The future is theirs and they need to help chart its course for all of us. The Student Debate tournament is intended to seed their interest in tourism and inspire them to be future leaders."

The 10 teams from outside Hawai'i consist of two teams from both Japan and Hong Kong, and one team each from China, Taiwan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Canada and the U.S. mainland. Some teams won local competitions to earn the right to participate in the Global Tourism Summit Student Debate.

The eight Hawai'i teams in the Student Debate tournament include three teams from Parker School, two teams each from Kamehameha Schools and the Home School League, and one team from Hilo High School.

Among the international debate teams is The Forensics Society from the Taipei American School representing Taiwan. In May, The Forensics Society won the International Division of the U.S. National Tournament of Champions in Public Forum Debate at the University of Kentucky. The team's coach, Dr. Nick Coburn-Palo, said the students are thrilled to be in Honolulu for the debate tournament.

"We are tremendously excited to embrace this incredibly generous opportunity to match wits with debate teams from some of the top schools in the world, as well as experience the hospitality for which Hawai'i is internationally famous," said Dr. Coburn-Palo. "Furthermore, our debaters are excited to dip their toes into professional waters by learning more about the rapidly evolving international travel industry at the conference."

On the morning of September 19, the 18 teams will be paired off in rounds of timed competition with a multi-tiered format that challenges the debate members to present and defend their case through the following process.

- Presentation of the team's case.
- Crossfire with opposing speakers asking and answering questions of each other.

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- Rebuttal to refute the opposing team's arguments.
- Summary highlighting the main points of the debate.
- Final focus with each team explaining why they won the round.

All of the teams participate in three rounds of debates, with the scores tabulated for each one. The two teams that emerge with the top scores will compete in the 2017 Global Tourism Summit Student Debate Finale from 2:00-2:45 p.m. in the Lili'u Theater.

PATA Hawai'i Student Forum: Planning for a Career in the Global Tourism Environment

Following the debate finals is the PATA Hawai'i Student Forum on the topic of Planning for a Career in the Global Tourism Environment. Presented by the Hawai'i Chapter of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) the forum features prominent tourism industry leaders providing students majoring in hospitality, tourism or transportation management with valuable career advice. The PATA Hawai'i Student Forum takes place from 3:00-4:55 p.m. in the Lili'u Theater.

Registering for the Global Tourism Summit, September 19-21

Interested attendees can participate in the Global Tourism Summit by registering online at www.GlobalTourismSummitHawaii.com. Registration also includes lunch on the days registered for and participation in the Aloha Reception, featuring entrées from 20 restaurants, on September 20.

Several options are available for registration:

- Individuals: Full Summit, September 19-21: \$395
- Groups of Eight or More: Full Summit, September 19-21: \$365 per person
(*Groups can mix and match different attendees during the summit*)
- Student and Faculty Members: Full Summit, September 19-21: \$150
- Individuals, Partial Summit, September 19-20: \$275
- Individuals, Partial Summit, September 20-21: \$265

Previously known as the Hawai'i Tourism Conference, HTA changed the name of the annual event this year to the Global Tourism Summit to more accurately reflect Hawai'i's emergence as a leader in international travel and tourism.

About the Hawai'i Tourism Authority

The [Hawai'i Tourism Authority](http://www.hawaiiauthority.org) is responsible for strategically managing the State of Hawai'i's marketing initiatives to support tourism. HTA's goal is to optimize tourism's benefits for Hawai'i, while being attentive to the interests of travelers, the community and visitor industry. Established in 1998 to support Hawai'i's leading industry and largest employer, HTA continually strives to help ensure the sustainability of tourism's success.

For more information about HTA, please visit www.hawaiiauthority.org. Follow updates about HTA on Facebook, Twitter (@HawaiiHTA) and its YouTube Channel.

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