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VIRGINIA TOURISM CORPORATION SELECTS BCF TO DEVELOP FUTURE ADVERTISING

Media Only

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www.virginia.org (consumer)

www.vatc.org (industry)

RICHMOND, Va. – The Virginia Tourism Corporation has selected BCF, a Virginia Beach- and Richmond-based agency, to spearhead its \$3-million annual advertising program. The firm was selected by a team of Virginia tourism industry leaders, who reviewed seven written proposals and three oral presentations, to win the highly coveted account.

VTC president and CEO Alisa Bailey said the panel that chose BCF was impressed not only with its innovative proposals but more importantly with its track record of leveraging dollars through industry partnerships for the competitive marketplace.

“On the eve of the nation’s 400th-anniversary commemoration of Jamestown 2007, we sought a firm that could combine new media with traditional media to cut through the clutter and reach potential visitors to the Commonwealth,” said Susan Payne, president, Payne, Ross & Associates Advertising and chair of the VTC search committee. The committee also included John Gillespie, vice president, marketing, Busch Gardens Europe, Water Country USA and Kingsmill Resort & Spa; Shawn Hash, owner, Tangent Outfitters; John Shaffer, director of marketing and public relations, Luray Caverns; Chris Canfield, vice president, corporate communications, VTC; Diane Bechamps, vice president, strategy and marketing, VTC, Wirt Confroy, director, Electronic Marketing, VTC; and Jovandra Cox, advertising marketing manager, VTC.

Tourism dollars comprise a vital economic engine for Virginia’s economy. The Commonwealth experienced record growth in spending by visitors to Virginia in 2005 -- \$16.5 billion, a 9.6 percent increase from 2004 figures. Approximately 207,000 Virginians are directly employed in the tourism industry, with a total payroll of \$4.1 billion in 2005. It is the mission of VTC to generate increased visitor expenditures, tax revenues and employment by expanding Virginia’s U. S. and international markets.

“Creating a stronger emotional connection with audiences is a challenge faced by tourism destinations across the country, and Virginia faces strong competition within the market,” said Art Webb, president of BCF. “We understand these challenges and are determined to become a full partner with the Virginia Tourism Corporation to drive visitation and thereby increase the economic impact created by tourism. It is an exciting opportunity to help make a difference for the Commonwealth in which we live.”

Founded in 1980, BCF provides marketing, advertising, public relations, interactive and promotional services for a diversified client roster but focuses primarily on the tourism/hospitality and consumer-products sectors. Among its clients are the Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau, Virginia Beach Convention Center, The Virginian-Pilot, the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center, Fredericksburg Area Tourism, Amelia Island Tourist Development Council, Tetra, Bank @LANTEC, ClearPoint Financial Solutions, and Marva Maid.

For more information on the Virginia Tourism Corporation’s advertising and marketing programs, go to www.VATC.org.

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