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VIRGINIA BEACH CONVENTION CENTER SUGGESTED STORY IDEAS

(Virginia Beach, Va., 2009) – Virginia Beach’s crown jewel – the \$202.5 million Virginia Beach Convention Center - is raising the standard for excellence. The facility features more than 500,000 gross square feet of space including a 150,000 sq. ft. column-free exhibit hall, more than 28,900 sq. ft. of meeting rooms and a state-of-the-art 31,000 sq. ft. ballroom. In addition, the Convention Center is the first *Virginia Green* facility in the Commonwealth. *Virginia Green* promotes environmentally-friendly practices in all aspects of Virginia's tourism and hospitality industry.

The following are story ideas regarding the Virginia Beach Convention Center, including its services, technology and unique options for meeting planners. If you’d like to arrange an interview with a CVB representative, please contact Maria Sabale at msabale@boomyourbrand.com. For more information, visit www.vbmeetings.com and for complimentary images, visit www.vbpressroom.com.

- **Virginia Beach Launches New Blog** – News from Virginia Beach just became more real time and engaging with the introduction of the Bring It to the Beach blog, <http://blog.vbmeetings.com>. The blog, designed to feature news and insightful thoughts of the resort city’s meeting and convention landscape, is written by Al Hutchinson, vice president of Convention Sales & Marketing. Posts are short and include timely topics ranging from Convention Center events, new hotel properties, restaurants, unique meeting venues to the CVB’s social responsibility and green initiatives. A Real Simple Syndication (RSS) feed is available for meeting planners and members of the media to subscribe and get real time updates from the destination.
- **DLH Sports Complex** – The city’s newest sports venue includes a 100-yard outdoor turf field, 200-meter indoor banked track and Olympic-style pool. A state-of-the-art fitness and wellness facility will be added to the DLH Sports Complex and is slated to open Fall 2009.

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- **Virginia Beach Goes Green** - In 2008, the Virginia Beach Convention Center became the first convention center in the Commonwealth to receive the *Virginia Green* certification. *Virginia Green*, the Commonwealth's new campaign to promote environmentally-friendly practices in all aspects of the Virginia tourism and hospitality industry. This certification marks the facility as a convention center meeting the program's "Core Activities," which include recycling, minimized use of Styrofoam/disposables, water efficiency, energy efficiency and supporting green conferences and events. In addition to the Convention Center, the *Virginia Green* program also has recently certified Virginia Beach as a green destination. To date, more than 80 Virginia Beach hospitality businesses are certified *Virginia Green*, including restaurants, hotels, events and attractions. For more information visit www.vbconventioncenter.com/green.
- **Passkey and a Web site with Cutting-Edge Tools for the Meeting Planner** – The Virginia Beach CVB's informative Web site, www.vbmeetings.com, offers meeting planners the capability to market their event, browse a list of vendors who provide services for their meeting or convention, and download an event planner's handbook containing information to help plan their next meeting or convention in Virginia Beach. Passkey, the online housing and reservation system, streamlines the reservation process for attendees and allows them to register for the meeting or convention as well as book accommodations. This system also assists the meeting planner with meeting their hotel room-block agreement. Meeting planners can also submit an online RFP, allowing them to request specific information as it relates to their meeting.
- **AGLOW and Rejuvenate – the Convention Center is on a Roll!** – The flexibility, accessibility and the appeal of a coastal destination have already drawn national and international acclaim to the Virginia Beach Convention Center. The facility's first event to utilize the entire 150,000 exhibit hall was the Hampton Roads Automobile Dealers Association International Auto Show in January 2009. New groups that have booked for future events include: the U.S. Field Hockey National Indoor Tournament – 2 year contract; USA Track & Field (USATF) Annual Convention – December 2010; the International Reading Association – 2011; AGLOW International – October/November 2012; and the Rejuvenate Marketplace – 2013.
- **Increased Flexibility for Meeting Planners with Superior Customer Service** – The flexibility and appeal of the Convention Center offers meeting planners a great venue for their meeting or conference. With over 150,000 sq. ft. of column-free exhibit space and nearly 29,000 sq. ft. of meeting space, the Convention Center can accommodate any sized group or meeting. Meeting planners will also enjoy the ease of event planning with specialized services and features such as customized postcards to remind attendees of important dates, an interactive planning map for locating hotels, dining and other attractions, and downloadable materials on events, attractions, accommodations and dining that can be distributed to meeting attendees. These support services and more can be found on the Virginia Beach Convention Center Web site. The options at the Virginia Beach Convention Center are endless.
- **Superb Accommodations in a Value Destination** – With nearly 12,000 hotel rooms and a temperate year-round climate, Virginia Beach is a first-choice convention, meeting and trade show destination any time of the year. Virginia Beach's central East Coast location makes it an ideal drive or fly destination for attendees. In the fall and spring shoulder season, Virginia Beach offers reduced hotel rates and unique activities such as whale watching, kayaking, fishing, and golf.

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- **Team Building:** Great relationships, confidence and morale make great team members, and Virginia Beach offers several activities that promote team building among groups. For example, The Founders Inn and Spa, a premier meeting and conference center in Virginia Beach, offers "culinary team building" for groups of individuals from business or organizations. Teams prepare their own food, and then enjoy the delicious creations together. Other team-building opportunities are available at Virginia Beach's state parks, museums and other attractions.
- **Virginia Beach Sports Marketing Team's Got Game** – Virginia Beach is an ideal choice for amateur and professional competitions, from soccer and golf to beach volleyball and gymnastics. Sports venues include the United States Field Hockey Association's National Training Center, Virginia Beach Sportsplex, Hampton Roads Soccer Complex, the Virginia Beach National golf course, and Owl Creek Municipal Tennis Center. The Virginia Beach Convention Center, completed in January 2007, offers an additional site for major sporting events, with more than 500,000 sq. ft. of space. The oceanfront, home to the Virginia Beach Rock n' Roll Half Marathon and the East Coast Surfing Championships, offers another perfect, natural venue for beach athletics. The 300-foot shoreline also offers expanded space for sand soccer and volleyball events. The sports marketing team is particularly successful in attracting youth and family-oriented sporting events. Virginia Beach has become a premier East Coast destination for sports enthusiasts.
- **Military Reunions** – Virginia Beach is home to four military installations, including Little Creek Naval Amphibious Base, Naval Air Station Oceana, Fort Story and Dam Neck Fleet Combat Training Center. Each military installation will work with reunion groups for tours, guest speakers and special events. Points of interest for tours include Naval Operations Base Norfolk, as well as Colonial Williamsburg, historic Jamestown, and Yorktown Battlefield Park. The Naval Aviation Monument, located at the Virginia Beach oceanfront, pays tribute to the region's history. The site includes a granite story board highlighting the names of the 160 aircraft carriers that have been commissioned by the Navy. In addition, larger-than-life statues dominate the site, honoring the early years of naval aviation, World War II and the period from the Korean War to the present. Nearly 75 military reunions are held in Virginia Beach each year, the majority of them in the spring and fall.
- **Convention Center Equipped with Cutting-Edge Technology:** The Virginia Beach Convention Center features the latest in wired and wireless communications technologies.
 - Cox Communications provides the public with wireless access to the Internet at many locations in the facility including the pre-function areas and all meeting, ballroom and exhibit spaces.
 - An expansive 360-foot video wall provides both art and information to the pre-function area.
 - The wood paneled 31,000 sq. ft. ballroom utilizes programmable LED lighting to provide special effects lighting never before used in a ballroom.
 - Ample electrical service are supplied to the ballroom as well as an overhead grid of rigging points to support the most demanding of special audio or visual requirements. Utility service is provided on a thirty-foot grid in the exhibit hall floor and contains 60 or 100 amp electrical service, fiber optic and category VI cable, water and drain service. A network of empty 6" conduits is located through out the exhibit hall to support special needs.

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- **Distinctive Gourmet Raises the Standard for Quality Food Service:** As the exclusive caterer for the new Virginia Beach Convention Center, Distinctive Gourmet delivers imaginative culinary creations to tempt every taste bud. Distinctive Gourmet is a division of Boston Culinary Group, one of the largest privately-owned, and fully-diversified foodservice management companies in the United States. Their goal is to provide extraordinary culinary and customer service talent, signifying a new standard for quality food service for the Virginia Beach meetings and conventions industry. Examples of their specialized services include customized, themed menus and developing unique table and room settings to suit specific client needs. The vendor operates several other fine dining restaurants well known for innovative fare and attentive service, including Fig's Restaurant at New York's La Guardia Airport and Porcini's of Boston.
- **Adventure Travel:** When the meeting is over, Virginia Beach is the perfect getaway for adventure lovers and thrill seekers. In 2009, *Men's Fitness* ranked Virginia Beach the No. 10 fittest city in America, and there's a reason why. Virginia Beach offers a variety of sports, fitness and outdoor activities for those who enjoy an active lifestyle. A number of outfitters teach surf lessons and surf camps geared for enthusiasts of all ages. For hikers and bikers, Virginia Beach boasts more than 18,600 acres of state parks and wildlife refuges perfect for hiking, biking, canoeing and kayaking. Over 121 navigable miles of waterways and 35 miles of ocean and bay beaches give visitors a variety of landscapes for exploring the great outdoors. Visitors looking for a challenging aquatic adventure can kayak through the ocean waves off Sandbridge beach or the North end of the Virginia Beach oceanfront. With so many ways to stay active, Virginia Beach is an adventurer's paradise!

The Virginia Beach CVB invites meeting planners to "Bring it to the Beach!" Virginia Beach is four hours southeast of Washington, D.C. by car and within a day's drive or less from two-thirds of the U.S. population. For the latest information and project updates on the new Virginia Beach Convention Center, visit www.vbmeetings.com. Media information and digital images are available at www.vbpressroom.com.

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