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Partnership With Prestigious Women's Golf Championship Exemplifies Intersection of Strategic Global Marketing and Destination Stewardship
Community Invited to LPGA LOTTE Championship at Hoakalei This Weekend

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is continuing its work to stabilize travel demand to the Hawaiian Islands through strategic global marketing, while also ensuring tourism's benefits flow to our communities. As part of this focused effort, HTA is furthering its partnership with the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) through the LOTTE Championship presented by Hoakalei being held this week on O'ahu.

Last year's LOTTE Championship winner was Grace Kim, an Australian golf star. As her fans in Australia – a key Hawai'i visitor source market – watch her compete again this week, they will see 120 of her fellow professional LPGA golfers from over 15 countries with the beautiful backdrop of O'ahu's south shore, including Hawai'i's own Malia Nam.

“The rise of sports tourism brings vast opportunities, such as the LOTTE Championship, for us to engage with these high-profile athletes and showcase our Islands' depth and breadth globally, while also giving our homegrown athletes a chance to shine here at home,” said Mufi Hannemann, HTA's board chair. “We encourage our residents and families to come out and enjoy championship golf at its finest.”

Part of HTA's partnership with the LPGA included the establishment of the LPGA*USGA Girls Golf Hawai'i Chapter in 2023 to further cultivate Hawai'i's youth golfers. A Buy One, Get One promotion is also available for Hawai'i residents (government-issued ID required). LOTTE Championship tickets are available at www.lottechampionship.com. Children ages 16 and under are free when accompanied by an adult ticket holder.

Community engagement endeavors are a key feature of HTA's sports partnerships. A recent example: the renovation of a basketball court and technology lab by the Los Angeles Clippers last month when they were in Hawai'i for an exhibition game against the Golden State Warriors. Both teams also held youth basketball clinics during their time in the islands. Coming up Thanksgiving weekend on Maui, the Maui Invitational will return to Lahaina, paired with a Kāko'o Maui benefit concert series and a marketplace of locally-made products.

Focus On Recovering Key International Markets

Sports tourism is a key part of the U.S. national strategy to attract international visitors to the country. The LOTTE Championship is now in its 12th year. Its title sponsor, LOTTE, is a household name in South Korea – a key international source market for Hawai'i visitors.

Visitors from Korea spent \$314.8 million in Hawai'i during the first nine months of 2024, generating \$36.5 million in state tax revenue. In comparison, visitor spending was \$322.8 million (-2.5%) in the first nine months of 2023 and \$352.2 million (-10.6%) during the same timeframe in pre-pandemic 2019.

HTA recently renewed its contract for brand marketing and management services in Korea with AVIAREPS Marketing Garden Holdings Ltd., which operates as Hawai'i Tourism Korea (HTK) representing The Hawaiian Islands. The contract continues through December 31, 2025, with the option to extend up to four additional one-year terms, subject to the availability of funds.

In August, Nāho'opi'i and Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism Director James Kunane Tokioka participated in a Korea travel mission led by Hawai'i Lieutenant Governor Sylvia Luke, the highest-ranking Korean American government official in the U.S. During the mission, HTK organized meetings with the Hawai'i delegation and executives from Korean Air and Air Premia to promote its Incheon-Honolulu routes, expand air connectivity and develop strategies to attract Korean visitors to the Islands.

"Underscoring our state's commitment to strengthening key international markets, including Korea, we are working collaboratively with government leaders and our Hawai'i Tourism Korea team to develop partnerships and reignite travel interest among Korea visitors," said Kalani Ka'anā'anā, HTA's chief stewardship officer. "When we pair our marketing efforts with partnerships that reinvest in our community and bring exciting professional sports events to our residents — including opportunities for our local athletes like Malia Nam to shine on the world stage — that's regenerative tourism in action."

For more information on HTA's work in the Korea market, visit www.hawaiiitourismauthority.org/what-we-do/brand-marketing/korea/.

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About the Hawai'i Tourism Authority

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority is the state agency responsible for representing The Hawaiian Islands around the world, and for holistically managing tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with community desires, economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, and visitor industry needs. HTA works with the community and industry to Mālama Hawai'i – care for our beloved home. For more information about HTA, visit hawaiiitourismauthority.org or follow @HawaiiHTA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), and [X](#).

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