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Wake County Hospitality Community Unites for Customer Service Training

Raleigh, NC (June 19, 2008) – The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau, Wake Tech Community College, the North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging association along with area businesses involved in Wake County tourism, joined together June 16 to offer “Customer Care for the Hospitality Industry.” Marbles Kids Museum, in downtown Raleigh, hosted the event where more than 40 employees from restaurants, attractions and hotels attended the training.

This initiative, spearheaded by the Wake County hospitality community, sets the goal of distinguishing Greater Raleigh as a leader in providing exceptional customer service; ultimately becoming a benchmark for other leisure and meeting destinations. In 2006, visitors spent \$1.34 billion in Wake County... that’s more than \$3.36 million every single day, creating more than 17,000 jobs directly related to the tourism industry in Wake County.

The three-hour course, taught by Wake Tech Hotel and Restaurant Management Instructor Jane Broden, is geared toward front line and management level employees in hotels, restaurants, attractions and transportation companies. The curriculum includes providing best practices in what defines outstanding service, how to work as part of a team, resolving challenges and making a positive impression on your customers. The course will be offered on a monthly basis in hopes of reaching all service personnel in the Wake County hospitality community.

“This partnership is a great way to get our hospitality community on the same page in regards to a standard level of service” said Denny Edwards, president and CEO of the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau. “The influx of people to the Raleigh area once the new Raleigh Convention Center, new hotels and attractions open will be tremendous, and we want to provide each and every one of them a positive experience from the time they land at RDU International Airport to checking in at their hotel and eating at area restaurants.”

Wake County is undergoing a \$3 billion renaissance, most notably the Raleigh Convention Center opening in September 2008 and the 400-room Raleigh Marriott City Center will create more than 1,000 new positions in the tourism industry. Due to the increase in services needed to accommodate new employees as well as visitors and meeting attendees to the area, Customer Care for the Hospitality Industry training courses are not the only part of the Community Hospitality Partnership; destination education and job placement are other components which will launch in the coming months.

The Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau, as the official destination marketing organization of Raleigh and Wake County, accelerates sustainable economic growth and development by increasing visitor and convention business.