



## **Press Release – For Immediate Release**

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## **Professional Association of Travel Hosts Launches Membership Campaign: Organization Created to Set Industry Standards and Provide Consolidated Leadership**

**Chicago, IL –January 24, 2007:** PATH, the Professional Association of Travel Hosts, is actively seeking new host agency operator members. The value of joining PATH is the ability to network with other host agencies and for host agencies to potentially reach new members through its association with PATH. The membership fee is \$300 annually and first-time members must pay an additional \$50 for an independent background check.

“Everyone on the board has undergone the same rigorous membership application process to ensure that the organization’s high standards are upheld,” said Andi McClure-Mysza, a charter board member of PATH and president of MTravel.com, the Independent Contractor Division of Montrose Travel. “The host agency business has evolved dramatically over the last few years and we want to work together with all hosts to ensure that PATH-member hosts benefit from our organization and from what we believe will become PATH’s ‘Good Housekeeping’s Seal of Approval.’”

The host agency model has grown and diversified over the recent years, both in numbers of host agencies and in the numbers of independent and home-based agents that these hosts serve. Some estimates show the number of host agencies between 250 and 300 businesses.

PATH was formed in 2006 with several leading host agency owners joining together to discuss the need for a forum for hosts. Through the course of several meetings, an executive board was elected, by-laws written and committees formed to conduct the work of the organization. The complete mission of the organization is covered in the bylaws, but some of the key reasons for forming this new professional organization was to gather the best practices from across the industry, to provide a set of industry standards to ensure the integrity of host agency operations and to help independent and home-based agents understand the value of host agencies as they investigate choosing the most suitable host agency partner.

The charter board of directors includes:

- Peter Stilphen, MCC, PATH President and CEO of Coral Sands Travel
- Nancy Peklo-Nosal, PATH Vice President & Chairperson of Host Agency Membership Committee, Design Travel, Inc.
- Tony Gagliano, PATH Treasurer, Travel Planners International
- Anita Pagliasso, PATH Executive Board Member & Secretary, President & CEO of Ticket To Travel
- Andi McClure-Mysza, PATH PR and Supplier Membership, President of MTravel.com, the Independent Contractor Division of Montrose Travel
- Donnie Ayres, Atlas Tour & Travel
- Jennifer Dugan, Dugan's Travels, LLC
- Robbert van Bloemendaal, IC Travel Host
- Harvey Siamon, Incentive Connection Travel
- Pam Miller, Magellan 360
- Rose Snyder, Uniglobe Travel USA

To maintain their high standards, PATH members must hold to several bylaws, including:

- Must not market their service emphasis on Travel Agent discounts and benefits.
- Must be a member of ARC, CLIA or IATAN and be in good standing.
- Has/have minimum of three years in travel operating primarily as a “Host” Agency, and must have a minimum of 10 Independent Contractor Agents under written contract.
- Must not market their services as part of a consumer recruitment process with benefits resembling a multi-level marketing scheme.
- Must certify that there are no pending travel related lawsuits concerning the payment of agent commissions and/or fraudulent practices.

“We’ve got an energetic and committed executive committee that will work diligently to support this membership campaign,” explained Peter Stilphen, PATH President and CEO of Coral Sands Travel.

“PATH will be able to provide a voice for its members and working together we will be able to forge a future that benefits our members and the travel industry as a whole.”

### **About PATH**

PATH, Professional Association of Travel Hosts, is the only host agency-driven organization in the travel industry and it is a valuable resource for independent and home-based agents that currently work with a host agency or are planning to choose a host agency. PATH’s membership includes both host agencies and travel suppliers and more information is available at [www.pathonline.travel](http://www.pathonline.travel) or by calling Host Agency Membership Committee person Nancy Peklo-Nosal with Design Travel at 847 577 7930 ext. 202.