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UF Tourism Crisis Management Institute hosts Crisis Management symposium for Florida destinations

GAINESVILLE, FL -- The Tourism Crisis Management Institute at the University of Florida hosted a symposium on Tourism Crisis Management for Destinations on June 25 at the Hilton University of Florida Conference Center in conjunction with the Florida Association of Convention and Visitor’s Bureau’s Destination Marketing Industry Summit. The symposium was facilitated by Elaine McLaughlin and Dr. Lori Pennington-Gray.

Attendees included representation from Florida Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVB), Tourism Development Councils, and County Chambers of Commerce all with tourism crisis management responsibilities.

The institute presented a four-step model crisis management model to assist tourism industry professionals with crisis planning. Two research studies were also presented including preparedness by destination management organizations at both the national level and within Florida.

A four-person panel comprised of Pam Brown, Sales Manager, The Beaches of Fort Myers and Sanibel Convention and Visitors Bureau, Bud Nocera, CEO of Visit Florida, Inc., Rose Rundle, Director of Harborside Event Center in Fort Myers, and Roland Loog, Executive Director of Visit Gainesville, discussed various crisis management strategies they have used during a crisis.

“It (the symposium) was a good exchange of ideas. The round table discussion was very beneficial. It seems that all of us are concerned with similar issues and are looking for similar solutions,” said Jack Wert, Executive Director of the Naples Marco Island CVB.

The symposium concluded with small group sessions where attendees discussed planning challenges with government, accommodations, and the potential for developing mutual aid agreements where bureaus and chambers can provide assistance to each other during crises.

Ann Sternal, executive director of the Ocala Marion County Convention and Visitors Bureau said, “It (the symposium) was an excellent seminar and very beneficial. We do not have a plan in place in Ocala. It provides us with information we need to start developing a plan. I am very impressed with the work of UF Tourism Crisis Institute that has been accomplished and moving forward in this important area.”
For more information, please visit www.tourismcrisis.com.

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