



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN THE TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY: NEWPORT BEACH & COMPANY STAFF IS RECOGNIZED FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS**

Prestigious awards and certifications attained by five individuals from notable travel industry associations

**NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA (August 10, 2023)** – Newport Beach & Company (NB&Co), the renown destination marketing agency for the city of Newport Beach, is thrilled to announce the commendable accomplishments of five exceptional individuals in the travel and tourism sector. Notably, three team members, including President & CEO Gary Sherwin, will be recognized at the 2023 California Travel Association (CalTravel) Summit on September 21, 2023 in Monterey, CA. Additionally, two members of the Visit Newport Beach sales team achieved the esteemed Certified Destination Management Executive (CDME) certification, further solidifying their status as visionary leaders in the industry. These accolades serve as a testament to the team’s unwavering commitment and effectiveness in driving visitation, increasing hotel occupancy, booking meetings and boosting visitor spending in Newport Beach.

#### **BRAD BURLINGAME AWARD (CalTravel, 2023)**

##### **Gary Sherwin, CDME, APR President & CEO**

The Brad Burlingame Award recognizes an individual or an organization member who has elevated travel and tourism advocacy in California by setting an example of commitment, generosity, and effectiveness. Gary Sherwin has been a well-respected leader in California’s tourism industry for decades, holding key positions with multiple DMOs across Southern California. When CalTravel’s Political Action Committee (PAC) formed over 25 years ago, Gary was one of the PAC’s founding trustees and biggest proponents—predicting the need for the travel and tourism industry to increase its influence, visibility, and credibility among elected officials.

Today, Gary continues to advocate for the PAC, making certain it remains a top priority for CalTravel and its membership. He currently serves as Co-Chair of the PAC Trustees, helping to drive revenue growth and direct contribution strategy to ensure CalTravel maximizes its impact in Sacramento. In early 2023, Gary and his NB&Co team, in partnership with The Resort at Pelican Hill, generously hosted CalTravel’s highest-grossing (and largest attendance!) board meeting and PAC fundraiser honoring retired U.S. Travel Association CEO Roger Dow, in Newport Beach.

#### **30 & UNDER EMERGING LEADER AWARDS (CalTravel, 2023)**

The 30 & Under Emerging Leader Awards recognize individual members, 30 years old or under, who have contributed through their individual efforts, to the promotion of travel, tourism, and hospitality in California. These exceptional individuals have demonstrated the skills, talents, attitudes, and initiative that are the hallmarks of emerging leaders.

##### **Megan Johns**



### **Communications Manager**

Megan Johns is an accomplished public relations expert who passionately brings the captivating narrative of Newport Beach to life on a global stage. With a proven track record in media relations, strategic planning, and creative content development, Megan is committed to showcasing the destination's allure and driving tourism. Her role encompasses curating Newport Beach's story for specific audiences, securing media placements across local and international outlets, and skillfully executing NB&Co's PR strategy. Megan crafts compelling media materials, press releases, leisure stories, and orchestrates media FAMS. With an innate ability to uncover unique opportunities and a dedication to genuine storytelling, Megan is unwaveringly focused on propelling Newport Beach to a coveted spot on every traveler's list.

### **Daniela Baldwin Vega Social Media Manager**

Daniela Baldwin Vega is a dynamic social media aficionado, spearheading Visit Newport Beach's digital narrative with ease. With a keen eye for strategic planning, she manages the destination's social strategy, seamlessly maneuvering across platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, and Pinterest. Her creative powers shine through content creation as she expertly directs social videos and photos, while her influencer relations expertise encompasses scouting, negotiating, coordinating, and managing content deliverables. Daniela's skillful management of social giveaways, creation of dynamic graphics, and dedication to tracking trends and KPIs make her an essential architect of Newport Beach's compelling digital presence.

### **CERTIFIED DESTINATION MANAGEMENT EXECUTIVE (CDME)**

Last month at the Destinations International Annual Convention in Dallas, two of Visit Newport Beach's national account directors, Michelle Devine and Enrique Paulo, graduated and earned their CDME certification, which is the tourism industry's highest individual educational achievement. The program prepares senior executives to thrive in a constantly changing environment with a focus on vision, leadership, productivity and the implementation of business strategies. With the completion of the program, these destination organization leaders are able to approach challenges from a multi-disciplinary perspective. Gary Sherwin, currently serving as the chair of Destinations International's Certified Destination Management Executive Board, provided a recognizable presence to assist them throughout the academic journey.

All headshots are available at the link [HERE](#).

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### **ABOUT NEWPORT BEACH & COMPANY/VISIT NEWPORT BEACH:**

Founded in January 2013, Newport Beach & Company is a non-profit organization established to serve as the official marketing agency for the city of Newport Beach. The agency brings together all of the marketing entities connected to the Newport Beach brand and is designed to oversee separate business



units that include Visit Newport Beach, Celebrate Newport Beach, Enterprise Newport Beach and Newport Beach TV. For more information, please go to [VisitNewportBeach.com](http://VisitNewportBeach.com).

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