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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**VISIT CALIFORNIA ANNOUNCES IN-STATE
TRAVEL WRITING AWARD WINNERS**

Grand prize trip stay at Cavallo Point, San Francisco awarded to Meetings Focus

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (May 6, 2014) — Visit California has proudly announced the winners of its Second Annual Eureka! Travel Writing Awards.

After carefully reviewing nearly 60 entries submitted across six categories, judges, including guest judge and industry professional Laurie Armstrong, Media Relations Director for the U.S. and Canada at the San Francisco Travel Association, named articles written in Meetings Focus, Washington Post, Trekaroo.com and American Forces Radio Network among this year's winners.

The second-annual Eureka! Travel Writing Awards honor remarkable editorial work in 2013 by California-based travel writers, showcasing the state's natural beauty and enviable lifestyle. Visit California's panel of judges carefully selects winning editorial contributions that have inspired visitors to enjoy the state's laid-back atmosphere, diverse regional landscapes, distinct culinary culture and engaging activities. By enticing visitors to explore both iconic and undiscovered destinations statewide, these storytellers communicate valuable information to potential travelers throughout North America.

"Many travel writers, bloggers and broadcast producers have traveled the globe, but choose to call the Golden State home," said Visit California President & CEO Caroline Beteta. "The pride these media have for California's diversity and culture truly shines through in these homegrown stories, which inspire visitors to come and dream big in California."

Maria Lenhart of Meetings Focus magazine won the Grand Prize for her story "California Land of Plenty," which highlights The Golden State as a perfect travel destination for successful business meetings and events. The piece was submitted in the "Magazine Feature" category and

achieved the overall highest score of any submission. For her work, Lenhart will enjoy a luxurious two-night stay at Cavallo Point in historic Sausalito, and a dinner for two at the lodge's acclaimed Murray Circle restaurant — one of the Bay Area's top culinary destinations. Cavallo Point features breathtaking views of the Golden Gate Bridge and the San Francisco Bay; certified LEED Gold, the elegant, environmentally sustainable luxury lodge has 142 Historic and Contemporary rooms and suites, most with fireplaces.

Winners by category are:

Category 1 - Magazine Feature Placement:

***Winner:** Maria Lenhart, Meetings Focus, "California Land of Plenty"

Hometown: San Francisco

***Grand Prize Winner**

Category 2 - Newspaper Feature Placement:

Winner: Chaney Kwak, Washington Post, "San Francisco's Dogpatch, mangy no more"

Hometown: San Francisco

Category 3 - Digital Feature Placement:

Winner: Kristine, Dworkin, HiltonMomVoyage.com, "Silicon Valley Tour – Adventures for Geeks of all Ages"

Hometown: Mountain View

Category 4 - Multi Media Placement:

Winner: Michelle McCoy, Trekaroo, "Take a California History Trip with Kids: Sacramento and Gold Country"

Hometown: Laguna Hills

Category 5 – Broadcast Placement:

Winner: Paul Lasley, American Forces Radio Network and OnTravel.com

Hometown: Santa Ana

Category 6 – Thematic: Lifestyle

Winner: Ingrid, Hart, Book: "My Year in California"

Hometown: Costa Mesa

Award Methodology:

California-based writers, editors and producers were encouraged to enter the competition with a qualifying submission published between Jan. 1, 2013, and Dec. 31, 2013, that featured California in an outlet whose readers live outside the Golden State. Entries were evaluated and scored by four industry experts in three equally weighted categories: creativity, quality and content. The highest score for each entry is a total 30 points, 10 points for each scoring category. To define category winners, each judge's scores were added together for a total score. The Grand Prize winner had the highest total score of any entry in any category.

Visit California (formerly known as the California Travel & Tourism Commission) is a non-profit organization with a mission to develop and maintain marketing programs - in partnership with the state's travel industry - that keep California top-of-mind as a premier travel destination. According to Visit California, travel and tourism expenditures totaled \$109.6 billion in 2013 in California, supporting jobs for 965,800 Californians and generating \$7.1 billion in state and local tax revenues. For more information about Visit California and for a free California Official State Visitor's Guide, go to www.visitcalifornia.com. For story ideas, media information, downloadable images and more, go to media.visitcalifornia.com.

About Cavallo Point – The Lodge At The Golden Gate

Featuring breathtaking views of the Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco Bay and the city beyond, Cavallo Point is located in historic Fort Baker in Sausalito, California, just minutes from San Francisco. Certified LEED Gold, the elegant, environmentally sustainable luxury lodge offers 142 Historic and Contemporary rooms and suites, most with fireplaces. Murray Circle restaurant, one of the Bay Area's top culinary destinations, features refined seasonal cuisine that showcases its rich Marin County roots, complemented by a stellar wine cellar. Farley Bar offers casual food, spirits, and fun. Also onsite are a premier Healing Arts Center & Spa with heated outdoor meditation pool, the Cooking School, Mercantile, and art gallery. Located within 75,000+ acres of the Golden Gate National Parks, the lodge offers hiking, biking, complimentary yoga and myriad activities nearby. An extraordinary experience for couples, families, groups and individuals, Cavallo Point offers "Nature, Nurture, Culture, Adventure."

– *Rated # 5 Top Resort in U.S., World's Best Awards 2013, Travel+Leisure* –

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