



Media Alert: December 11, 2013

Virginia Green Travel Star Award Winners Recognized at 1st Annual Virginia Green Conference

The 1st annual Virginia Green Conference & Awards Celebration was held at the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Research Center in Virginia Beach on December 3 & 4, 2013. Virginia Green recognized 14 program partners in 11 different categories who received the **Virginia Green Travel Star Award**. The program also recognized 8 additional partners who received *Virginia Green Travel Leader Awards*.

Virginia Green is Virginia's voluntary program to encourage green practices in the state's tourism industry. The program is run through a partnership between the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and the Virginia Hospitality & Travel Association.

The conference featured the award winners and an announcement that Virginia officially considers itself a "green travel destination". More than 1400 tourism operators have now self-certified that they are engaged in a wide range of green practices and commitments. The program also challenges green-minded consumers to *Travel Green* by choosing to support Virginia Green partners, and they can find Virginia Green partners wherever they travel in Virginia.

"Virginia Green partners are having a positive economic impact on Virginia's tourism industry as our partners are realizing significant costs savings and increased business," says Tom Griffin, Virginia Green Coordinator. "Additionally, Virginia Green partners have significantly reduced their annual environmental impacts by more than 20,000 tons of wastes through recycling, 290 million kwh of electricity use, and 850 million gallons of water use. Our award winners have implemented innovative projects and programs that exemplify the voluntary commitments of the program participants."

More than 125 participants attended the program's first annual conference, which also featured technical workshops, a clean-up, a regional tourism partnerships panel, and the awards luncheon. This is the 3rd year of the Virginia Green Travel Star awards.

The 2013 Virginia Green Travel Star Award winners are:

- Green Event of the Year (tie):
 - [2013 Kingsmill Championship](#) (Williamsburg)
 - [ASAE Foundation 2013 Springtime Golf & Tennis Invitational at Lansdowne Resort](#)
- Green Restaurant of the Year: [Maple Avenue Restaurant](#) (Vienna)
- Green Hotel of the Year (tie):
 - [Hilton Garden Inn Downtown Richmond](#)
 - [Westin Richmond](#)
- Supporting Organization of the Year: [Sandbridge Blue Realty Services](#)
- Green Conference Center of the Year: [Virginia Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau](#)
- Green Innovative Project of the Year:
 - [Virginia Living Museum](#) (Newport News)

- [Virginia Commonwealth University 810 Market](#) (Richmond)
- Green Winery of the Year: [North Gate Vineyard](#) (Purcellville)
- Green Supplier of the Year: [RD Fresh](#) (Newport News)
- Green Campground of the Year: [Williamsburg KOA](#)
- Green Bed & Breakfast of the Year: [Oak Grove Plantation Bed and Breakfast](#) (Cluster Springs)
- Green Attraction of the Year: [Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center](#) (Virginia Beach)

The program also recognized seven partners as *Virginia Green Travel Leaders*:

- Innovative Outreach Projects:
 - [Adventure Kayak Tours](#) (Chesapeake)
 - [Roanoke Civic Center](#)
- Green Bed & Breakfasts:
 - [The Collins House Inn](#) (Marion)
 - [Inn at Riverbend](#) (Pearisburg)
 - [Clay Corner Inn](#) (Blacksburg)
- Green Restaurant: [Panache Catering Company](#) (Middletown)
- Green Hotel: [Holiday Inn Express & Suites](#) (Warrenton)
- Green Supporting Organization: [Sandbridge Realty](#)

The Virginia Green's consumer-focused marketing is hosted by the Virginia Tourism Corporation and is available at www.VirginiaGreenTravel.org.

For additional questions, please contact Virginia Green Coordinator Tom Griffin at (804) 986-9119 or VirginiaGreen@Virginia.org.