



## San Diego Convention Center Open for Business

Staff, attendees mobilize in wake of fires

Attendees are Encouraged to Come for the Convention, Stay for the Vacation

SAN DIEGO, Oct. 27 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Officials from the San Diego Convention Center Corporation are mobilizing resources to ensure attendees, exhibitors and meeting planners are updated on the impact of the devastating fires in the San Diego County region on events occurring or planned over the next two weeks at the downtown Convention Center. The more than 6,000 attendees participating in the American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) annual meeting (<http://www.ashg.org/genetics/ashg/menu-annmeet.shtml>) at the downtown convention center will end their meeting today but not before taking extra efforts to help local citizens hard hit by the fires.

"Our team, many who were forced to evacuate their homes over the last several days, continues to go above and beyond to ensure guests attending events at the Convention Center receive all the support and assistance they need to ensure they have a successful event," said Carol Wallace, President and CEO of the San Diego Convention Center Corporation. "Our hearts and thoughts are with those who have suffered emotionally, and in many instances, those who have suffered great personal loss due to the devastating fires of the past week. We are incredibly proud and thankful by the leadership and heroics demonstrated by everyone from our firefighters and police, to our next door neighbors," she added. The Convention Center has provided a direct link to local relief efforts coordinated by the American Red Cross on its web page at <http://www.visitsandiego.com>.

"We have been deeply touched and appreciative of the incredible efforts made by ASHG attendees, exhibitors, as well as ASHG meeting organizers who have gone above and beyond in their efforts to support the relief efforts currently underway in San Diego," said Wallace. Event attendees freed up hotel rooms for local evacuees by doubling-up on hotel rooms, volunteered to provide medical assistance to evacuees, and ASHG has launched a relief fund to help provide additional resources to local relief efforts. Information on those efforts can be located at <http://www.ashg.org>.

"While some have questioned our decision to stay open, it is important to remember that the conventions held in our building are planned and contracted four to five years in advance and attract hundreds of thousands of out-of-town attendees annually. San Diegans who work in local hotels, restaurants, shops, museums, etc. depend on these events and the tourism industry, for their livelihood," added Wallace.

Events scheduled to occur in the building over the next 10 days will generate nearly \$2.5 million in tax revenues to the City of San Diego to support public safety and fire protection. Only one large group, Sharp Healthcare's annual employee meeting which was expected to attract 12-14,000 local attendees, cancelled their event at the Convention Center due to the fires.

On Sunday, Oct. 28th, the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), with approximately 2000 attendees, will begin a three day conference in the Convention Center. Following NAHRO, the Society for Neuroscience, with 32,000 attendees, will begin meetings in the Convention Center, from November 3-7, 2007. A complete list of upcoming events can be found at <http://www.visitsandiego.com>.

The San Diego Convention Center Corporation is a public benefit

corporation created by the City of San Diego. The Corporation is exclusively responsible for marketing, managing and operating the Convention Center. In its 18-year history, the Center has generated nearly \$13 billion in economic impact, over \$270 million in tax revenues and continues to serve as San Diego's premier gathering place

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**Related links:**

- <http://www.visitsandiego.com>
- <http://www.ashg.org>
- <http://www.ashg.org/genetics/ashg/menu-annmeet.shtml/>

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