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## **Statement by George D. Szigeti, President and CEO, Hawai'i Tourism Authority**

### **RE: National Showcase for Hawai'i Bowl, Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic**

**HONOLULU** – George D. Szigeti, president and CEO of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), issued the following statement about the importance to the Hawaiian Islands of ESPN's support and telecasts of the Hawai'i Bowl and Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic, Dec. 22-25.

"Sports fans nationally will be seeing a lot of Hawai'i's enticing warmth and spectacular natural beauty on ESPN over four straight days culminating on Christmas, with many undoubtedly envisioning how they can join us in the Islands to escape the freezing cold of winter.

"ESPN's support of the Hawai'i Bowl and Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic are what makes the quality of these holiday events so worthwhile to the college student-athletes, their families and fans. Many make their first trip to Hawai'i because of this bowl game and basketball tournament.

"Mahalo to Pete Derzis and his team at ESPN for their belief in the merits of the Hawai'i Bowl and Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic. These sports events are a magnificent showcase of what makes the Hawaiian Islands such a memorable destination for travelers to experience: Our cultural diversity, hospitality, beautiful environment and aloha spirit. HTA is proud to join ESPN as a partner in sponsoring these events for all that they mean to the State of Hawai'i and our residents.

"Our congratulations go to the University of Hawai'i football team, Head Coach Nick Rolovich and Athletic Director David Matlin for playing in this year's Hawai'i Bowl. The whole state will be cheering on our beloved Rainbow Warriors as they cap off a successful comeback season. We will also be rooting hard for the UH basketball team and Head Coach Eran Ganot, as they face another tough field of teams competing in the Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic. Happy holidays from Hawai'i."

#### **About the Hawai'i Tourism Authority**

The [Hawai'i Tourism Authority](http://www.hawaii-tourism-authority.org) is responsible for strategically managing the State of Hawai'i's marketing initiatives to support tourism. HTA's goal is to optimize tourism's benefits for Hawai'i, while being attentive to the interests of travelers, the community and visitor industry. Established in 1998 to support Hawai'i's leading industry and largest employer, HTA continually strives to help ensure the sustainability of tourism's success.

For more information about HTA, please visit [www.hawaii-tourism-authority.org](http://www.hawaii-tourism-authority.org). Follow updates about HTA on Facebook, Twitter (@HawaiiHTA) and its YouTube Channel.

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