

## PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hotel Website: [Hilton Columbia Convention Center, SC](#)  
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### Hilton® Columbia Convention Center Groundbreaking

**On November 22, 2005** was the official groundbreaking of the new Hilton® Columbia Convention Center hotel in the heart of the Congaree Vista District, Columbia Downtown Historic District, South Carolina. The hotel is the closest lodging construction project to the new Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

The 222-room Hilton® at the new Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center was first announced in the beginning of 2004, just one block from our Hampton Inn® Columbia Downtown Historic District (cost: circa \$125,000/key inclusive of \$3 million city subsidy and land from city).



Construction of the Hilton® Columbia is scheduled for completion in the **Spring of 2007**. When completed, the hotel will feature 222 guestrooms including 2 presidential suites, 14 King Suites, and 4 junior suites. The hotel will also boast the first Ruth Chris Steakhouse in South Carolina, the Ruth's Chris operator will lease and provide 100% of food & beverage services.

Hospitality America is partnering with Windsor / Aughtry Company, Inc. to develop and manage the property. Since founded by Chris Cargen, Hospitality America is a nationally recognized management

company for producing occupancies, average rates, REVPARS and GOP's substantially exceeding original performance and system-wide averages.

Hilton® Hotels Corporation is recognized internationally as a preeminent hospitality company. Members of the Hilton HHonors® guest reward program can earn HHonors® points in addition to airline miles for every qualifying stay at the Hilton® Columbia.

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#### About Hilton® Family of Hotels

Hilton® is the proud flagship brand of Hilton® Hotels Corporation and the most recognized name in the global lodging industry. Conrad Hilton purchased his first hotel in Cisco, Texas back in 1919. Since that time they have grown to over 500 hotels in cities all over the world, the Hilton® company also develops, owns, manages or franchises more than 2,100 hotels, resorts and vacation ownership properties. The Hilton® brand include Hilton®,



*Hilton Columbia Groundbreaking Ceremony. From left: Chip Davis - Regional Manager, Chris Cargen - Hospitality America, and Tony Tam - General Manager.*

Conrad® Hotels, Doubletree®, Embassy Suites®, Hampton Inn®, Hampton Inn & Suites®, Hilton Garden Inn®, Hilton Grand Vacations Club®, Homewood Suites by Hilton®, and Scandic®. The Hilton® Family of Hotels implements several quality assurance programs, including substantial investment in consumer research annually. With these programs, business and leisure travelers alike have even more reason to say, "Take Me to the Hilton"™. Visit the [Hilton website](#).

**About Windsor/Aughtry Company, Inc.**

Windsor/Aughtry Company, Inc. was established in 1988 as a result of the merger between Windsor Properties, Inc. and The Aughtry Company. These companies had an established history of residential and commercial real estate development, respectively, and their combination formed an organization capable of offering a full range of real estate development and brokerage services within their market area of South Carolina and western North Carolina. There exists well over 200 years of combined experience in the real estate industry among the three principals and key employees of the Company. Visit the [Windsor/Aughtry Company website](#)

**About Hospitality America, Inc.**

Hospitality America, Inc. ("HA") is a management group with seasoned and successful experience throughout the Southeast US in hotel development, management and marketing. HA specializes in management of upscale limited service inns, mostly Hilton® Hotel Corporation branded Hampton Inns® and Hampton Inn & Suites®. Hospitality America managed Hampton Inns® achieve occupancies, average room rates, RevPAR's and Gross Operating Profits substantially exceeding original proformas and Hampton Inn® system-wide averages. Hospitality America ended 2004 with eleven hotels and 1,294 rooms under management in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. Several other inns are either in construction or funded pre-development stage. Hospitality America is recognized as one of the top-100 hotel management companies as published annually by Hotel Business and ranked as the #1 Top Hotel Management Company By Occupancy in 2003 and the #3 Top Hotel Management Company By Occupancy in 2004. Visit [Hospitality America, Inc. website](#)

**About Ruth's Chris® Steak House Inc.**

Ruth's Chris® Steak House was founded in 1965 when Ruth Fertel mortgaged her home for \$22,000 to purchase the "Chris Steak House," a 60-seat restaurant located near the New Orleans Fair Grounds racetrack. Forty years after our founding, our success continues to be driven by our adherence to Ruth's core values, which are to deliver the highest quality food, beverages and service in a warm and inviting atmosphere. In that time, we have also received numerous awards, including being named "America's Best Steakhouse" in September 2004 by Restaurants & Institutions magazine. Today, we boast nearly 90 Ruth's Chris® Steak House restaurants, including ten international franchisee-owned restaurants in Mexico, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Canada. Visit the [Ruth's Chris Steak House Inc. website](#)

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