



## **HALEKULANI OKINAWA LAUNCHES CORAL NURTURING MARINE ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION PROGRAM**

**Okinawa, Japan – April 22, 2020 – [Halekulani Okinawa](#)**, the award-winning luxury resort located in the Okinawa Kaigan Quasi-National Park in Onna Village, a region known for its abundant nature and coral reefs, today launched its new Coral Nurturing program, a sustainability initiative dedicated to marine environment conservation. The new program was developed as part of Halekulani Okinawa’s corporate responsibility efforts in support of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Onna Village, whose pledge to become a “Village of Coral” has earned the community its designation as a “Future City” for its superior approach to sustainability.

“At Halekulani Okinawa, we have been dedicated to providing our guests with memorable experiences since our opening in July 2019,” said Jun Yoshie, General Manager of Halekulani Okinawa. “With the debut of our Coral Nurturing program, we hope that both new and returning guests will participate in this exclusive experience to learn and gain an even better understanding of the natural marine environment surrounding us, and the importance of coral conservation. As a member of the Onna Village community, it is an honor to contribute to these SDGs initiatives.”

According to Professor Hideyuki Yamashiro of the University of the Ryukyus’ Tropical Biosphere Research Center, more than half of all coral species inhabiting the world are located in Okinawa, with many unique and distinct corals found in the southern Okinawa region, including the waters around Halekulani Okinawa. Coral reefs, which account for only 0.2% of the world’s ocean but 25% of marine life, have acted as natural breakwaters for the Okinawan islands, protecting the land and providing abundant marine resources since ancient times. Recently, numerous factors such as global climate change, plastic and land pollution, have adversely impacted the coral reefs in Okinawa and contributed to the deterioration of the marine environment.

In alignment with Halekulani Okinawa’s mission of contributing to the conservation of the local environment, and in support of the UN’s SDG “Life Below Waters” conservation goal, the new Coral Nurturing Program aims to restore the coral reefs by planting corals in the waters around the hotel where corals have died. Guests of the hotel are invited to participate in this 90-minute program, which includes a series of hands-on activities for both children and adults and takes place every Wednesday morning. The experience begins with an introduction on the rich

connections of coral reefs and other creatures and proper marine environment conservation, followed by the opportunity to participate in the seedling cultivation offshore and observe the planting process from the boat. The program is funded by the profits generated from sales of Halekulani Okinawa's eco-bags, which are made from recycled PET (plastic) bottles and sold at the hotel's on-property boutique.

Professor Yamashiro added: "As we continue to raise awareness of the threats our coral reefs are facing, global efforts such as the UN's SDGs have become an increasing priority. I am confident that Halekulani Okinawa's new Coral Nurturing program will support Onna Village's mission to protecting and regrowing the coral reefs in Okinawa."

Halekulani Okinawa developed this initiative in collaboration with Professor Yamashiro and the local Onna Village Fisheries Cooperative, who contributed their knowledge of coral planting coral seeding and collection from the regional seas. Halekulani Okinawa plans to continue strengthening its relationship with the local community through additional social contribution programs and activities, while continuing to provide unforgettable and educational experiences for guests.

For more information on Halekulani Okinawa's Coral Nurturing program, please visit [www.okinawa.halekulani.com](http://www.okinawa.halekulani.com).

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### **About Halekulani Okinawa**

Halekulani Okinawa, the second hotel from the leading Hawaiian resort of the same name and first outside Hawaii, is a luxury beach resort located in Onna Village on the main island of Okinawa. Featuring a variety of accommodations built to emphasize the geographic features of its surroundings, Halekulani Okinawa sits on 32 acres of lush land within the Okinawa Kaigan Quasi-National Park and faces approximately one mile of coastline. Halekulani Okinawa is home to a diverse array of facilities including nine unique restaurants and bars. In addition, the property boasts the prestigious SpaHalekulani, a fitness center, luxury boutique, over 2,550 ft<sup>2</sup> of meeting and convention space and five swimming pools, one of which is adorned with nearly 1.5 million mosaic tiles in the shape of Halekulani's signature Cattleya orchid. Halekulani Okinawa is the third member in Japan to join The Leading Hotels of the World, an exclusive collection of the world's most extraordinary luxury establishments

### **Media Contact**

EVINS Communications  
Halekulani-Okinawa@evins.com  
(212) 377-3570