



# CREATIVE GROUP

**AWARD CATEGORY** EXCELLENCE IN INCENTIVE TRAVEL: NORTH AMERICA

**PROGRAM NAME** PRESIDENT'S ACHIEVEMENT 2024

**CLIENT** CDW





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This recognition is a testament to the strength of our partnership with an incredible client and the creativity of our team. What makes it especially meaningful is that it celebrates people — their achievements, their connections, and the experiences that bring them together in unforgettable ways.”

- Hillary Smith, Global Head of Creative & Marketing,  
Creative Group

## New approaches to defining incentive travel

**Congratulations to Creative Group, recipients of a 2026 SITE Crystal Award for a Hawaiian program that smartly reflects top incentive travel trends**

At first glance, Creative Group’s award-winning 2025 incentive looks like a textbook program: featuring two waves of qualifiers that, combined, equated to nearly 800 participants from a Fortune 500 global technology company looking to enjoy a rewarding springtime program in Hawai‘i.

What makes this program well-deserving of a SITE Crystal Award, however, is Creative Group’s commitment to smartly taking on broad trends and best practices shaping the future of incentive travel and delivering personalized, high-touch experiences.

For qualifiers in both program waves, Creative Group focused on what would deliver the best guest experience, leaning into the program’s “It’s your time” theme to guide decision-making. The program needed to recognize both sales and support team members, fostering authentic cross-functional connections that will help drive future performance.

The Creative Group team designed sustainable, scalable branding & scenic elements as a way to set a consistent tone across both program waves. One standout example of this was the group’s “Aloha postcard” activation, which proved a huge hit with attendees. The postcard theme was visually reinforced with life-sized “wish-you-were-here” photo props for participants to pose with, too.

These visuals provided the perfect selfie moment for an increasingly online qualifier base — with first-time attendees accounting for nearly 40 percent of program participants, reflecting a strong pipeline of emerging talent for the client.

Creative Group displayed other strengths in catering to this mixed group. One day of the program, for instance, featured a ukulele strum session. Creative Group structured this as a self-paced cultural activation, with participants able to drop in and spend as much or little time as they wanted, at their leisure — or opt for completely open agenda time instead.

Any leftover strum session instruments that qualifiers did not want to take home with them were donated to a local school music program: in line with increased expectations for incentive programs to leave a positive impact in their host communities. Creative Group also provided non-alcoholic beverages during the program — another nod to inclusivity and in line with wider food & beverage patterns emerging across incentive programs more generally.

As a final challenge, Creative Group was also asked to deliver a once-in-a-lifetime experience for about three dozen of the very top-performers taking part in the program. The team tapped another broader incentive trend, demand for immersive storytelling and bespoke destination experiences — deciding to treat this elite group to a special dinner aboard the USS Missouri.

Docents provided detailed ship history chats during the evening, and the group also enjoyed a moving sunset ceremonial flag experience. Each winner also received a commemorative piece of the ship’s teak deck — a symbolic, unforgettable token of the night.

As incentive travel continues to evolve, it’s leading voices like those at Creative Group that are showing how must-have program elements can — and will — need to be continuously refreshed, re-explored, and re-imagined, for incentives that are genuinely responsive and rewarding.