



MONTEREY
CONFERENCE CENTER



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**MONTEREY CONFERENCE CENTER ANNOUNCES NEW SCULPTURE FOR THE PLAZA
DESIGNED BY LOCALLY BASED METAL SPECIALTIES**

Sculpture to Fuse Monterey's Maritime History with Contemporary Design

MONTEREY, Calif., February 16, 2017 – Just a walk away from iconic attractions Cannery Row, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Old Fisherman's Wharf and the spectacular Monterey Bay will soon be the newly renovated Monterey Conference Center. Greeting visitors as they walk onto the sparkling new plaza at the Conference Center will be a contemporary, stainless steel school of fish and streams of water. The large scale sculpture was generously donated by the Monterey Marriott and Portola Hotel & Spa, which adjoin the Conference Center.

John Dotto, owner of Monterey-based Metal Specialties, was commissioned to design and fabricate the sculpture, which will be among the new features. Dotto says he was inspired by the architecture of the new Conference Center as well as the destination's breathtaking coastline and maritime history.

"I wanted to blend Monterey's traditional maritime feel with a more contemporary approach and create a sculpture that will be interesting and inspire people to visit the Monterey Conference Center," says Dotto. "I created something organic, a piece that reflects light and captures movement as well as history. The intent was to create something that could become emblematic of Monterey."

The new sculpture on the plaza will be approximately 17 feet in diameter and 4 feet high. Each of the 1,400 fish will be about 12 to 14 inches in length and welded together at the company's location on Del Monte Avenue in Monterey. Dotto is also working in collaboration with locally-based Aqua-Jett Systems, which will be incorporating the water features.

"We have a family business here in Monterey, and this is our home. My hope is that I have created a sculpture that our community can be proud of," says Dotto.

"This sculpture will fit in perfectly with the architecture and feel of the new Monterey Conference Center and our destination as a whole," says Doug Phillips, General Manager of the Monterey Conference Center. "We have such an incredible coastal location, and it is our hope that visitors to the Conference Center will walk away feeling inspired, invigorated and refreshed."

The new sculpture will be joining the refurbished bronze statue of Don Gaspar de Portola, the first governor of California. The statue, sculpted by Fausto Blazquez, was donated by King Juan Carlos I of

Spain to the City of Monterey in 1978. The "Two Dolphins" sculpture by Big Sur artist Emile Norman will also be returning to the Conference Center. The impressive 9-foot tall piece is composed of thousands of pieces of inlaid wood and was originally unveiled in 1981. In addition, the 36-foot ceramic tile "Monterey Mural" will also be on display once again on the corner of Pacific Street and Del Monte Avenue. The festive mural, which consists of more than 600 handmade tiles, was created by artist Guillermo "Bill" Wagner Granizo and depicts the rich history of Monterey.

The new, highly-anticipated Monterey Conference Center will be a modern, LEED certified meeting facility with more than 40,000 square feet of flexible meeting space and a capacity of 3,200 people. The goal of the \$60+ million renovation project is to welcome and encourage cultural and economic prosperity for the City of Monterey.

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ABOUT MONTEREY CONFERENCE CENTER

The newly renovated Monterey Conference Center is centrally located in the City of Monterey, within steps of the waterfront and serves as a beacon to the downtown. The Conference Center will boast 40,000+ square feet of meeting space and is adjacent to the Portola Hotel and Spa and connected to the Monterey Marriott. Its ideal location also puts it within walking distance to a diverse list of iconic attractions including the Old Fisherman's Wharf and an incredible array of restaurants and shops. The Conference Center is also convenient to a number of other hotels ranging from the boutique Hotel Pacific to the Hyatt Regency Monterey Hotel and Spa as well as dozens of other area lodging options which make the facility a centerpiece for group business in the region.

ABOUT MONTEREY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is a 501©6 organization that drives tourism for Monterey County and in recent years has led the destination to record levels of growth. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in the County. The MCCVB is a partnership of the hospitality community and local governments that aims to drive business growth through compelling marketing and sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to our guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was more than \$2.7 billion in 2015, representing a 4.5 percent increase from 2014. Visitors also generated \$109 million in local tax receipts, a 7.4 percent increase and supported 24,390 jobs.