



Media Release

For Immediate Release

Whistler Welcomes Family From Extreme Makeover: Home Edition

Whistler, BC, Canada - June 21, 2007 – Whistler welcomed the ABC hit series *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* to the mountain resort, offering a fun-loving family from Hawaii five days of outdoor adventure and an exquisite stay at the Hilton Whistler Resort & Spa.

Extreme Makeover: Home Edition is a top-rated Emmy Award winning show that gives deserving families the wonderful gift of a new home, designed and built over one week while the family is whisked away on holiday. The show is consistently among the top ten most watched shows on American television, and averages 15 million viewers per episode.

“We are delighted to be able to give back to a family that is so worthy of a helping hand. It is hard to determine who benefits more from the good feelings of participating in such a deserving endeavour,” says Mark Paul, Director of Sales and Marketing for Hilton Whistler Resort & Spa.

The Akana family of six – in Whistler from June 7th to 12th – embodies the “Aloha” spirit of love and sharing. Eleven years ago Theresa Akana – affectionately known as “Momi” in her community – started a non-profit organization for struggling single moms and their kids in her hometown in Hawaii.

The Akana kids had never seen snow, so on their first day in Whistler, they flew with Pemberton Helicopters and were thrilled to land on a glacier and make their very first snowman. The kids also did a ski lesson in the Whistler Blackcomb alpine where 14-year-old Keahi proved he was a natural.

Back down in the Whistler valley, the kids took in summer activities where 12-year-old Kuulei’s highlight was conquering her fear of heights with Ziptrek Ecotours. Eight-year-old Maka loved splashing through the mud puddles on his ATV with Outdoor Adventures. The Core’s Jean-Francois Plouffe introduced the family to rock climbing and even had them reaching the top of the wall blindfolded by the end of the lesson.

The family joined Whistler River Adventures for a rafting trip down the Cheakamus River, which was made even more exciting by two black bear sightings en route to the river. Thanks to the Nanny Network, Momi and dad Ben were able to sneak away for a romantic dinner at the Bearfoot Bistro. Momi sabred a bottle of champagne before having what she called “the best meal she had ever had.”

“Whistler is an extraordinary natural playground for families, and each Whistler activity operator went above and beyond to show the Akana’s an incredible time,” says Arlene Schieven, Vice President of Marketing Services for Tourism Whistler. “We hope the Akana’s will have many

fond memories of experiencing our resort first-hand. We wish them every happiness in their new home.”

The episode featuring the Akana family’s new home and their Whistler holiday will be part of the two-hour season premiere in September. Exact air dates will be determined by ABC closer to the date.

Tourism Whistler is the member-based marketing and sales organization representing Whistler, operating the TELUS Whistler Conference Centre, the Whistler Golf Club, the Whistler Visitor Centres and tourismwhistler.com, as well as 1-800-WHISTLER and whistler.com – Whistler’s official source for visitor bookings and information. As the convention and visitors bureau for the Resort Municipality of Whistler, Tourism Whistler represents more than 7,000 members who own, manage and operate properties or businesses on resort lands including hotels, restaurants, activity operators and retail shops.

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“Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” is produced by Endemol USA, a division of Endemol Holding. David Goldberg is the president of Endemol USA. The series is executive-produced by Denise Cramsey. The show airs Sundays (8:00-9:00 p.m. ET), on the ABC Television Network.

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A photo of the Akana family is available at

[Click here for photograph](#)

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