

Global Hospitality

OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

**Greg
Juceam**

President & CEO
Extended Stay
America

**50 Most
Inspirational
People in
Global
Hospitality
& Travel**

**Property
Showcase**
Sofitel Al
Hamra Beach
Resort

**VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD**

**PUBLISHED
BY THE
INTERNATIONAL
HOSPITALITY
INSTITUTE**



CERTIFIED HOSPITALITY SALES EXECUTIVE (CHSE)

For sales and marketing executives in the
Hospitality/Travel industries.

CERTIFIED HOSPITALITY SALES MANAGER (CHSM)

For sales and marketing managers in the
Hospitality/Travel industries.

CERTIFIED SALES AND MARKETING EXECUTIVE (CSME)

For sales and marketing executives working
in any industry.

Benefits of Getting Certified

- Gain strategic sales and marketing skills to power your career and drive your organization's success.
- Enhanced professional credibility.
- Gain new competencies while enhancing current competencies.
- Professional development.

THANK YOU.



Photograph by Natalie Roberson

Published by:
The International Hospitality Institute
www.internationalhospitalityinstitute.com

My team and I at IHI are excited to bring you the October 2024 issue of Global Hospitality Magazine. This issue features two of our top award categories: The 50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality and Travel and the Top 25 Hospitality Executives to Watch in 2025.

We celebrate the professionals recognized in both award categories and thank them for their work promoting and supporting the hospitality industry and inspiring many.

Our Voices Around the World section presents an interview with Chef Andre Blaszczak, Executive Chef at the Westin Hotels Seven Miles Beach Resort, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands

This edition's Property Showcase features the newly-opened Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort in Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates, and a profile of its General Manager, Karim Abdelhamid.

Enjoy the reading!

Dr. Jeffrey O
President
International Hospitality Institute

GLOBAL HOSPITALITY MAGAZINE

PUBLISHER
INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING/PARTNERSHIPS
Denise Hall

MAGAZINE DESIGN
Anna Kuznietsova

EDITORIAL INQUIRIES
Info@InternationalHospitalityInstitute.com

MARKETING/ADVERTISING INQUIRIES
Info@IHIPrgrams.com

Celebrating hospitality excellence!



Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Calvin Stovall
Chief Experience Officer
ICONIC Presentations, LLC

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Cassie Pressley
General Manager
Hampton Inn & Suites
Biltmore Area, Asheville, NC

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

Top 25 Hospitality Executives to Watch in 2025

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Craig Carboniere, Jr.
AVP of Sales
Hospitality Milestone Inc.

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Craig Poole
President
Reading Hospitality Management, LLC

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Davonne Reeves
Founder,
The Venture Group

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Deepak Ohri
Founder & CEO
Luxury Atelier Maison Happiness (LAWH)

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Dr. Peter Ricci
Director of the Hospitality & Tourism Management program
Florida Atlantic University (FAU)

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Emily Kanders Goldfischer
Founder,
HEALTHIER

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Filip Boyen
Luxury Hospitality Advisor
Senior Advisor, Capella Hotel
Global Ambassador
Forbes Travel Guide

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Frances Kiradjian
Founder & CEO
BILLA, BILA
Dennis Boatman
Money Group
Spartanburg, TN

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Glenn Haussman
Host, No Vacancy Podcast

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE

Global Hospitality
OCTOBER 2024 ISSUE

Greg Juceam
President & CEO
Extended Stay America

Property Showcase
Sofitel AI
Hamra Beach
Resort

VOICES
AROUND
THE WORLD

50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality & Travel

PUBLISHED BY THE INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY INSTITUTE





CONTENTS



*Karim Abdelhamid, GM,
Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort,
Al Ras Khaimah, UAE*



*Westin Hotels Seven Miles Beach Resort,
Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands*

- 10** Voices Around the World: An Interview with Chef Andre Blaszczak of the Westin Hotels Seven Miles Beach Resort, Cayman Island, Grand Cayman
- 14** Property Showcase: Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort, Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates
- 35** General Manager Spotlight: Karim Abdelhamid, GM of the Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort
- 38** 25 Top Hospitality Executives to Watch in 2025
- 56** 50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality and Travel

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



HR | CONSTRUCTION
GROUP

ABOUT HR CONSTRUCTION GROUP

HR Construction Group is a family-owned and licensed general contractor providing full-scale construction services nationwide. In 2022, we celebrated our 20th anniversary with over \$1 billion in revenue. Fast-track commercial work is our specialty. Whether you need simple or extensive renovations, additions, converting a property into another use or brand, exterior renovations, mechanical upgrades, and more, the experts at HR Construction Group will get it done right and within budget.

Every project is estimated thoroughly to ensure the job is done right. That sometimes means we are not the lowest bid but the lowest risk because we ensure the job is quoted correctly to minimize or eliminate costly change orders. Our financial duty is to estimate our projects honestly and upfront so our clients know exactly what they will cost. Our estimate will be accurate for getting the job done right and not just winning the bid.

HR Construction Group can complete your entire project from start to finish. Our in-house management team, project managers, field superintendents, administrative staff, and self-performing tradespeople ensure our projects are consistently on budget and schedule.

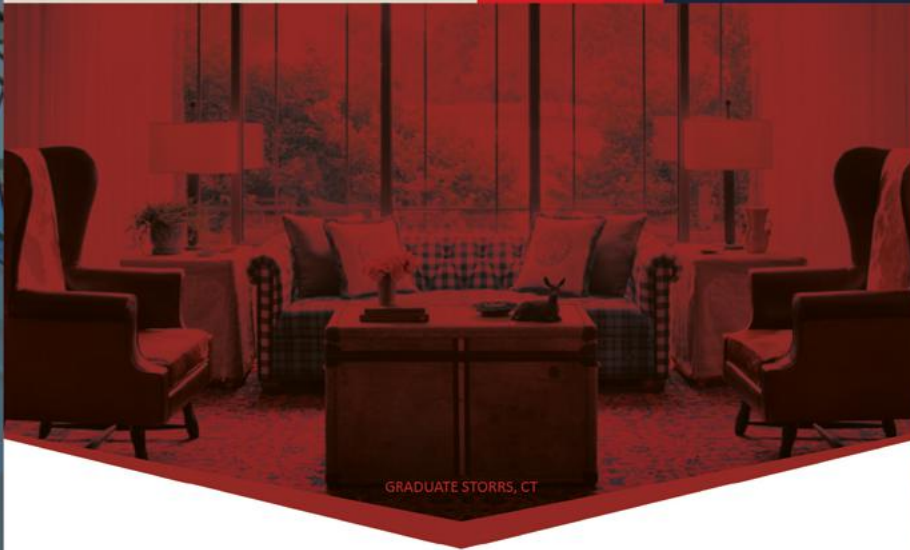
We value strong and trusted subcontractor and vendor partnerships to help bring your project to completion. HRCG is also passionate about historic building projects and has a rich history of bringing them forward in time.

The best compliments are referrals, with much of our work coming from repeat clients. A significant amount of our new business comes from satisfied client referrals. We work hard to earn this honor on every project with quality construction so your guests will want to repeat their experience at your property again and again. Our clients' satisfaction is paramount.

Reach out to us about your next project and learn how we are the low-risk GC you will want to partner with again and again.

Partner content provided by HR Construction Group

Building Experiences Worth Repeating



HR | CONSTRUCTION
GROUP

*Your nationwide, full-service general contracting partner
for fast-track commercial construction*

What We Do Nationally

- Renovations
- New Additions
- Interior Build-outs
- Design-Build
- MEP Upgrades



Expertise

- Hospitality
- Historic Properties
- Multi-Family
- Retail, Restaurants
- Tenant Space

Headquartered in Columbia, MD
www.HRconstruction.com • 301-330-1650
10200 Old Columbia Road, Suite K • Columbia, MD 21046

CREATIVE | SKILLED | TRUSTWORTHY



BECOME A Member

Types Of Memberships:

Individual

Allied

Corporate

Executive



An aerial photograph of a tropical island. On the left side, a long row of overwater bungalows with thatched roofs extends into the water. The island's lagoon is a vibrant turquoise color, transitioning to a deeper blue as it meets the open ocean. The sky is a clear, bright blue with a few wispy clouds. The overall scene is serene and idyllic.

VOICES

Around

The World

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHEF ANDRE BLASCZAK

EXECUTIVE CHEF, WESTIN HOTELS SEVEN
MILES BEACH RESORT, GRAND CAYMAN,
CAYMAN ISLANDS



Tell us your name and your current role.

My current role is Resort Executive Chef at Westin Hotels Seven Miles Beach Resort, Cayman Island, Grand Cayman.

When did you join your current property?

I joined the property in November 2023.

What makes your property special?

My resort is located on one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. Seven Miles Beach is the place everyone dreams of visiting, and I have the opportunity to live here.

How long have you worked in the hospitality industry?

It has been almost 30 years.

What attracted you to the hospitality industry?

Hospitality is in my blood because my mother ran a small hotel. I was born and raised in the hospitality world.

What motivates you?

What motivates me is the opportunity to learn new things every day.

What do you like the most about the hospitality industry?

The opportunity to meet new people every day and connect with people from different cultures and levels of society.

In what area(s) does the hospitality industry need to improve?

There are many areas where the industry needs to improve, such as training, development, and recognition.

How is the industry's recovery from COVID-19?

Everything is back to normal now. People are traveling again, which is a great thing. That is exactly what our industry needs.

What is the secret to your success as a leader?

A good leader needs to be always available to hear everyone and be willing to step up to help everyone.

What is your view about the current state of training in the hospitality industry?

I see some improvement from the last couple of years, but there is much more ground to cover. Some people think you are done once you complete some training, but the reality is completely different. Training should be a continuous process; we must be trained, retrained, and refreshed daily.

What is your advice to young people considering a hospitality career?

Be passionate! Learn as much as you can all the time!

What is the one thing you wish you had done differently in your career in hospitality?

If I had the opportunity to start again, I would have started my abroad journey a little early.

Do you have any advice or feedback for companies or people working in the hospitality industry?

It is essential to prioritize exceptional customer service. In hospitality, our guests are at the heart of everything we do. Strive to create memorable experiences by being attentive, approachable, and responsive to their needs. Remember, a smile and a warm greeting can go a long way in making someone feel welcome. Always listen actively to guest feedback; it can teach us how to improve our services.

Teamwork is crucial in our industry. The hospitality environment is fast-paced and often demanding, and we must support each other.

Adaptability is important. The hospitality industry is always evolving, with new trends and technologies emerging regularly. We need to stay informed about industry developments and be open to change. We need to be flexible and always willing to learn.

You must take pride in your work and understand that your contributions matter. Pay attention to the details.

And do not forget to take care of yourself! Because the hospitality industry is demanding, it is easy to become overwhelmed. Prioritize your well-being, both physically and mentally. Take breaks when needed, seek support from your colleagues, and engage in activities outside of work that bring you joy and relaxation.

PROPERTY SHOWCASE

Exploring the Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort, Ras Al Khaimah, UAE

The new Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort, the brand's sixth hotel in the Emirates, is only 55 minutes from the Dubai International Airport, set in the historic destination of Ras Al Khaimah, nestled between the seaside and the Hajar mountains.

"Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort is where generous local traditions seamlessly blend with the French zest. Each corner of our resort tells a captivating story just waiting to be unraveled," said Karim Abdelhamid, General Manager of the Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort.

At the Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resorts, guests are immersed in an atmosphere that draws from

Eastern and Western cultures. An emotion, a smile, a kind gesture; service is heartfelt, backed by Sofitel's famous attention to detail.

Dreamt into reality by the award-winning interior design studio Kristina Zanic Consultants, the refined décor stands out with reinvented elegance. The Cultural Link, the renowned Sofitel emblem with two geometric interlacing curves – symbolizing two cultures that merge to create a unique experience – expresses itself in French-style interiors awash in a palette of Mediterranean colors.



FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Experience the flavors of the world in a contemporary setting that exudes elegance. Indulge in delectable treats and heartwarming service amidst an enticing atmosphere that satisfies your palate and soul.

CITRON Lobby Lounge

VERITAS Wine Bar

EAST All Day Dining Restaurant

SAMPHIRE Pool Bar

REUNION French Brasserie

BLEND & SQUEEZE Juice Bar

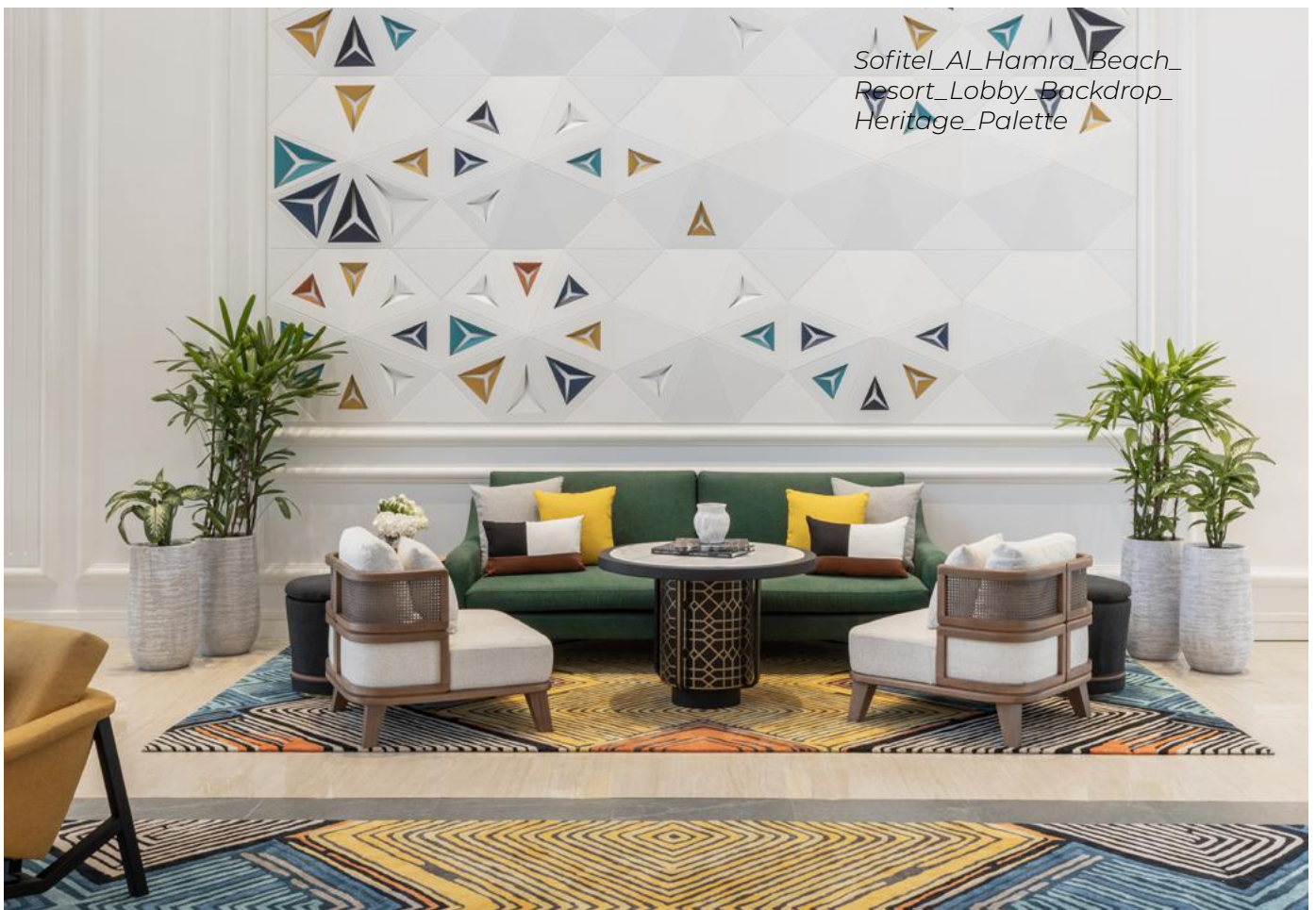
WAKA Polynesian Restaurant

Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_East_Restaurant_All_Day_Dining





Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_Lobby_Lounge_Night



Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_Lobby_Backdrop_Heritage_Palette



Sofitel_AL_Hamra_Beach_Resort_East_All_Day_Dining



Sofitel_AL_Hamra_Beach_Resort_Citron_Lobby_Lounge

ROOMS & SUITES

- 245 rooms - from Classic King to Luxury Double Rooms
- 45 suites from Prestige One Bedroom to Beachfront Two Bedroom Suite with Private Pool
- 2 Presidential Suites

Distinctive Features

- Garden and sea-view rooms
- King-size Sofitel MyBed™
- Diptyque amenities
- Bespoke design with an elegant touch
- Suites with Club Millesime access

Features and Amenities

- Complimentary Wi-Fi
- Nespresso coffee machine

- LED HD TV
- Safe
- Mini bar

CURATED EXPERIENCES

- Butler Service
- Laundry Service
- Concierge Desk
- Le Petit Club
- Child Care Service
- Travel Desk
- Transportation
- Souvenir Shop



Sofitel Al Hamra
Beach Resort Superior
Room La Maison



Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_2_Bedroom_Beach_Front_Suite_Pool_King_Room



Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_2_Bedroom_Suite_Living_Room

Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_2_Bedroom_Beach_Front_Suite_With_Pool





Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_
Luxury_Room_Queen_Queen





Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_
Classic_Room_Bathroom



Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_
Classic_Room_Bathroom



SPA & WELLNESS

Uncover the ancient Arabic secrets of serene well-being, wrapped in the embrace of the French art de vivre, and receive a truly revitalizing experience.

- Sofitel SPA WITH CLARINS includes four treatment rooms (3 single treatment rooms and one couple treatment room).
- Sofitel FITNESS features state-of-the-art equipment.
- Open daily from 6 am to 10 pm.
- 4 Beach-front Swimming Pools

*Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_
Sofitel_Spa_With_Clarins*



*Sofitel_AL_Hamra_Beach_Resort_
Sofitel_Spa_With_Clarins_Tea*







Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_Sofitel_Spa_With_Clarins_Treatment_Room





Sofitel_AL_Hamra_Beach_Resort_
Sofitel_Spa_With_Clarins_Bowl



Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_
Resort_Lagoon_Pool_Sunset



MAGNIFIQUE MEETINGS

Elevate your meetings by drawing inspiration from the dynamic local cultures of Ras Al Khaimah, incorporating contemporary design, and leveraging state-of-the-art technology – all infused with a hint of French flair.

- Configurable layouts such as classroom, theatre, or boardroom in M, V, or U position
- Outdoor spaces for social events or weddings, accommodating up to 300 guests.

Distinctive Features

- Flexible space for various events, including buffet, dance floor, cocktail party, or exposition

Content provided by the Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort, Al Ras Khaimah

Sofitel_Al_Hamra_Beach_Resort_Citron_Lobby_Lounge



GENERAL MANAGER SPOTLIGHT

MEET KARIM ABDELHAMID

GENERAL MANAGER AT THE SOFITEL AL HAMRA BEACH RESORT



Operations at The First Group based in Dubai. As VP of Hotel Operations, he drove operational success across the hotel portfolio, executed profitability strategies, and developed talent for the group's properties.

With a strong track record of building and sustaining cohesive, top-performing teams, Karim has a successful background in multi-property operations and managing prestigious F&B venues, including Michelin-starred restaurants and convention centers.

Over the years, Karim has worked at 5-star luxury and lifestyle hotels around the world including The Plaza Hotel – A Fairmont Property in New York, The Ritz Carlton Central Park New York, Sofitel Legend Old Cataract Egypt, Sofitel Philadelphia, Qatar Foundation, The Westin Savannah Harbor Golf Resort and Spa, The Knickerbocker Hotel New York, which was the first independent luxury property in Times Square, The InterContinental Hotels Dubai Festival City, and InterContinental Jubail Resort.

In addition, he has developed nine prestigious ultra-luxury hotels, including Mandarin Oriental, Park Hyatt, Capella, and Zula Wellness Resort by Chiva-Som.

With over 25 years of experience in hospitality and managing renowned luxury and lifestyle properties worldwide, Karim is the General Manager at the Sofitel Al Hamra Beach Resort, Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates. He has held that position since January 2024.

Before that role, Karim was Vice President of Hotel

Karim is a guest satisfaction enthusiast who demonstrates the ability to increase guest satisfaction scores year on year while ensuring strong positioning for his properties. He graduated from St. John's University in New York City with a Bachelor's Degree of Science in Hospitality Management and completed Cornell University's Senior Leadership Program.



INTERNATIONAL
HOSPITALITY
INSTITUTE

Get CERTIFIED



Professional Certifications

Certified Hotel General Manager
(CHGM)

Certified Food and Beverage Manager
(CFBM)

Certified Front Office Manager
(CFOM)

Certified Hotel Operations Manager
(CHOM)

Certified Hospitality Housekeeping
Manager (CHHM)

And many more...

Benefits of getting certified



You will skill, upskill and reskill yourself in hospitality management.



You will learn new competencies while enhancing current competencies.



You will learn about trends and best practices in the hospitality industry and expand your knowledge.

Questions? Visit our website or email us at info@internationalhospitalityinstitute.com



TOP 25

Hospitality Executives To Watch

IN 2025



IHI is delighted to recognize the Top 25 Hospitality Executives to Watch in 2025. These professionals are pacesetters and trailblazers who promote the hospitality industry and inspire many with their contributions. While we could not feature all the honorees' photos and bios due to editorial deadlines, we have listed all of them. Congratulations to all the awardees!

The honorees are listed in alphabetical order.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Akram Shaar | 14. Katherine Minnock |
| 2. Amanda Elder | 15. Liz Dahlager |
| 3. Andrew Rubinacci | 16. Mercedes Blanco |
| 4. Anita Mendiratta | 17. Michele Kline |
| 5. Ashli Johnson | 18. Mychal Millian |
| 6. Brahim Kledis | 19. Nick Horgan |
| 7. Burak Ipekci | 20. Nina Kleaveland |
| 8. Cassie Pressley | 21. Peter Idoko |
| 9. Eugene Naughton | 22. Robert Foster |
| 10. Iva Kutle Škrlec | 23. Simon Tan |
| 11. James Lim | 24. Tammy Gillis |
| 12. Joe Baker | 25. Tom Gilliland |
| 13. Judith Cartwright | |





TOP 25

Hospitality Executives To Watch

IN 2025



Liz Dahlager

Chief Operating Officer

Mereté Hotel Management

Liz leads the hotel management services team at Mereté Hotel Management and is responsible for portfolio performance and growth. This includes fostering an environment of excellence and a company culture that evolves to meet the needs of our associates, owners, and guests. Her experience in the hotel industry includes full-service, boutique, branded, and select service and encompasses over 25 years across multiple roles.

She enjoys cultivating strong partnerships and developing strong cross-functional teams. She was recognized for her efforts in developing others

and supporting women in hospitality through the American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA) with the Paving the Way Award in 2022. Her leadership exemplifies Mereté's four pillars of excellence that guide the company's culture, "We are growing," "We set the bar," "We are community," and "We have fun."

Liz believes the best way to predict the future is to create it!



Iva Kutle Skrlec

Director, Destination Marketing, MEA

Marketing and Loyalty, EMEA

Hilton Hotels

Iva is one of MEA's leading destination and travel marketing and commercial experts with 20 years of international experience in the agency, client, and media/technology sides.

Originally Croatian and a former Marketing Director for Valamar Hotels and Resorts, she moved to Dubai in 2015 when she joined Google to manage their relationship with the region's travel giants such as Emirates Airline, Etihad Airways, and local tourism boards.

Iva helped shape some of the most prominent campaigns for Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Expo 2020 through Google's platforms, also leading Google's excellence hub for destination marketing throughout the pandemic. Her passion has always

been marrying data-led commercial strategies with the power of marketing technology.

She joined Hilton in 2022 as a Destination Marketing Director in one of the company's fastest-growing and most dynamic regions. She leads regional strategy and supports Hilton's expanding portfolio of brands in the Middle East and Africa, with a strong focus on the luxury segment.

In addition to her marketing hat, as an organizational psychologist, she is passionate about leadership, people development, and organizational change.

A graduate of the London School of Economics and Harvard Business School Executive Education program, she won the 2022 Martech champion award, multiple Effie awards, and The Brandberries' Superwomen of MENA recognition.



Nick Horgan

Chief Commercial Officer

Amaze Insights

Nick Horgan focuses on transformative growth for Amaze Insights. He brings more than 25 years of expertise in the hospitality technology industry, a proven track record of growing revenue, and expanding relationships with key decision-makers at major hospitality brands, hotel management companies, ownership groups, and individual hotels. He prides himself on keeping the best interests of customers at the forefront of all decisions.

Since joining Amaze Insights, the company has grown rapidly and is now providing reporting and analytics solutions to thousands of hotels. Nick has also spoken at several industry conferences, including HSMIAI, HITEC, and the BITAC Sales, Marketing, and Revenue Management Summit.

Before Amaze Insights, Nick served as Chief Sales Officer for a leading digital marketing firm. After leaving that role, he was a strategic advisor to companies developing digital solutions for the hospitality industry and a board member for HSMIAI San Diego.

For most of his career, he held various leadership roles at Amadeus Hospitality, where he was responsible for growth strategy among strategic accounts. During this time, he consistently spearheaded multi-million-dollar and enterprise deals with some of the largest hospitality brands, including one with a global rollout for more than 6,000 hotels.

Nick was the #1 worldwide revenue producer for Amadeus Hospitality for seven of the eight years he was with the company after its acquisition of Newmarket International. Throughout his career, Nick has been directly responsible for increasing revenue year over year while ensuring that his customers achieve outsized benefits and successful outcomes. Nick has personally sold more than \$160 million in software and SAAS projects in the hospitality industry.

Nick resides in San Diego, and when he is not working, he loves spending time with his family, traveling, and playing pickleball.



Cassie Pressley

General Manager

Hampton Inn & Suites Biltmore Area,
Asheville, NC

Cassie's career in hospitality is rooted in her belief that empathy and human connection are at the heart of great leadership. Since joining the Asheville Hotel Group team in 2013 as a front desk agent at Hampton Inn, she has consistently demonstrated an ability to lead with compassion, creating a positive and inclusive environment for both her team and guests. Cassie's leadership philosophy is based on being a connector—whether she's helping her team develop their skills or making sure every guest feels truly welcomed, her focus is always on building relationships and promoting a sense of belonging.

Rising through the ranks from front desk agent to General Manager, Cassie has been recognized for her operational acumen and commitment to those around her. After receiving the prestigious Spirit of Hampton Award in 2014 for her dedication to guest satisfaction, she continued to lead by example, showing that kindness and empathy can drive business success. Since becoming General Manager in 2019, she has cultivated a workplace culture that encourages collaboration and growth, empowering her team to deliver exceptional service.

Cassie's leadership was tested most recently

when a hurricane hit the Asheville area, leaving many guests stranded and her team facing unprecedented challenges. Throughout this difficult time, her priority was her team's well-being. By providing them with the support they needed, she ensured that they could, in turn, take care of their guests. Cassie's calm and caring presence made a significant difference during the crisis, reinforcing her belief that great leaders take care of their people first.

In addition to her work at Hampton Inn & Suites, Cassie is passionate about giving back to the next generation of hospitality leaders. She regularly partners with the hospitality department at her alma mater, Western Carolina University, where she earned a degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management. By offering guest lectures and facilitating practical learning opportunities for students, Cassie has played an active role in furthering the education of future industry professionals. Her collaboration with the university reflects her dedication to her field and the local community.

Outside of work, Cassie enjoys exploring the natural beauty of Asheville with her husband and daughter, visiting zoos, and spending time outdoors. Her leadership continues to shape her team's success and enhance guests' experiences, all while promoting a positive culture both in and beyond her hotel.

SINCE BECOMING
GENERAL MANAGER
IN 2019, SHE HAS
CULTIVATED A
WORKPLACE CULTURE
THAT ENCOURAGES
COLLABORATION
AND GROWTH,
EMPOWERING HER
TEAM TO DELIVER
EXCEPTIONAL
SERVICE.



Amanda Elder

Chief Commercial Officer
Kempinski Hotels

Amanda Elder is responsible for driving the commercial strategy of Kempinski Hotels globally, with an emphasis on generating revenue opportunities and reinforcing the company's position as the leading independent European luxury hotel hospitality management group.

In this capacity, she oversees a global team of experts in marketing, branding, sales, revenue management, CRM, loyalty, public relations, and

corporate communications to deliver engaging content and programs for Kempinski guests across multiple platforms.

An Australian national, Amanda first joined Kempinski in 2014 as Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Kempinski in China, where she led all business development efforts in the market. She has over 25 years of experience in luxury hospitality, including senior global sales positions covering Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and China.

Before joining Kempinski, Amanda held leadership roles in business development and hotel operations with Fairmont Raffles Hotels International, Marriott International, and Starwood Hotels. She has a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Auckland.



Michele Kline

Founder

Kline Hospitality

With intentionality and dedication, Argentinean immigrant **Michele Kline** has crafted a distinguished career in the hospitality industry. With academic expertise in communication and multiple certifications in Coaching, Kaizen, Total Quality Management, Six Sigma, and more, Michele's extensive operations and human resources background uniquely positions her to empower leaders to reach unprecedented heights.

In her latest book, *360° IMPACT: A Guide to Live, Lead, and Serve in a More Colorful World!* Michele calls on readers to infuse humanity into business and life, forging authentic connections that create a 360-degree impact.

In 2010, Michele founded Kline Hospitality Consulting, a boutique coaching and consulting firm dedicated to developing empathetic, visionary leaders who prioritize human connection to drive transformative results.

Specializing in leadership, communication, and well-being, Michele's coaching harnesses the power of neuroscience to reframe mindsets and cultivate lasting high-performance habits.

Michele's holistic approach to leadership elevates personal and business potential, promoting effective communication, inclusive cultures, and a profound sense of well-being. Michele is a passionate advocate for diversity, inclusion, and belonging. Engaged in numerous philanthropic initiatives, she empowers professionals to embrace diversity in all forms, promoting inclusive environments through effective communication and authentic connection.

As co-creator of *WTF! Walk The Floors, All Things Hospitality Training* — an internationally recognized and award-winning podcast and training program — Michele illuminates the leadership opportunities that come from engaging with people, not just managing from behind a desk. Her mission is to help leaders unlock their passions, ignite transformation, and inspire lasting growth. Above all, Michele believes in dreaming big, taking bold action, and achieving greatness.



Joe Baker

Dean, School of Business

Okanagan College, Canada

Joe Baker is a passionate leader within Canada's tourism, hospitality, and education sectors and a vocal advocate for an inclusive, future-forward industry. He is the Dean of the School of Business at Okanagan College and has played a key role in the development of a new state-of-the-art Centre for Food, Wine, and Tourism.

Joe is also CEO at Joe Baker & Co., a consultancy specializing in thought leadership and human

capital, and host of the NO RESERVATION podcast. He was previously Dean at Centennial College's School of Hospitality, Tourism, and Culinary Arts in Toronto, where he led the most meaningful transformation in the school's over 50-year history.

Joe has held senior management roles at George Brown College's Centre for Hospitality and Culinary Arts in Toronto, including Director of Operations, Services, and Partnerships. Before joining higher education, he worked in hotels and managed restaurants.

He has a Master of Education in Higher Education Leadership, a Bachelor of Commerce in Hospitality and Tourism Management, and extensive executive education and certifications. Joe proudly serves on the board of directors for Tourism HR Canada (THRC).



Mercedes Blanco

Chief Partnerships Officer

The Hotels Network

Mercedes Blanco is a corporate executive with over 15 years of experience in Travel and Hospitality. She is passionate about creating value through digital-tech solutions and fighting for women's empowerment. Before joining The Hotels Network as Chief Partnerships Officer, she worked at BCV, a Rategain Company, Microsoft, and AC Hotels by Marriott.

She has two bachelor's and two master's degrees, including Tourism Management from IE Business

School and a PDP in Digital Marketing from Harvard University.

Mercedes has been a dedicated member of the travel industry at large. She is an active member of the Sales Americas Advisory Board at HSMIAI and a founding member of Women in Travel THRIVE. She was recognized as one of the Top 50 Women in Travel by WINIT by GBTA and one of the Top 25 Most Extraordinary Minds by HSMIAI.



Eugene Naughton

President

Dollywood

Eugene Naughton is a theme park industry veteran, having worked for three of the largest and most well-known attractions companies during his tenure. While earning his degree in culinary management from Radford University in Radford, Virginia, Naughton would travel back and forth to his hometown of Richmond, Virginia, to work at Paramount's Kings Dominion. Putting his degree to work after graduation, Naughton moved up through the culinary positions at Kings Dominion before earning the title of Vice President of In-Park Services. His next move—which kept him with Paramount—saw him in a dual role overseeing revenue for the Charlotte, North Carolina-based company while also working at Paramount's Carowinds, in Charlotte.

Naughton spent an impressive 19 years with

Paramount Parks and was with the company when it was bought by Ohio-based Cedar Fair. Seeing the opportunity for change in 2006, Naughton seized a chance to join Six Flags at the corporate level, where his focus was on in-park revenue-building strategies. During his last four years at Six Flags, he led international development and was responsible for designing and building parks in the UAE, China, and Saudi Arabia.

Naughton spent 14 years at Six Flags before he was approached with an opportunity to join The Dollywood Company. Naughton started with The Dollywood Company in November 2019 as the Vice President of Parks Operations. In November 2020, he became just the third president in the company's history. While managing the park through the challenges of the global pandemic, his efforts and attention to detail have The Dollywood Company poised for continued success. In June 2021, Naughton and Dollywood Dreamer-in-Chief Dolly Parton announced a 10-year, \$500 million investment strategy that will see the addition of multiple resort properties and attractions by the end of the decade. The first project in the investment campaign is Dollywood's HeartSong Lodge & Resort, scheduled for completion in 2023.



Judith Cartwright

Founder and Managing Director

Black Coral Consulting

With over two decades of experience in the hospitality industry, **Judith** has worked closely with owners, asset managers, and leadership teams at some of the world's most prominent hospitality companies to achieve exceptional results.

Her innovative and disruptive approach to traditional revenue management has earned her a reputation as a trusted strategic advisor. Her roster of clients has included Boutique Group, Four Seasons, Wynn, Cool Inc, Azmont Investments, Grupo Vidanta, and Global Hotel Alliance.

Judith's international career working for leading hospitality brands across three continents culminated in her role as Global Senior Vice President of Revenue Management & Distribution at Kerzner, where she was responsible for the

Atlantis, One&Only, and Mazagan brands, which encompassed resorts, hotels, F&B outlets, spas, and attractions.

During her tenure at Kerzner, Judith developed a commercial strategy and culture that yielded double-digit growth across key income streams. Her obsessive focus on system and data efficiency, inventory optimization, and identifying new revenue streams helped drive this success. Judith brings this winning mindset and formula to every client she works with.

Judith is not satisfied with simply "managing" revenue but is always seeking novel ways to maximize profitability and ensure that potential profits across all income streams are realized. Judith is a passionate believer that revenue management should be an indispensable tool for any executive team in the hospitality sector, given the right education, training, and focus on unrealized growth opportunities.

Whether it is new openings, re-flaggings, or unforeseen crises, Judith has the experience and skills to help steer companies through the most challenging times and create income opportunities when others would be content to maintain the status quo.

In addition to becoming a trusted strategic advisor on commercial activities, Judith has led highly effective teams capable of achieving revenue optimization and developing best-in-class distribution platforms. Since launching Black Coral Consulting, Judith has received numerous awards for her consultancy work, including becoming a proud Member of ISHC, the leading source of global hospitality expertise, Chair of the Revenue Optimization Advisory Board for HSMAl, and a member of the Hotelier's Guild Academy of Hospitality Arts. Her success has made her a sought-after speaker, and she is frequently invited to participate in panels and conferences.

Based in Dubai and drawing on her extensive regional and global experience, Judith is deeply committed to helping her clients thrive and succeed in these unprecedented times.

HER INNOVATIVE AND
DISRUPTIVE APPROACH
TO TRADITIONAL REVENUE
MANAGEMENT HAS EARNED
HER A REPUTATION AS
A TRUSTED STRATEGIC
ADVISOR.



Anita Mendiratta

Founder

Anita Mendiratta and Associates

Anita Mendiratta is a globally recognized strategic advisor, author, diplomat, and on-air personality in Tourism, Aviation, Leadership, and Development. With a professional background anchored at IBM, Unilever, and The Coca-Cola Company, Anita currently leads ANITA MENDIRATTA & ASSOCIATES (www.anitamendiratta.com), a London-based global management consultancy known for its excellence in strategy design, creative ideation, stakeholder relationship development, and delivery of measurable, impactful results.

Anita's deep understanding of the intricate economic, social, political, and environmental dynamics that shape nations and businesses is supported by over three decades of experience across more than 100 countries. As the Special Advisor to the Secretary General of UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO), she

plays a crucial role in shaping tourism policies that significantly influence global economic diversification through sustainable tourism development.

Uniquely, Anita has established herself as a trusted source of insight and inspiration in tourism development and aviation, focusing acutely on transforming national economies, societies, identities, and future growth trajectories.

Her extensive work and deep commitment have solidified her reputation as a senior advisor to the leadership of governments and top-tier organizations.

Her latest book, *The Call to Leadership: Unlocking the Leader Within in Times of Crisis* (www.thecalltoleadership.com), has received nominations from international book awards, including *The Financial Times Book of the Year 2024* and *Best Business Book Award 2024*.

Anita's professional honors include:

- Executive in Residence at the University of Surrey, UK.
- Visiting Professor at Cranfield University, UK.
- Former Founding Advisory Board Member to the Royal Commission for AIUIA (RCU).
- Former Special Advisor to the CEO of the Saudi Tourism Authority (STA).
- Moderator and Facilitator of numerous government and UN investment and tourism leadership events.
- Strategic Resource to the World Bank, World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), International Air Transport Association (IATA), and Air Transport Action Group (ATAG).

Furthermore, Anita channels her belief in global activity making a local impact through her Foundation, *The Anita Mendiratta Foundation* - <https://anitamendirattafoundation.org/> that works in tourism-dependent countries to rebuild communities after crises, focusing on restoring early childhood education. Firmly embedded within the global leadership community, Anita's influence has earned her recognition as one of the 'Most Influential Women in Tourism' and among the 'Top 25 Inspirational Executives in Travel/Hospitality,' underscoring her significant contributions to global advancement.



Andrew Rubinacci

Chief Advisory Officer

FLYR Hospitality

As the Chief Advisory Officer of FLYR Hospitality, the hospitality division of FLYR, Andrew leads a global team whose mission is to amplify the commercial performance of FLYR customers. He also serves a critical role in helping FLYR grow the hospitality business and lead the industry with modern approaches to commercial strategy.

With over 25 years of commercial leadership experience, Andrew is among the foremost revenue management and global distribution experts in the hospitality industry. He has held various executive positions, including Chief Commercial Officer and CIO for Omni Hotels & Resorts and Senior Vice President of Distribution and revenue

Management for InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG). Most recently, Andrew served as Executive Vice President, Commercial and Revenue Strategy at Aimbridge Hospitality Corporate Office.

Andrew holds bachelor's degrees in business administration, majoring in marketing and hospitality at Florida State University. He won the 2023 HSMIA Award for Achievement in Revenue Optimization and serves as the 2024 Chair of HSMIA Americas. He has also served on the boards of HEDNA, Worldres, Open Travel, Roomkey, and the Dedman College of Hospitality at Florida State University.



James Lim

Founder and President

Mosaic Hospitality

James Tecson Lim, a Filipino immigrant and Certified Hotel Administrator, brings over 30 years of experience revitalizing hotels. From the luxury Palace Hotel to overseeing Joie de Vivre properties, where he earned four Core Value Awards, James has consistently enhanced guest experiences and implemented award-winning environmental programs. As founder and President of Mosaic Hospitality, James continues to drive success in hotel asset management.

His leadership and strategic vision have earned him numerous accolades, including the California Hotel & Lodging Association's "Outstanding General Manager of the Year" (2018), WHERE Magazine's "Best GM" at the 2019 Silver Plume Awards, and Omni Hotels' "General Manager of the Year."

Beyond his career, James is dedicated to giving back.

As the current volunteer President of Philippine International Aid (PIA), he supports "out-of-streets-into-school" programs for children. He also received the 2019 Outstanding Community Service Award from the Asian Women's Resource Center. He has served in leadership roles with the Hotel Council of San Francisco, SF Travel, and Visit California.

Mentoring the next generation of hospitality professionals is James's greatest passion, a legacy that continues through his daughter Mikki, who followed his path in hospitality. For over 20 years, he has also shared his expertise with hospitality and tourism students as an adjunct professor at institutions such as California State University and the University of San Francisco.

James holds a B.S. in Hotel and Restaurant Management and pursued MBA studies in Marketing at Golden Gate University, along with a Management Finance Certificate from Cornell University. Through Mosaic Hospitality, he continues to shape the industry's future with his strategic insight and commitment to excellence.



Kledis Brahim

Founder and CEO

DolceVita Hospitality

Kledis Brahim was raised in a family where hospitality was a way of life. His parents and grandparents taught him that true hospitality is about building meaningful connections and making everyone feel special. This deeply rooted passion shaped Kledis into one of the youngest leaders in the Italian hospitality industry.

As the Founder & CEO of DolceVita Hospitality, Kledis has poured his heart into building a company that goes beyond luxury, focusing on the art of human connection. He has gathered a team of experts with experience from the world's most iconic brands, such as Four Seasons, Ritz Carlton, Bulgari Hotels, Armani Hotels, Park Hyatt, and more. DolceVita

works closely with government bodies and leading hospitality brands to manage hotels, implement innovative strategies that enhance guest experiences and optimize operational efficiency, and design innovative Italian-certified training programs.

Inspired by the values instilled in him from a young age, his mission is to create “moments you will never forget”—moments that transform a simple stay into a personal and memorable experience.



Nina Kleaveland

Co-founder and CEO

Lanyard

Nina Kleaveland is the Co-founder and CEO of Lanyard, a corporate housing platform serving industries like hospitality, manufacturing, construction, and agriculture. Nina is also the Founder of Female Founders in Hospitality, a global network of women building companies that will transform the travel and hospitality landscape.

Nina graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and started her career in hotel operations at The Westin Philadelphia. She moved to a digital marketing role at Starwood Hotels & Resorts and from there to managing partnerships for Starwood Preferred Guest, the loyalty program.

In 2009, Nina left Starwood to pursue an MBA at The

Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. After graduating, she moved to Hong Kong to work for American Express in B2B marketing, product, and partnerships.

Nina moved back to the United States in 2014 and worked for Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, where she led global partnerships, including the cobrand credit card, and built out a corporate strategy team.

Nina lives in New York with her husband and two daughters. She is on the Advisory Council of the Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth and the Advisory Board of the Penn Arts & Sciences Professional Women's Alliance.



50 MOST INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE IN GLOBAL HOSPITALITY AND TRAVEL IN 2024

IHI is delighted to recognize the 50 Most Inspirational People in Global Hospitality and Travel in 2024. These professionals continue to support and promote Hospitality and Travel, inspiring many with their contributions. While we could not feature all the honorees' photos and bios due to editorial deadlines, we have listed all of them. Congratulations to all the awardees!

The honorees are listed in alphabetical order

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Agnès (Montergoux) Roquefort | 17. Emily Goldfischer | 35. Natalia Bayona |
| 2. Amaka Amatokwu-Ndekwu | 18. Filip Boyen | 36. Pablo Torres |
| 3. Amanda Hite | 19. Frances Kiradjian | 37. Peter Ricci |
| 4. Andrew Zimmern | 20. Geoff Ballotti | 38. Rachel Humphrey |
| 5. Anna Blue | 21. Glenn Haussman | 39. Robert Richardson |
| 6. Anna Pollock | 22. Greg Juceam | 40. Rocco Bova |
| 7. Anthony Melchiorri | 23. Horst Schulze | 41. Rupesh "Rup" Patel |
| 8. Aradhana Khowala | 24. Ibrahim Koshy | 42. Sanjana Chappalli |
| 9. Bashar Wali | 25. Issam Kazim | 43. Shannon McCallum |
| 10. Bastien Blanc | 26. James Ferguson | 44. Sima Patel |
| 11. Calvin Stovall | 27. John Carpenter | 45. Stacy Silver |
| 12. Craig Carbonierre | 28. John Lancaster | 46. Stuart Greif |
| 13. Craig Poole | 29. Josiah Mackenzie | 47. Suzanne Bagnera |
| 14. Dana Jacobsohn | 30. Karelle Lamouche | 48. Ted Teng |
| 15. Davonne Reaves | 31. Kristie Dickinson | 49. Wil Slickers |
| 16. Deepak Ohri | 32. Lara Hernandez Jaffe | 50. Will Guidara |
| | 33. Leticia Proctor | |
| | 34. Mit Shah | |

50 MOST INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE

*IN GLOBAL HOSPITALITY
AND TRAVEL*

IN 2024





John Lancaster

Vice President Franchise Development and Strategic Programs

Choice Hotels International

Before joining Choice Hotels, John had extensive on-property hotel experience with his initial entry position into the hospitality industry as a lifeguard. John quickly traversed the hotel landscape and held positions including Director of Marketing and General Manager at multiple properties in the full-service and extended stay segments.

John joined Choice as the Director of Global Sales Sourcing and Solutions where he oversaw RFP sourcing and Business rate loading Internationally. He also led a team to implement Salesforce technology for the global sales and franchise

development organizations. He quickly found his opportunity on the development team as the Director of Emerging Markets where he pushed the boundaries of hotel ownership engagement. Choice then promoted John to RVP Signature brands for Mid-Atlantic Region.

In his current role as Vice President, he is on a mission to inspire and educate underrepresented minorities on the benefits of hotel ownership and simplify the process of hotel ownership. He leads a team of diverse franchise development professionals focused on recruiting diverse hotel owners.

John was instrumental in creating HERTels by Choice (focusing on Women Entrepreneurship) and starting CHOAAA (a franchisee based African American ownership group). During his 10-year tenure in Development at Choice, he personally helped 120+ underrepresented minorities (Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino Americans, Native Americans, Veteran Americans, and Women) achieve hotel ownership under the Choice flag and influenced countless others within and outside of the industry in hotel ownership.

John is on the International Franchise Association Foundation’s board of trustees. He also sits on the Hospitality board of Morgan State University and the board of directors for Visit Montgomery and was appointed to the board of trustees for the American Hotel Lodging Association Foundation.

Savoy Magazine named John one of the “300 most Influential Black Executives in Corporate America” in June of 2022. John received the Chairman’s Award at the 2023 NABHOOD Summit. He was named to Savoy Magazine’s Most Influential Executives in Corporate America for 2024. He was honored with the coveted President’s Award from the Latino Hotel Association.

IN HIS CURRENT ROLE AS VICE PRESIDENT, HE IS ON A MISSION TO INSPIRE AND EDUCATE UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITIES ON THE BENEFITS OF HOTEL OWNERSHIP AND SIMPLIFY THE PROCESS OF HOTEL OWNERSHIP



Frances Kiradjian

Founder & CEO

BLLA, BLLA Events, Boutique Money Group, StayBoutique, TIEWN

Here is Fran in her words.

“Humbly honored as one of the Top 50 Executives in Hospitality (October 2024) and the Top 100 People in Global Hospitality by the International Hospitality Institute 3 years running, I have created a global organization with four divisions focused on hospitality. In 2009, BLLA was born and is the only official organization for the world’s verified boutique (and luxury boutique) hotels, promoting industry sector growth, connections to resources and capital,

and education through several annual conferences and continuing podcasts and videos, with a crystal-clear focus on advocacy for independent owners and operators.

As a pioneer in forecasting the boutique movement, BLLA remains a market segment leader among hotel owners and investors/developers in the specialty hospitality space. I am pleased that our network has grown beyond our expectations. I run BLLA and its three divisions alongside my wonderful daughter, Ariela Kiradjian. Together, we traverse the globe, searching for properties and people to join us.

You can review our BLLA Corporate Manifesto video (<https://vimeo.com/720072645>) and experience the intention behind BLLA Events in this video (<https://vimeo.com/763219963>). Additionally, there are many sizzle reels of past

conferences on bllaevents.com.

After 15 years of leading the boutique community, it is refreshing to say that BLLA is a catalyst for trends and the future of the boutique lifestyle. Our sister companies include BLLAevents.com, stay-boutique.com, boutiquemoneygroup.com, and tiewn.com (a community of 13,300 women in hospitality & travel, which I launched just before BLLA).

On a personal note, my passion project is “MyLettersFromHeaven.com,” a story of how 2 of my worlds collide from both my parents and their own stories beginning in the late 1800s. It is a story of intrigue, fame, and tragedy. I hold historical documents and letters that the world has never seen. I look forward to sharing this story in a book or docuseries.

Here is a link to some of the articles I’ve written over the years: <https://muckrack.com/frances-kiradjian/articles>”



Aradhana Khowala

Chief Executive Officer

Aptamind Partners

Aradhana Khowala is a global thought leader and changemaker and one of the most influential leaders in the travel, tourism, and hospitality sectors. Her career has spanned 24+ years, five continents, and more than 80 countries, transversing luxury hospitality, regenerative tourism, health and wellness, and gender dynamics.

Today, she is the CEO of Aptamind Partners, a strategic consultancy that combines hard data

and decades of experience to advise governments, emerging destinations, and public and private organizations on sustainable development. Previously, she was the Managing Director of Tourism at NEOM—the US\$500 billion land of the future purpose-built for a sustainable and new way of living in Saudi Arabia—and Chair of the Group Advisory Board of Red Sea Global in Saudi Arabia for the last seven years.

An active board member, she has an impressive portfolio of non-executive board roles, currently serving as a Board Member and Chair of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee at Elaf Group, owned by a listed holding company – SEDCO, and board member of Global Wellness Institute in the USA which is the leading global research and educational resource for the US\$ 5.6 trillion global wellness industry. She has previously worked for

Jones Lang LaSalle, covering the UK, Benelux, and Scandinavian markets, a Strategy Consulting practice in Europe and Asia, and Hospitality Operations in India.

Beyond the boardroom, Aradhana is a startup enthusiast with a knack for identifying promising ventures committed to nurturing the next generation of trailblazers, providing financial backing and invaluable mentorship and guidance. Armed with a keen eye for innovation, a rich network, and a deep understanding of market trends, her diverse portfolio ranges from a generative AI travel business in the USA to an Aviation start-up in Mexico, showcasing her commitment to driving meaningful change as she supports budding entrepreneurs on their journey to success.

She has won multiple awards and was featured amongst the 100 Most Powerful People in Global Hospitality, the Most Inspirational Leaders in the Middle East for three years (2021- 2022- 2023) and the 25 Most Influential Women in Hospitality by the International Hospitality Institute. In 2021, she was featured as an Inspirational woman rethinking a sustainable tourism by City Nation Place in the UK and also won the Chairman's Award of Global Chamber of Commerce, US for being a leader amongst peers. She won the 21st Century Icon Awards in 2017 in association with CNBC and the London School of Economics as an Inspirational Game Changer, and in 2014, she was featured as one of the 50 most Influential Next Generation leaders who will define the future of luxury by Swiss Economic magazine, Bilan.

Aradhana is a strong believer in and advocate for the fact that, when it is done right, tourism can be a force for positive change. This must involve stakeholders taking an active rather than a passive role in all three aspects of ESG: environmental, social, and governance. And while her vision for the future is ambitious, she is not afraid of the hard work or the tough conversations that are required to get there, whether that is talking about the gender gap in the Boardroom, getting to the bottom of what is turning the younger generation off a career in tourism, lobbying for closing the gender gap in women's health and wellness in the industry or developing metrics and tools to ensure businesses robustly measure their efforts to improve diversity, equity and inclusion through a first-of-its kind portal, FiveEightTen.

An expert on the Middle Eastern, African, Indian, and other new-age economies, she is a systemic thinker who conceptualizes broad macroeconomic trends to identify important global growth drivers for the future of travel and wellness. An ardent and

passionate advocate of regenerative growth and gender equality, she advises heads of governments and ambitious leaders in the private sector on how tourism can be a force for good, advancing the cause of humanity.

An accomplished public speaker with dozens of keynote engagements every year, she has spoken about gender equality on the TEDx stage and hospitality's 'Great Resignation' at the Future Hospitality Summit. She has also participated in global policy discussions at WEF, the United Nations, and the G20. One theme runs through all her work: radical change is needed to ensure a sustainable future for an industry with huge potential for positive social and financial impact on communities worldwide.

She has read at Cornell University in New York, Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne in Switzerland, and INSEAD in France.

HER CAREER HAS SPANNED 24+ YEARS, FIVE CONTINENTS, AND MORE THAN 80 COUNTRIES, TRANSVERSING LUXURY HOSPITALITY, REGENERATIVE TOURISM, HEALTH AND WELLNESS, AND GENDER DYNAMICS.



Sales for Questex Hospitality Events. Over the past three decades, Silver has held increasingly influential positions with two of the industry's leading media companies, serving as vice president, publisher, executive director of events, and executive director of digital media for Hotel Business (ICD Publications) and Hotel Management (Questex Media Group).

As a 30-plus-year hospitality-publishing veteran, Silver has a long track record of creating successful print and online products and events for the hospitality industry. She is a leader in multiple industry fund-raising activities for charitable organizations, including Shatterproof. Silver serves on the UJA Hospitality Division Committee for their annual event. She is also a Board member of the Nolan School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University's Center for Hospitality Research and the Pillsbury Institute of Hospitality Entrepreneurship.

Silver is a frequent speaker at major industry events. She holds a Bachelor's degree from SUNY

Oneonta. Silver resides in Florida with her husband, Scott, and their two children, Alex, and Rayna.

Stacy Silver, ISHC

President

Silver Hospitality Group

Stacy Silver is the president of Silver Hospitality Group, a boutique consulting firm specializing in building revenues and profitability for hospitality companies through targeted industry relations outreach, creative marketing solutions, and special events. She is also a Visiting Professor of Practice for Experiential Networking at The Nolan School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University.

Before launching Silver Hospitality Group, she was Executive Director of Business Development and

AS A 30-PLUS-YEAR HOSPITALITY-PUBLISHING VETERAN, SILVER HAS A LONG TRACK RECORD OF CREATING SUCCESSFUL PRINT AND ONLINE PRODUCTS AND EVENTS FOR THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY.



Executive for Travel & Hospitality and led J.D. Power's Global Hospitality & Travel group. Stuart also served as the Travel & Hospitality Practice Lead for customer data start-up and now unicorn, Amperity, backed by early investors in Amazon, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

Stuart's global background and leadership experience bringing innovative digital solutions to the travel industry spans his engagement with start-ups, prominent tech companies, top-tier consultancies, VCs, private equity, and government.

In those roles, Stuart partnered with many of the world's leading and most loved travel and hospitality brands. Stuart continues to actively engage in the travel start-up community, where he serves as a board member, advisor, mentor, and investor, helping the industry elevate through innovation.

Stuart is a passionate connector of people, ideas, and opportunities. He advocates for female, DE&I, and traditionally underrepresented founders and leaders, and his leadership has been recognized by Hertelier, IWTF (Women in Travel

CIC), and Female Founders In Hospitality.

Stuart W. Greif

Forbes Travel Guide, Chief Strategy, Innovation & Operating Officer

Global Travel & Hospitality C-Suite Executive, Board Member, Advisor, Thought Leader, Speaker, Mentor, and Investor.

At Forbes Travel Guide, **Stuart** drives strategy, innovation, and operations spanning 80+ countries. Stuart also serves on several boards and institutions, including the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism.

Stuart previously served as Microsoft's Senior

Stuart is a dynamic, sought-after industry speaker, delivering keynotes, speaking on panels, and appearing in media as an industry expert, including CNBC Squawk on the Street, WSJ, New York Times, CNN, BBC, and other global press, as well as industry and trade media such as Skift, Phocuswire, and HNN among others over the years.

Stuart's thought leadership—on guest experience, social commerce, AI, and Innovation - has been published via industry trade and highly regarded academic institutions, including Cornell's Center for Hospitality Research.

Stuart started his career at Accenture (Andersen Consulting) and holds a MBA in Strategy and General Management from The Darden School at the University of Virginia. He is based in the San Francisco Bay Area.



Sanjana Chappalli

Vice President, Brand Marketing

Revinate

Sanjana Chappalli is the Vice President of Brand Marketing at Revinate. She is an award-winning marketer.

In a career spanning 19 years, she has crafted marketing strategies and content that have delivered results for GSK, P&G, Porsche, Spotify, Lenovo, and IBM, among others.

Her marketing campaigns have been implemented across Asia Pacific, Europe, and North America. Sanjana speaks five languages fluently and is currently mastering Italian – her sixth. She can tell stories in two languages.

Sanjana attended the University of London where she earned a Master’s degree in Social Sciences. A gifted and insightful writer and storyteller, Sanjana believes that “crafting stories is the best skill that marketers can have.”

You can read Sanjana’s writings at www.sanjanachappalli.com

Pablo Torres is a hospitality professional passionate about sharing knowledge and adding value to industry peers.

Born and raised in Spain, Pablo has developed most of his career internationally, spending over a decade in London.

He holds a degree in Tourism from the University of Salamanca and furthered his studies with a Certificate in Revenue Management from Cornell University and an Executive MBA from IE Business School.

In addition to his work as a Hospitality Consultant, Pablo frequently collaborates with educational institutions such as the University of Alicante, UNIR, and Barcelona Executive Business School (Spain). He has delivered more than 10,000 hours of consulting and training to over 4,000 industry professionals in more than 30 countries worldwide.

Pablo is a global LinkedIn Top Voice and has been recognized in the past as one of the Top 25 Most Influential Social Media figures in the hospitality industry worldwide (IHI).

He has published hundreds of articles online and is regularly invited to events to share his insights on the industry. Pablo also has experience as a speaker, addressing audiences in the UK, Colombia, Portugal, and Spain.

He recently published his first book, “Mastering



Pablo Torres

Hospitality Consultant

HMHospitality Ancillary Revenue,” in which he shares over 100 real-life examples of best practices for optimizing Total Revenue in the hospitality industry.



Robert Richardson

CEO

Institute of Hospitality

Robert Richardson FIH MI is the Chief Executive Officer of the award-winning Institute of Hospitality (IoH), the world's largest professional body of almost 16,000 hospitality professionals worldwide, and a registered charity. IoH is dedicated to driving the recognition of the hospitality profession and uplifting its membership through lifelong learning, mentorship, and network-building.

A long-time member of IoH, Richardson built his career in the hospitality industry. Working his way up through the ranks from hotel floor staff to hotel General Manager, and now as CEO of IoH, he has a deep belief in making the hospitality industry open, inclusive, and accessible to all who seek to join it. In 2021, Robert led the Institute to win the Chartered Governance Institute UK&I "Diversity & Inclusion Strategy of the Year" award in recognition of these efforts.

Prior to joining IoH, Richardson served in senior management positions at major hotel chains including Hilton Worldwide, IHG, and Ramada Jarvis, before applying those industry best practices to a few of England's best independent hotels. For the last 12 years, Richardson served as General Manager across two independent luxury properties, including a luxury boutique hotel and golf resort in the Kentish countryside and a grade 2 listed coastal heritage property.

A true people champion, Richardson believes that for organizations to succeed and thrive, people must feel they belong regardless of background or position. To this end, he regularly speaks about his efforts in the international and U.K. conference circuit and trade press, as well as frequently contributing to radio and podcast conversations in both his home country of the U.K. and abroad.

Richardson was recognized by Hotel Designs on their 2020 Brit List as "one of the top 25 hoteliers operating in Great Britain" and on Boutique Hotelier's "2022 Power List" as an "Industry Titan", and among the Top 50 inspirational and influential hospitality professionals operating in the world today. In 2022, Richardson was made an "Honorary Master Innholder" by the Worshipful Company of Innholders and was recognized in the USA-produced "Global Hospitality" Magazine as "one of the 100 Most Powerful People in Europe's Travel and Hospitality Industry" in both 2022 and 2023.

Additional recognition includes the Southern Enterprise Awards' Boutique Hospitality Manager for two years running, the Shaw Trust Employer of the Year Award for his work developing hospitality employment strategies for people with disabilities, Boutique Hotelier's "2020 Power List" as a "Young Trailblazer," and the Institute of Hospitality Judges' Special Achievement Award.

Richardson is also a trustee for the registered charity Room to Reward, a unique volunteer recognition charity created to thank inspirational volunteers who give up their time to make a difference to those who need it most.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/robert-richardson-fih-mi-3b265a20/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/RBWR>



Josiah Mackenzie

Founder, Host, and Producer
Hospitality Daily

Josiah is the founder, host, and producer of Hospitality Daily. Through its podcast, newsletter, and YouTube channel, Hospitality Daily delights its audience and boosts profits by sharing insights from daily conversations with the best in the business.

After getting his start in hospitality, working at the front desk of a small property on the California coast, Josiah held leadership roles in technology companies serving tens of thousands of hotels around the globe with operations, revenue, and investment management before founding Hospitality Daily.

Mit Shah

Chief Executive Officer
Noble Investment Group

As founder and chief executive officer, **Mr. Shah** provides overall strategic guidance for the Noble organization and heads its investment committee.

He has been profiled in Newsweek magazine as one of the most influential South Asians in the United States, named as one of Atlanta's most prominent leaders by Atlanta Magazine and the Atlanta Business Chronicle, and as one of the 21st century's most influential hospitality industry leaders by both Lodging and Lodging Hospitality magazines. He has been awarded the prestigious IREFAC Arne Sorenson Award for his industry leadership, named Penn State University's Executive of the Year, and honored by the UJA Federation of New York for his professional and philanthropic achievements.

Mr. Shah was most recently chairman of the board for LaQuinta (NYSE: LQ) and CorePoint Lodging REIT (NYSE: CPLG) prior to their successful realizations for shareholders. He presently serves as an executive committee member of the board of directors for the American Hotel and Lodging Association, co-chairman of its Industry Real Estate



and Finance Advisory Council, and member of the owner boards for Marriott International, and Hyatt Hotels Corporation.

Mr. Shah actively supports educational objectives and is serving his fifth term as a member of the Board of Trustees for his alma mater, Wake Forest University, where he is chairman of its investment committee.



Craig Carboniere, Jr.

AVP of Sales, Hospitality

Milestone Inc

Craig Carboniere Jr. of Milestone Inc. is a hotel industry veteran and Certified Hospitality Digital Marketer (CHDM) from Southern California. He also serves on the HSMIA Marketing Advisory Board and is the Past President of the HSMIA Los Angeles Chapter.

Craig earned the award as one of the Top 25 Extraordinary Minds in Hospitality Sales, Marketing, and Revenue Optimization and is a trusted advisor for developing hotel e-commerce strategies.

Rocco Bova

Hospitality Consultant

Rocco is an experienced hotelier with over 25 years of international experience, having worked for some of the best international brands in 11 countries, from Europe to the Middle East, Asia, India, Africa, the Caribbean, and Mexico.

Educated in Italy, the UK, and most recently at Cornell University in Singapore, Rocco is an avid learner who continues his education by investigating online to keep up to date with the latest global tourism trends.

He started his career in Dubai with Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts. He then worked with Four Seasons, Hilton, Aman Resorts, IHG, LUX* Resorts, Starwood (now Marriott), and independent companies managing world-class luxury hotels.

Rocco actively contributes as an influencer of the hospitality industry through social media, writing articles in digital blogs, speaking at several conferences and podcasts, lecturing at hotel schools, and serving as a Board Member of pro bono organizations like Hoteliers Guild, GSN Planet, and the World Wellness Weekend.

Rocco is still actively working in the industry. He is currently in Mexico consulting for various developers of boutique hotels and master-planned communities.





Greg Juceam

President and CEO

Extended Stay America

G6 Hospitality, the parent franchisor of 1,400 hotels under the iconic Motel 6 and Studio 6 brands.

Juceam also was CEO of BRE Hotels & Resorts, a hospitality real estate platform then comprising 250 hotels representing \$10B in asset value in the Upscale, Upper-Upscale, and Luxury segments. Prior to this role, Juceam served as Chief Operating Officer for BRE Select Hotels, the select-service division of the company. He also spent 12 years at Interstate Hotels & Resorts, culminating as Executive Vice President of Full-Service Operations.

Greg Juceam serves as President and Chief Executive Officer for Extended Stay America, the leading brand family in the mid-priced extended-stay hotel segment in the U.S., with more than 750 hotels, including 650+ company-owned and managed properties.

Previous to ESA, Juceam was President & COO of

Juceam is the immediate past Chair of the Board of Trustees of the American Hotel & Lodging Association Foundation and a Board Member of the American Hotel & Lodging Association.

He is an active alumnus of Cornell University's Nolan School of Hotel Administration.

Suzanne Bagnera, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Florida International University

Assistant Professor **Suzanne Markham Bagnera**, Ph.D., brings more than 22 years of higher education experience and more than 25 years of hands-on industry experience in the hospitality sphere to her leadership role in the top 10 ranked Chaplin School of Hospitality & Tourism Management at Florida International University. In her exciting new role, Suzanne will serve as an expert for the lodging curriculum, bringing her extensive knowledge to the forefront as she will be teaching lodging-related classes.

Additionally, Suzanne will serve as the Program Director of Hospitality Executive Education as she contributes to the implementation of non-credit-bearing courses and continuing education initiatives in collaboration with industry partners. She is developing the educational programs for



industry icons, Anthony Melchiorri (Hotel Impossible Host and hotel expert) and Adam Tihany (Hospitality Design Expert).

With a rich background in the hotel industry, specifically with IHG brands, Suzanne is not only an academic powerhouse but also the Executive Producer of the hospitality industry's leading podcast, No Vacancy Live, hosted by Glenn Haussman and Anthony Melchiorri. In 2023, the podcast received the Industry Recognition Award from ICHRIE. The podcast continues to earn the #1 placement for hospitality podcasts from the International Hospitality Institute.

Before her Florida adventure, Suzanne held the position of Undergraduate Programs Chair in the School of Hospitality Administration at Boston University. There, she seamlessly coordinated faculty efforts for the undergraduate program, crafted each semester's schedule, and shared her wealth of knowledge by teaching graduate and undergraduate classes. Suzanne has also made impactful contributions to educational institutions in the northeast, including Johnson & Wales University, Fisher College, Mount Ida College, Bunker Hill Community College, as well as Indian River State College in Florida.

In 2020, Suzanne founded the Hospitality Leadership Academy, where she serves as Managing Partner. Together with her business partners, HLA offers customized training and management services for businesses seeking to improve their customer service experience, dazzle customers, and develop talented employees.

She is the co-author of the textbook Human Resource Management in Hospitality Cases, published by Routledge. Suzanne recently authored seven chapters in the new edition of the Hospitality

& Tourism Management Program textbook by the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute. Additionally, she has co-written the Organizing Staff chapter in the Operations Management in the Hospitality Industry textbook. She has also authored numerous journal articles contributing to the gaps in COVID-19, customer service, and user-generated content.

Suzanne started in the hospitality industry working at Louie's Shore Restaurant in New York, where on-scene filming for Meet the Parents occurred. She has held the position of General Manager at Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites, Staybridge Suites, and Holiday Inn Express. Suzanne has worked in each of the hotel department operations positions (e.g., Guest Services, Food and beverage, Restaurant, Revenue Management).

Suzanne earned her Ph.D. in Hospitality Management from Iowa State University, showcasing her commitment to advancing her field. Her MBA and undergraduate degrees were obtained at Johnson & Wales University, grounding her in a solid foundation of hospitality education.

In 2022, Suzanne was recognized as one of the 100 Most Powerful People in USA Hospitality, and in 2021, as one of the 25 Most Influential Educators in Hospitality by the International Hospitality Institute. In 2023, the International Hospitality Institute recognized Suzanne as one of the Top 50 Global Social Media Influencers in Hospitality and 30 Most Influential Educators. In 2024, Suzanne was once again recognized by the International Hospitality Institute as a Top 100 Global Social Media Influencer in Hospitality.

Suzanne can be reached at sbagnera@fiu.edu to explore your learning needs.



Calvin Stovall

Chief Experience Officer

ICONIC Presentations, LLC

Calvin Stovall is the Chief Experience Officer of ICONIC Presentations, LLC. He specializes in delivering dynamic customer experience and leadership keynote presentations and workshops for organizations nationwide. He has nearly 30 years of experience in the hospitality and non-profit service industries. Today, he leverages his life experiences as

a business leader along with the universal language of music to engage and connect with his audiences nationwide. For more information visit, <https://iconicpresentations.net/>

In addition to running his own business, Calvin serves as the Director of Executive Programs with The Advanced Leadership Institute (TALI) based in Pittsburgh, PA. In partnership with Carnegie Mellon University Tepper School of Business, TALI shares a common mission to cultivate Black executive leadership to strengthen companies, institutions, and communities. For more information visit,

<https://taliinstitute.org/>

Calvin is also the author of the forthcoming book “Hidden Hospitality: Untold Stories of Black Hotel, Motel, and Resort Owners from the Pioneer Days to the Civil Rights Era,” scheduled for a Juneteenth 2025 release.

Calvin resides in Mooresville, North Carolina, with his two teenage sons, Caden and Carson.



Amaka Amatokwu-Ndekwu

Chairperson and Co-Founder of the African Association of Women in Tourism and Hospitality (AAWTH)

management and marketing from Lagos Business School, a postgraduate certificate in business management from the European School of Economics in London, United Kingdom, a certification in hotel distribution fundamentals from ESSEC Business School, and a bachelor’s degree in accounting from Madonna University in Okija, Nigeria. She is a Castell Project Leadership Program alumna from the class of 2019. She has experience working at and managing hotels for both local and international brands.

She is the Chairperson and Co-Founder of the African Association of Women in Tourism and Hospitality (AAWTH) and Chairperson, Founder, and Past President of The Women in Hospitality Nigeria (WIHN). These organizations were founded to serve as a voice of support for all females working in the hospitality and tourism industries and to pioneer changes in gender equality and governance in the hospitality and tourism sectors. She is a member of various hospitality and tourism organizations’ boards of directors. She established the prestigious Pyne Awards to recognize pioneers in African hospitality and tourism.

She is a member of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group’s operational team’s hospitality and tourism sector thematic group. She led the NESG-THITG subcommittee on human capital development and training policies. Among her other accomplishments, she was a mentor with the Lagos Business School and the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women in Business in the United

Amaka has over fifteen years as a hospitality expert, consultant, and analyst in Africa and the United States, with a track record of tenacity, strong drive, passion, and leadership. She is an inspirational industry leader with a demonstrated track record of being a results-oriented leader, visionary, and change agent.

Amaka has been instrumental in developing numerous programs aimed at boosting growth and development in Africa’s hospitality and tourism industries. Her experience in these industries includes hotel operations, advocacy, negotiations and sales, strategic planning, human resource development, training, women’s empowerment initiatives, and events.

Amaka holds an AMP certificate in business

Kingdom, a partner with Interswitch Group on their Merchant Payment Services for hospitality and lifestyle organizations, a course facilitator with the International Security Organization in Switzerland, a member of the Top 100 Founding Volunteer Mentors of the Manatee Mentors Program/App in Basel, Switzerland, a course facilitator with the International Security. She is the Commissioner for Marketing & Promotions at the African Tourism Board.

She has contributed to Africa's hospitality and tourism industries' reforms, restructuring, expansion, and social development. Her impact

has earned her global recognition, including Top 30 Hospitality Leaders in Nigeria 2018, an award from the Global Leadership Institute; Tourism Hero 2021 from the World Tourism Network, Winner-Women in Leadership Award from the African Tourism Leadership Forum in 2021, and most recently Global Top 25 Most Inspirational Executives in Travel & Hospitality 2021, 2022 and Global Top 20 Hospitality Executives to Watch in 2022 by the International Hospitality Institute USA, Y Naija Top 100 Women in Nigeria 2022 & 100 Most Powerful People in USA hospitality, 2022. UN/ MIPAD 100 Most Influential People of African descent 2023.



Amanda Hite

President, STR

Amanda Hite, STR's president since 2011, oversees the company's business activities and overall direction. Under Hite's leadership, STR has experienced substantial growth in its global presence, client base, data coverage, and revenue. Her time with the company has also resulted in several significant milestones, including the 2016 unification of STR's

global brands, and the implementation of several key industry deliverables.

Additionally, Hite led STR through the company’s acquisition by CoStar Group (NASDAQ: CSGP) in late 2019. Hite’s accomplishments have been recognized with inclusion in “30 Influential Women in Hospitality” and “40 Under 40 Emerging Leaders” lists. Hite is a member of the Board of Directors of the American Hotel & Lodging Association and the U.S. Travel Association. She also serves as a member

of the Board of Directors of the Nashville Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta and on the Industry Advisory Board of the Hotel and Restaurant Management Program at Auburn University. Before joining STR in 2006, Hite was the Director of Research for the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce. She is a graduate of Birmingham-Southern College with a B.S. in Business Administration. She resides in Hendersonville, TN, with her husband and two children.



Anna Blue

President

AHLA Foundation

Anna serves as President of the AHLA Foundation, the impact arm of the American Hotel & Lodging Association, driving meaningful change in support of a stronger and more equitable hotel workforce.

Anna is a seasoned social impact leader with over two decades of experience building movements for good. Known for her ability to leverage collaboration and mobilize communities, Anna has advanced

deep-rooted systemic change in gender equity, urban education, and digital safety through her previous executive roles at Girl Up at the United Nations Foundation, The Female Quotient, and the Tech Coalition.

Featured by the Feminist Institute as a “historic feminist of our time,” Anna has engaged audiences on the power of girls and women, Gen Z leadership, the future of work, and inclusive leadership on some of the largest global stages, including Cannes Lions, SXSW, the World Economic Forum, and Fortune’s Most Powerful Women Next Gen.

Anna serves on the Advisory Board for Girl Up at the United Nations Foundation and on the Board of Directors of the HSMIA Foundation.



Bashar Wali

Founder & Chief Executive Officer

Practice Hospitality + THIS
ASSEMBLY

A born leader and a bit of a rebel, **Bashar** can speak to the ins and outs of the industry because he's done it all. Most at home on the road, he eats, sleeps, and breathes this calling that we call hospitality. Some might say he's obsessed with hotels. But, it's really the humans behind them that drive him. Well, that and a vintage Land Rover Defender.



Bastien Blanc

Co-Founder, TroKadero
Management

The quintessential hotelier, **Bastien** is the Co-Founder of the international hospitality group TroKadero Management. The group operates in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and Australia as a third-party operator and advisor to owners. Bastien's distinguished hospitality career spans

30 years over 4 continents, having trailblazed new markets globally. His leadership and directorial positions have seen him previously work with some of the world’s leading hotel operators, including Interstate, FRHI, ACCOR, and IHG, with him driving luxury-led portfolios.

His expertise in operations, commercial performance, and property and product development has been recognized through international awards. Bastien

is passionate about the hospitality industry, its development, quality of offering, and advancing the talent of tomorrow. His leadership and performance in the hospitality industry have seen him recognized as one of the Top 100 Most Inspirational Leaders in the Global Hospitality and Travel Awards in 2023. Bastien also judges award competitions and is invited to deliver keynotes at hospitality conferences around the world.



Craig Poole

President

Reading Hospitality Management, LLC

has become the #1 Hotel in the brand, one of the top-ranked hotels on TripAdvisor in the country, and has helped revitalize what was once the poorest city in the nation through authentic hospitality and his mantra: “Follow Me and I Will Be Behind You”.

Craig enjoys spending time with his wife, children, and grandchildren in his spare time.

For over 50 years, **Craig Poole** has been a force to be reckoned with in the hospitality industry. Cutting his teeth in restaurants and hotels, Craig rose to prominence in the 1970s as Vice President of Food and Beverage for Holiday Inn Incorporated, overseeing 60 hotels in his mega region.

Upon his departure from the Company, Craig developed, owned, and operated three of the United States’ first Hampton Inn Hotels, trailblazing what is now one of the most valuable franchises in the industry with over 2,500 locations worldwide. Other notable moments in Poole’s long career include re-developing an abandoned property in the inner city of Pittsburgh into a top 100 global Jazz Club and overseeing the transformation of underperforming, bankrupt, or lender-owned properties into profitable hotels with positive cultures.

Craig’s current role is President of Reading Hospitality Management, LLC, where he oversees 220 employees who work at his DoubleTree Hotel, Catering Company, and 3 Cafes. Under his leadership, the DoubleTree by Hilton in Reading, PA,

UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP, THE DOUBLETREE BY HILTON IN READING, PA, HAS BECOME THE #1 HOTEL IN THE BRAND, ONE OF THE TOP-RANKED HOTELS ON TRIPADVISOR IN THE COUNTRY, AND HAS HELPED REVITALIZE WHAT WAS ONCE THE POOREST CITY IN THE NATION THROUGH AUTHENTIC HOSPITALITY AND HIS MANTRA: “FOLLOW ME AND I WILL BE BEHIND YOU”.



Davonne Reaves

Founder, The Vonne Group

Davonne Reaves, a trailblazer in the hospitality sector, is the brains behind The Vonne Group. With a career spanning over 15 years, she has evolved from a front desk agent to an acclaimed hotel consultant and asset manager, owning a trio of hotels. She's the creative force behind Vesterr, the inaugural Black-owned crowdfunding platform for hotel investments, and Stay Black Experience, one of the most extensive directories for Black-owned hotels. She also shares her insights as a co-host of the NextGen in Lodging Podcast, powered by Hotel News Now.

Her professional trajectory in the hospitality industry has seen her manage portfolios amassing over \$1 billion in hotel assets at CHMWarnick. Presently, she harnesses this vast experience to guide the Black community toward successful hotel investment and ownership.

Reaves' influence is extensive, having enlightened over 4,000 individuals and facilitated the journey to hotel ownership for many across the U.S. Her work

has garnered her features in esteemed publications such as Forbes, The Atlanta Business Chronicle, Black Enterprise, MarketWatch, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, NextAdvisor (Time), and Franchise Times.

Her industry contributions have been acknowledged by The International Society of Hospitality Consultants, Hotel Management Magazine, and the International Hospitality Institute. She also serves on the Board of her Alma mater, Georgia State University Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality, where she earned a B.A. in Sociology.

Among Reaves' accolades are her induction into Georgia State University's top 40 under 40, receiving the Trailblazer of the Year Award from The Urban League of Greater Atlanta, and being recognized as one of the top 100 most influential African Americans under 40 by The Root. Davonne calls Atlanta, GA, home, where she lives with her son, Jamir.



stars, conceptualizing a vertical destination, and orchestrating The Million Baht Dinner, renowned as the world's most expensive dining experience.

Deepak Ohri also invented the Ohri Luxury Index (OLI), a tool that measures emotional luxury brand value, which earned the Best of the Best 2023 award from Robb Report Thailand. In 2024, he was honored as the Icon of Luxury at Robb Report Hong Kong's Best of the Best awards. His leadership in hospitality has been recognized by the International Hospitality Institute, which named him one of the 100 Most Influential People in Global Hospitality and Tourism in 2022, 2023, and 2024.

As a thought leader in luxury hospitality, Deepak Ohri has lectured at top business schools, including the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB), ISB Hyderabad, INSEAD, Columbia University, NYU Stern, and Harvard Business School. He also mentors future leaders by providing career advice and insights to students pursuing careers in hospitality and luxury.

Deepak Ohri

Founder and CEO

Luxury Atelier Maison Happiness
(LAMH)

Deepak is a visionary entrepreneur and leader in the global luxury hospitality industry, known for his transformative approach to business. His passion for excellence and commitment to innovation have shaped the success of his ventures, with his most recent project, House of Tin Baron, standing as a testament to his ability to revolutionize luxury hospitality. This destination will feature the world's first Louis Roederer Cristal Room at House of Tin Baron, further cementing its position as a trailblazer in the industry.

Deepak Ohri's extensive experience in hospitality reflects his exceptional business acumen and forward-thinking approach. Under his leadership, his companies have achieved remarkable success, earning recognition for their dedication to quality and customer satisfaction. He has introduced industry-defining trends, such as the world's highest rooftop restaurant, earning two Michelin

stars. Deepak Ohri's expertise has made him a sought-after speaker at prestigious events, including the Forbes Global CEO Conference and the Financial Times Business of Luxury Summit. His storytelling, combined with his deep knowledge, makes him a compelling speaker, sharing valuable lessons from both science and experience.

In addition to his industry contributions, Ohri serves as Executive in Residence in Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the Pino Global Entrepreneurship Center at Florida International University (FIU). He is also Chairman of the Executive Board for the Center and a Board Member for CIBER (Center for International Business and Education) at FIU's College of Business. Deepak Ohri co-designed the Luxury Incubator MBA course, a pioneering program in luxury management and marketing, and co-created The Experiential Immersion, a professional development program focused on experiential learning.

Deepak Ohri is also the author of *A Bridge Not Too Far – Where Creativity Meets Innovation*, a book highlighting the importance of focus, self-esteem, and strategic thinking through his personal journey. The book has been adopted as instructional material for college-level management and marketing courses.



Emily Kanders Goldfischer

Founder, hertelier

A curious journalist passionate about the hotel industry, [Emily Kanders Goldfischer](#) founded hertelier in March 2021. An online media platform that enlightens and inspires women in hospitality to pursue, navigate, and nurture their careers at every stage, Hertelier has taken off, creating a dynamic and engaged community of professionals.

Emily curates hertelier's content through the lens of supporting women in their hotel industry careers—sharing valuable lessons from accomplished pros and rising stars, covering business skills, work/life balance, industry news, and networking

opportunities presented in a fresh voice, with bold graphics and social media integration. Her free Sunday newsletter, Round-Up, a summary of important news from the week, has quickly grown into 'essential reading' for industry insiders with an open rate of over 50%.

A self-confessed “hotel nerd” and graduate of the Cornell University Nolan School of Hotel Administration with a master's from the London School of Economics. Emily began marketing and promoting hotels, restaurants, and destinations on the agency side before joining Loews Hotels as the Vice President of Public Relations, managing the brand's corporate comms and hotel PR for over a decade. Originally from New Jersey, Emily has been living in London with her family since 2010, where they have made it a mission to travel Europe and the UK.



Filip Boyen

Luxury Hospitality Advisor

Senior Advisor Corinthia Hotels

Global Ambassador Forbes Travel Guide

Advisor Orient Express La Dolce Vita
Trains Italy

A luxury hospitality career spanning more than four decades has taken **Filip Boyen** everywhere, from Turkey, South Africa, Moscow, Bora Bora, and Peru.

Before setting up his Luxury Hospitality Consultancy firm Boyen served as CEO of Forbes Travel Guide. Previously, he served as CEO of Small Luxury Hotels of the World, where he oversaw a portfolio of more than 520 exceptional independent hotels in 80 countries.

Prior to that post, the Belgian native spent 18

years with Orient-Express, the famed precursor to the Belmond brand. First joining the hospitality company as general manager of Bora Bora Lagoon Resort in Tahiti, he rose through the ranks to become executive vice president and chief operating officer of Orient-Express. In between, his various roles included Group Vice President Operations, Regional Vice President, Africa, Australia & Latin America, and Managing Director of Hotels & Trains in Peru.

Boyen began his hospitality career as a Comis chef and stayed in the food and beverage side of the business for ten years, working in Michelin-starred restaurants in Belgium and France. He even did a stint under French master chef Joël Robuchon.

His extensive background in food and beverage, experience managing complex operations—including trains and ships—and luxury hospitality expertise harmoniously combine in his capacity as a Luxury Hospitality Advisor.

“Quality has always been a passion of mine. I support and celebrate everyone who has a passion for extraordinary service.”



Glenn Haussman

Host, No Vacancy Podcast

Glenn Haussman is a well-known advocate for the hospitality industry and a commentator, educator, and consultant. In both 2022 and 2023, he was recognized by the International Hospitality Institute as the #1 Global Social Media Influencer in Hospitality, and his show, No Vacancy Live, was also named the #1 podcast in hospitality. Additionally, in May 2022, he received the Leadership Excellence Award from SKAL USA for his tireless work bringing the hotel industry together during the Covid crisis, while the podcast was given a Davey Award.

Glenn publishes the novacancynews.com industry news site, is a professional keynote speaker, event host, and moderator, and is a consultant/strategist and speaker/media trainer.

Additionally, he hosts No Vacancy News Today, a news and analysis program focused on hospitality headlines, and Friday Night Audit, a comedy-focused happy hour show.

The No Vacancy podcast hosted by Glenn Haussman and Anthony Melchiorri attracts the biggest names in hospitality, including major public company CEOs and industry influencers.

Glenn has been quoted in leading publications such as the New York Times, USA Today, Washington Post, Forbes, MSNBC.com, CNN.com and Chicago Tribune. He's also been in the classroom, previously serving for nearly 10 years as an adjunct professor at New York University, teaching classes in Public Relations & Advertising, and Consumer Behavior.

Find Glenn on social media at Glenn@novacancynews.com and @TravelingGlenn.



James Ferguson

Leadership and Culture Expert

Author, *The Confetti Culture*



James Ferguson is a leadership & culture expert, speaker & author of *The Confetti Culture Playbook: How to boost your team's contribution & impact*. He has been recognized by Global Gurus as a Top 30 Organizational Culture Professional in 2022, 2023, and 2024, a Top 100 Most Inspirational People in Hospitality by IHI, an HRZone Culture Pioneer Award finalist for 2023, and a Top Workplaces winner,

James specializes in guiding hotels to improve employee engagement and retention by realigning their priorities and putting employees first! If you are looking to be an Employer of Choice and create cultures where employees are seen, heard, and celebrated, connect with James to put the FUN back in FUNdamentals. Get Ready for confetti!



Leticia Proctor

Executive Vice President
Donohoe Hospitality Services

Leticia Proctor is the Executive Vice President at Donohoe Hospitality Services. Leticia provides leadership and strategy for sales, marketing, revenue management, new builds, and property renovations. Leticia focuses on maximizing total hotel revenue that increases profitability while building a sales culture that promotes staff development and retention for DHS and its hotel portfolio.

Leticia has over thirty years of experience in the hospitality industry, working with major hotel companies to improve sales, marketing, catering, revenue management, digital strategies, and hotel

operations. She has held sales and marketing positions with well-known hotel companies including PM Hotel Group, Kimpton Hotels, Hersha Hospitality Management, Crestline Hotels, Remington Hotels, Interstate Hotels & Resorts, Loews Hotels and Hospitality Partners.

Leticia has been recognized by the International Hospitality Institute as one of the Top 25 Most Influential Women, Top 25 Most Inspirational Executives in Travel/Hospitality, and Top 100 Most Influential Leaders in Hospitality. She also received the Minority Business Leader Award from the Washington Business Journal, the Top 25 Most Extraordinary Minds Award from HSMAI, and was selected as a Hoya Professional 30 by Georgetown University.

Leticia obtained her Bachelor of Science in Legal Studies with a minor in Business Law and Public Policy from the University of Maryland and her Masters of Professional Studies in Hospitality Management from Georgetown University.



Dr. Peter Ricci

Director of the Hospitality and Tourism Management program

Florida Atlantic University (FAU).

Dr. Peter Ricci is the Director of the Hospitality and Tourism Management program at Florida Atlantic University (FAU). The program is a Top 30 nationally. He has published more than industry and academic articles. He also maintains hospitality industry certifications across various areas, including marketing, sales, analytics, and hotel management.

Peter is a distinguished alumnus of the University of Florida, where he pursued both bachelor's and master's degrees. He later completed his doctorate at the University of Central Florida in Orlando.

His proudest accomplishment was the creation in his honor of the Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International's Dr. Peter Ricci scholarship. This fund provides annual financial awards to top-performing students studying hospitality sales, marketing, and revenue optimization across South Florida's colleges and universities.

Rachel Humphrey

Board Member, Speaker, Hospitality Industry Executive, and Counsel

Rachel is the Founder of the Women in Hospitality Leadership Alliance and a Board Member, Principal, and Interview Host for DEI Advisors. Before retiring in August 2021, Rachel served as the EVP and COO of AAHOA, the nation's largest and most influential hotel owners association. She was a member of its Executive Leadership Team and, in 2019, its interim President and CEO. Rachel joined AAHOA in 2015 after over 20 years as a trial lawyer.

Rachel has been recognized as one of the most "Influential Women in Hospitality," one of the "Top 50 Women in Travel," one of the "100 Most Powerful People in USA Hospitality," and one of the "100 Most Inspirational People in Hospitality". She has received numerous awards and recognitions for her leadership and service to the hospitality industry.



She is dedicated to advancing women in leadership in the hospitality industry. In addition to the Alliance and DEI Advisors, Rachel currently serves on the boards of Women in Travel Thrive and the Kennesaw State University Coles College of Business. She is also a frequent speaker at industry conferences and serves on numerous advisory boards within the hospitality industry.

SHE IS DEDICATED TO
ADVANCING WOMEN
IN LEADERSHIP IN THE
HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY.



Ashli Johnson

Founder

Hospitality Hued

Ashli is committed to elevating communities and creating wealth through hospitality ownership and leadership. A passionate advocate for the hospitality industry, Ms. Johnson is frequently invited to provide remarks at top business and hospitality conferences, making her an industry mainstay.

specifically benefiting the underrepresented and underestimated in the hospitality industry, such as HLT100 (Hospitality Leaders Today) and Hospitality Hued. Double hospitality degreed, Ms. Johnson is a proud alumna of the University of West Florida and Florida International University

She is the founder of conference programs



Rupesh “Rup” Patel

Hotel Investor & Advocate

Rupesh “Rup” Patel has hosted Hospitality Live with Rupesh. He is an active hotel investor and a strong advocate for the hospitality industry.

Shannon McCallum

Vice President, Hotel Operations,
Resorts World Las Vegas

As Vice President of Hotel Operations for Resorts World Las Vegas, Shannon McCallum oversees and executes the strategic direction of all hotel functions, including the front desk, revenue, front services, VIP services, spa, housekeeping, pool, uniforms, concierge, and more.

McCallum is responsible for creating and implementing innovations to enhance the guest experience and developing short- and long-term goals to generate revenue for the property’s three hotel brands – Las Vegas Hilton, Conrad Las Vegas, and Crocford’s Las Vegas.

In her role at the Strip’s newest integrated resort, McCallum works to create an environment that motivates team members to perform at their best, further developing the Resorts World Las Vegas brand and establishing its reputation in the Las Vegas market. She looks forward to refining the operations and the innovative technology that enhances the guest and employee experience, continuing to focus on driving a culture of service excellence.

McCallum brings more than 30 years of experience in the hospitality industry throughout the U.S. and Canada with some of the industry’s largest and most respected brands. She most recently served as Vice President of Hospitality for Volan Technology, leading the company’s Hospitality Division. Before her time at Volan, McCallum was Vice President of Operations for both ARIA Resort & Casino and Vdara Hotel & Spa, which was part of her nearly ten years with MGM Resorts International in Las Vegas. Her daily duties included overseeing more than 20 departments and ensuring the highest level of service was maintained



throughout the 5,000+ rooms and suites under her purview. McCallum also spent 15 years with Fairmont Hotels and Resorts in several management and executive roles with the world-renowned luxury brand.

McCallum is a Board Member of the Nevada Hotel and Lodging Association (NHLA) and past Chair of the Nevada Hotel and Lodging Foundation (NHLF). She currently sits on the Global Board of Directors for the Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals Association (HFTP) and is a past co-chair of the 2023 HITEC Advisory Council. She is also co-chair of the 2024 Super Bowl Host Committee for Hotels and Housing. McCallum was previously a member of the Forbes Travel Guide Standards Advisory Council representing Global Gaming properties. She was recognized as Hotelier of the Year for the State of Nevada in 2015.

MCCALLUM IS RESPONSIBLE
FOR CREATING AND
IMPLEMENTING
INNOVATIONS TO ENHANCE
THE GUEST EXPERIENCE...



Sima Patel

Co-Founder and CEO

Ridgemont Hospitality

Sima is the Co-founder and CEO of Ridgemont Hospitality, a family-owned and operated company.

Sima is a Passionate Leader, Visionary, and lifelong Entrepreneur with extensive experience in Hospitality operations and Hotel Development.

Sima Patel came to Oakland in 1979 after marrying her husband, Pravin Patel, who is also an Oakland resident. They have raised their family in North Oakland. Today, their son Dhruv Patel has joined the family business. He is the president of Ridgemont Hospitality and the current chair of the Visit Oakland Board.

Sima currently serves as a Chief Fiscal officer and past chair of Visit California, representing over 20,000 tourism industry partners. She serves on an executive committee of the California Chamber

of Commerce and the California State University Hospitality and Tourism Alliance advisory board.

She is the Past Chair of Visit Oakland where she was instrumental in securing funding to market Oakland as a destination through a voter referendum. Her civic involvement includes the Oakland Rotary Club and serving as Vice-chair of the Historic Paramount Theatre in Oakland.

Sima proudly serves her Oakland community and is always willing to help. She is a recipient of numerous business and leadership awards, including AAHOA Women Hotelier of the Year 2001, 100 Most Influential Women in Business SF Bay Area, Ascend Executive Leadership Award, and Richard L. Speece Leadership Award. She is also the founder of a nonprofit named Saaheli.org, whose mission is to educate, empower, and engage women globally.

CERTIFIED HOSPITALITY SALES EXECUTIVE (CHSE)

For sales and marketing executives in the
Hospitality/Travel industries.

CERTIFIED HOSPITALITY SALES MANAGER (CHSM)

For sales and marketing managers in the
Hospitality/Travel industries.

CERTIFIED SALES AND MARKETING EXECUTIVE (CSME)

For sales and marketing executives working
in any industry.

Benefits of Getting Certified

- Gain strategic sales and marketing skills to power your career and drive your organization's success.
- Enhanced professional credibility.
- Gain new competencies while enhancing current competencies.
- Professional development.



The International Hospitality Hall of Fame is the culmination of several years of work by IHI. Congratulations to 2023's honorees!

To learn more about the class of 2023, visit www.HospitalityHallofFame.org or contact info@InternationalHospitalityInstitute.com.

INTERNATIONAL HOSPITALITY HALL OF FAME
AND MUSEUM

