



CFHLA Thanks Our Back of the House Sponsors



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CFHLA Honors Exceptional Hospitality Front Line Professionals at the Golden Pineapple Awards



On **Thursday, February 27th**, CFHLA hosted our annual **Golden Pineapple Awards** dinner and celebration at the [Orlando World Center Marriott](#) (Thank you **Robert Bray**, General Manager).

This year, **CFHLA** recognized **263 “front line” employees from 67 different Central Florida lodging properties**, that were nominated for each of the thirteen categories for their exemplary service and outstanding customer satisfaction throughout 2024. Thank you to **Ybeth Bruzual of Spectrum News 13**, who served as our guest emcee for the second year in a row for the event which attracted **over 950 attendees**.

Next week's Back of House will include more information about each of the Golden Pineapple Winners and a photo gallery from the signature event.



**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR NOMINEES AND
2025 GOLDEN PINEAPPLE AWARD WINNERS!**

Outstanding Back Office Employee of the Year

Sunny Tsehaye

[Grand Bohemian Hotel Orlando](#)

Outstanding Bell Person/Concierge Employee of the Year

Louis Douyon

[Four Seasons Resort Orlando at Walt Disney World Resort](#)

Outstanding Community Service Employee of the Year

Yvonne Suarez

[Hyatt House Orlando Airport](#)

Outstanding Convention Center/Banquet Employee of the Year

Kevin Alburez

[Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center](#)

Outstanding Culinary Employee of the Year

Weynshete Beyene

[Renaissance Orlando at SeaWorld](#)

Outstanding Engineering Employee of the Year

Luis Otero Torres

[Hampton Inn & Suites Orlando/ East UCF Area](#)

Outstanding Food & Beverage Service Employee of the Year

Xzavier Salazar

[Holiday Inn Orlando International Airport](#)

Outstanding Front Office Employee of the Year

Catherine Davis

[Hyatt Regency Orlando](#)

Outstanding Housekeeping Employee of the Year

Gilaine Pierre

[Loews Sapphire Falls Resort](#)

Outstanding Laundry Employee of the Year

Charming Perez

[Signia by Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek](#)

Outstanding Recreational Employee of the Year

Chevis Earle

[Evermore Orlando Resort](#)

Outstanding Security/Loss Prevention Employee of the Year

Magaly Gomez

Sheraton Vistana Villages

Outstanding Steward/Dishwasher Employee of the Year

Maria Leticia Suarez

Ritz-Carlton Orlando, Grande Lakes

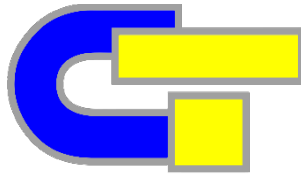
Each honoree, through generous donations from CFHLA Members, received a large gift basket filled with attraction and entertainment tickets, gift cards and more. Thank you to the following companies who contributed to these honoree baskets including: [Align Business Advisory Services](#), [CEC Entertainment](#), [Experience Kissimmee](#), [Florida Citrus Sports](#), [Florida HIA](#), [Greater Florida Electrical Contractors](#), [Global Sourcing International, LLC](#), [J.R. Hobbs Co- Atlanta, LLC](#), [LandCare](#), [Orlando City Soccer Club](#), [SeaWorld Orlando](#), and [Universal Orlando Resort](#).

**CFHLA would like to thank our
Golden Pineapple Award Presenting Sponsor:**



**CFHLA would also like to thank our
Golden Pineapple Award Corporate Sponsors:**





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Thank You Scholarship Committee Members!



This year, our dedicated **twenty-three CFHLA Scholarship Committee Members** secured a **minimum of \$2,500** each in monetary and/or auction donations for the CFHLA Gives Program, which raises money for Hospitality and Culinary Student Scholarships, Family Member Scholarships and Educational Grants. It is because of their generous support, our CFHLA Foundation will be able to distribute these funds to the recipients of our student scholarships and educational grants that will be announced during our **CFHLA Gives Scholarship Luncheon this fall**.

Thank you, **CFHLA Foundation Board Chair and Chair of the Scholarship Committee, Paul Joseph, Managing Director** of the [Hyatt Regency Orlando](#) and his entire team, for hosting a wonderful reception this week in appreciation of the fundraising efforts of the 2024 Scholarship Committee Members.

Thank you to each of the scholarship committee members and thank you again **Paul Joseph**, for your incredible leadership and support of this program as the 2024 Committee Chair!

Welcome Matthew McAlister as new GM at The Celeste Hotel Orlando, a Tribute Portfolio Hotel

Please join us in welcoming **Matthew McAlister** as the new **General Manager** at [The Celeste Hotel Orlando](#), a Tribute Portfolio Hotel. Matthew brings more than 20 years of experience within the hospitality industry to our community.

Matthew has a distinguished background in luxury hospitality management and a deep passion to create outstanding guest experiences. He has led successful hotel openings, large-scale renovations and daily operations at independent and branded properties. McAlister previously served as General Manager at the [Daytona Grande Oceanfront Resort](#) and at [Delaware North](#).

We look forward to seeing Matthew's continuing success, and we welcome him to our Central Florida hospitality community. Congrats!



*Welcome
& Congrats*

**MATTHEW
MCALISTER**
.....

CFHLA welcomes
Matthew McAlister,
General Manager at The
Celeste Hotel Orlando, A
Tribute Portfolio Hotel
to the Central Florida
hospitality community!



CFHLA
Central Florida
Hotel & Lodging Association

**CLICK HERE TO
PURCHASE BODY AD**

**Partners in Action - Allied Relations Council Provides
Supplies to Wekiva High School**



Volunteers from the CFHLA [Allied Relations Council](#) are helping one of their partner schools stock up on supplies to make sure students are ready to learn at [Wekiva High School](#). Thank you to **Peter Woodruff** of [Southeastern Laundry Equipment](#), who recently dropped off a cart load of supplies to assist the staff there.

Did you know that the CFHLA Allied Relations Council supports Wekiva High School, [Lockhart Elementary School](#) and [Lockhart Middle School](#) with several volunteer programs throughout the school year as part of our [Adopt-A-School](#) Program?

Two CFHLA Members are 2025 ARDA Awards Program Finalists

Congratulations to two of our CFHLA Members who are currently finalists for the [2025 ARDA Awards Program](#)!

First, CFHLA Engineers' Council Board Member **Ronald Carroz Castillo**, of the [Hilton Vacation Club Grand Beach Orlando](#), was named a finalist in the Maintenance Team Member Large Developer Category. Secondly, we'd like to recognize CFHLA Security & Safety Council Board Member **Keith**

McRae, [Holiday Inn Club Vacations- Orange Lake Resort](#), who was named a finalist in the Safety & Security Professional or Team Category.

All winners will be announced at the ARDA Spring Conference during the ARDA Awards Ceremony held on Wednesday, March 26, 2025, at the [Signia by Hilton at Bonnet Creek](#). Best of luck to both of our members!



CFHLA Board Member Receives Service Honor from the Hotel Owners Association

Please join us in congratulating CFHLA Board Member **Raman (R.P.) Rama**, President and CTO of [Holiday Inn Orlando International Airport](#) for recently receiving a prestigious hotel owners service award in India. Mr. Rama was recently honored with the **Bharitiya Gaurav Award NRI Division**.

Mr. Rama's name was recommended for this award by Ex. Indian Embassy Diplomat Mr. Dharmavir Singh from New Delhi for Mr. Rama's contribution to promoting the Indian culture and values in the Hospitality Industry profession. R.P. has been in the Hospitality Industry for the past 43 years.

The award recognizes successful hotel owners for high ethical standards and for giving back to their communities. Mr. Rama traveled to India to receive the award from the Hotel Owners Association.

We also thank R.P. Rama for his many contributions to the hospitality and tourism industry in Central Florida and for his decades of passion to serve others.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FEBRUARY MEMBERS OF THE MONTH

Meet Our February Members of the Month



Barb Bowden

[Loews Hotels at Universal](#)
[Orlando](#)



Lexi Willaman

[LandCare](#)

To nominate a future CFHLA Allied and/or Lodging Member of the Month, please [CLICK HERE](#).

MEET THE VIP



Did You Know...

At [Gas South](#), our purpose is to Be A Fuel For Good, and we put that purpose into practice by giving back 5% of our profits to support children's basic needs, education, and wellness. In 2024, we committed over \$4 million and over 1,200 volunteer hours to 10 Fuel For Good Allies in Georgia and Florida, as well as Impact Investments chosen by employees and customers, and team grant projects driven by our employees. Serving others and doing what's right are core values at Gas South, and we're proud to support inspirational organizations that provide positive pathways and strengthen our communities.

UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information on upcoming events, or to register, just click on the button below.

- [Airport Area Hoteliers Luncheon \(3/5/2025\)](#)
 - [Engineers Council Board Meeting \(3/6/2025\)](#)
 - [Osceola County General Managers Luncheon \(3/6/2025\)](#)
 - [St. Patrick's Day Golf Open Committee Meeting #2 \(3/10/2025\)](#)
 - [Allied Relations Council Breakfast - Meet your new CFHLA Board Members \(3/11/2025\)](#)
 - [CFHLA Executive Committee Meeting \(3/11/2025\)](#)
 - [Wednesday AM Leads Group \(3/12/2025\)](#)
 - [Wednesday Noon Leads Group \(3/12/2025\)](#)
 - [St. Patrick's Day Golf Open \(3/13/2025\)](#)
 - [Security & Safety Council Board Meeting \(3/20/2025\)](#)
-

CLICK HERE FOR A GUIDE
TO REGISTER AN
INDIVIDUAL FOR EVENTS

CLICK HERE FOR A GUIDE
TO REGISTER A TABLE/
TEAM FOR EVENTS

JOB OPENINGS

Check out the latest hospitality employment opportunities in Central Florida.

[VIEW JOB POSTINGS](#)

CONNECT WITH CFHLA



WWW.CFHLA.ORG

About CFHLA

6675 Westwood Blvd #210, Orlando, FL 32821

The mission of the Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association is to represent the Central Florida Hospitality Industry, by setting the standard of excellence through advocacy, collaboration, education, recognition, and service.