



March 28, 2025

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Advocating at the State Capitol for Florida Tourism Day



This week, more than 25 of our CFHLA members and industry partners had the opportunity to advocate and engage with our legislative leaders during Florida Tourism Day!

Thank you to all of our members, partners and elected officials who joined us for this important advocacy trip, as we partnered with so many other industry leaders and professionals from across the state to discuss our priorities, educate policymakers on the issues that can directly impact your business, and share the incredible value of tourism to Florida's economy, our team members and its residents.

In addition to educating nearly two dozen legislators, we had the opportunity to hear from **Florida Governor Ron DeSantis**, **[VISIT FLORIDA](#)'s Interim President/CEO Craig Thomas**, and the **Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation Secretary Melanie Griffin**.



It was an extremely productive couple of days advocating on behalf of the hospitality and tourism industry, along with educating our Legislators on the significant economic impacts that the industry continues to have on our state. Thank you again to each of the legislators who met with us and we appreciate them for taking the time to listen to our industry leaders.

Enhancing Security Through Drone Technology



This week, the **CFHLA Security & Safety Council** hosted an insightful **Drone Seminar** featuring **Deputy First Class Michael Kleinfelt, UAS Coordinator** and Knightro with the **Orange County Sheriff's Office – Orlando**. This seminar was a great opportunity to educate and showcase how utilizing technology and drones properly, can help keep our visitors and guests safe.

DFC Kleinfelt highlighted the many ways drones are being used for surveillance, search and rescue, and emergency response. He shared a real-life example from an incident on International Drive, where a drone played a key role in resolving an unruly guest situation by providing live-streamed footage to law enforcement.

Attendees left with a greater understanding of the capabilities and benefits of drone technology in enhancing security across the hospitality industry. CFHLA appreciates DFC Kleinfelt and the Orange County Sheriff's Office for their continued partnership and expertise with our industry professionals.

Congratulations to 2025 UCF Rosen College Hospitality Hall of Fame Honorees



CFHLA is proud to congratulate **Frank Santos, Chief Executive Officer of Rosen Hotels & Resorts**, and **Jeff Polk, Executive Vice President and General Manager of Epic Universe** at **Universal Orlando Resort**, as this year's inductees into the **UCF Rosen College Hospitality Hall of Fame**.



Both leaders have made a profound impact on Central Florida's hospitality and tourism industry, demonstrating exceptional leadership, innovation, and dedication to excellence. Their contributions continue to shape the future of our industry and inspire the next generation of hospitality professionals.

Congratulations to Frank Santos and Jeff Polk on this well-deserved honor!

Partners In Action - Staff Pro Workforce Solutions hosts Donut Treats at Kissimmee Middle School



CFHLA is proud to recognize the partnership between **Staff Pro Workforce** and **Kissimmee Middle School**. Recently, Staff Pro Workforce sponsored a Parent and Student Donut Treat at their Adopt-A-School partner, Kissimmee Middle School. Because of their generosity, the school was able to bring families together for a fun and meaningful time on campus.



Thank you to the team of Staff Pro Workforce for your support of this fantastic opportunity to strengthen community connections and support family engagement in education!



Welcome Universal's Terra Luna Resort



Please join us in welcoming our newest CFHLA Member Universal's [Terra Luna Resort](#) on their official grand opening this week! With another 750 guest rooms, a shiny, tiled exterior and an interplanetary vibe, families are going to enjoy this twin of Stella Nova that is also within walking distance of the new Universal Epic Universe theme park this summer!

Thanks again to the team at Loews for giving us a tour of this brand new property, that will offer guests a unique space-themed stay and space station-styled windows! On behalf of CFHLA, we wish all the best to Complex Managing Director, Jonathan Barisano, and the entire Terra Luna team on this out of this world, new addition to our community! Welcome to Central Florida and congratulations!



CFHLA Ladies Empowered at the GamechangHers Leadership Summit

On Thursday, the ladies of CFHLA had a wonderful experience at the **GamechangHers Leadership Summit**, presented by our CFHLA partner the **Orlando Magic**.

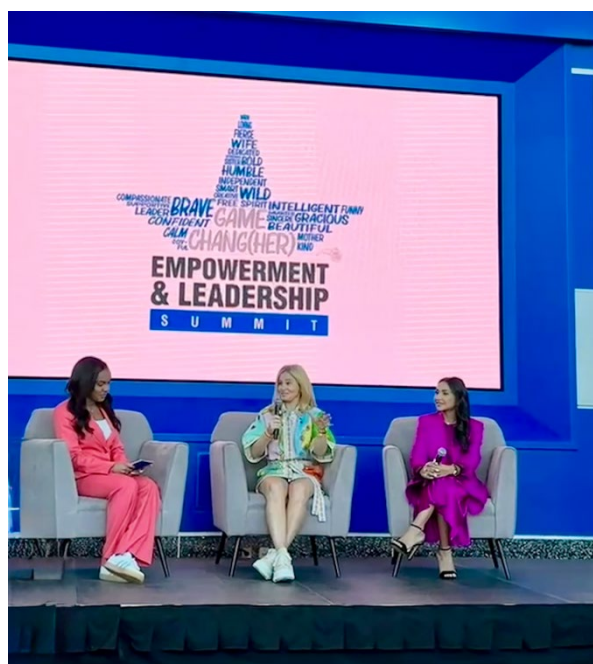


This dynamic event featured an inspiring panel discussion with two powerhouse Orlando-based entrepreneurs: **Suneera Madhani, Founder and CEO of Worth AI**, and **Lindsay Muscato, Founder of Teleties**. The

excitement continued with a captivating fireside chat with **Sali Christeson, Founder and CEO of Argent.**

To top it all off, attendees came together to pack food for the **Desire Foundation**, making a tangible impact on our community.

Thank you to the Orlando Magic inviting our team members to join in this inspiring morning!



Orlando's Sports Leaders Share Insights at Business of Sports Panel



CFHLA was proud to attend the **Orlando Business Journal's 2025 Business of Sports panel**, where industry leaders shared insights on the evolving sports landscape in Central Florida.

Moderated by **Greater Orlando Sports Commission President / CEO Jason Siegel**, the panel featured **Donna Boone, Head Coach of UCF Track & Field**; **Kelly Hyne, SVP of Brand Alliance at Orlando City Soccer** and **Orlando Pride**; **Amy Pauly, Head Coach & VP of Volleyball Operations - Orlando Valkyries**; and **Sherry Wheelock, President / CEO of Special Olympics Florida**.

Discussions covered topics such as the economic impact of sports tourism, the rise of women's athletics, and strategies for strengthening community engagement through sports. Their perspectives underscored the importance of collaboration between sports organizations and the hospitality industry, reinforcing Orlando's reputation as a premier sports destination.

CFHLA appreciates these industry leaders for sharing their expertise and for helping to shape the future of sports in Central Florida.

Wekiva High School's Magnet Academy: Shaping Future Hospitality Leaders

The Magnet Academy of Culinary Arts at Wekiva High School is more than just a classroom - it's a gateway to success in the hospitality industry. Under the leadership of **Chef Christopher Bates**, a seasoned professional with over 25 years of experience, students engage in a four-year, hands-on education that prepares them for careers as chefs, restaurant managers, and hospitality professionals.

Since its launch in 2016, the program has flourished, offering students real-world experience in a fully equipped kitchen, bakery, café, and demo kitchen. They take on roles in marketing, inventory management, and even operate a school food truck - gaining valuable business and money management skills.



Beyond the classroom, students connect with Orlando's hospitality industry, learning directly from professionals in hotels and restaurants. Whether aspiring to run a local café or lead an international resort, graduates of this program leave with the expertise and confidence to thrive.

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**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR
MARCH MEMBERS OF THE MONTH**

Meet Our March Members of the Month



Mark Cartotto

Caribe Royale Orlando



Christina Martinez

Simplefire

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

MEET THE VIP



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UPCOMING EVENTS

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

- [New Member Orientation \(4/1/2025\)](#)
- [CFHLA Board of Directors Meeting \(4/2/2025\)](#)
- [CFHLA VIP After Hours Reception \(4/2/2025\)](#)
- [Adopt A School & CARES Committee Meeting \(4/3/2025\)](#)
- [Vacation Ownership Council Meeting \(4/8/2025\)](#)
- [Wednesday AM Leads Group \(4/9/2025\)](#)
- [Wednesday Noon Leads Group \(4/9/2025\)](#)
- [Seminar #2 - 2025 Leadership Development Series \(4/9/2025\)](#)
- [I-Drive/LBV Area General Managers Meeting \(4/10/2025\)](#)
- [2025 Hob Nob \(4/15/2025\)](#)

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TO REGISTER AN
INDIVIDUAL FOR EVENTS

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TO REGISTER A TABLE/
TEAM FOR EVENTS**

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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.