



March 7, 2025

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**Meet the Exceptional Front Line Golden Pineapple Award
Winners**



Once again, congratulations to the **thirteen Central Florida hospitality professionals** that were selected and honored at our **Golden Pineapple Awards** dinner and celebration at the [Orlando World Center Marriott](#) last week (**thanks again Robert Bray, General Manager**)!

It was an incredible evening as we **recognized 263 “front line” hospitality professionals from 67 different Central Florida lodging properties**, that were nominated for their exemplary service and outstanding customer satisfaction throughout 2024.

To learn more about each of our thirteen Golden Pineapple Award winners, please [CLICK HERE](#).



Lastly, we invite you to check out the photo album from the event by [CLICKING HERE](#). A special thanks to [Britt Runion Studios](#), our in-kind photographer.

[CLICK TO VIEW GOLDEN](#)

Orlando Airport Area General Managers Meeting



On **Wednesday**, the **Orlando Airport Area General Managers** held their first meeting of the year at the [Hyatt Regency Orlando International Airport](#) (thank you **Bruce McDonald, General Manager**). Thank you to the team for your wonderful hospitality and a delicious lunch.

Each of our members had a chance to network and discuss variety of issues that are important to the Orlando Airport area hotels. Additionally, we were grateful for an update from **Jason Siegel**, President / CEO of the [Greater Orlando Sports Commission](#), as he shared more about the organization's efforts to bring group sporting events (of all shapes and sizes) which will significantly boost Central Florida's economy.



CFHLA would like to thank our 2025 Orlando Airport Area General Managers Meeting Sponsors:



Osceola County General Managers Meeting



Then on Thursday, the **Osceola County General Managers** also held their first meeting of the year at [Experience Kissimmee](#). A special thank you to **D.T. Minich and Misty Johantgen** for your continued partnership with CFHLA and for your outstanding hospitality.

During the meeting, each of our members had a chance to network and discuss variety of issues that are important to the hospitality and tourism industry in Osceola County. Lastly, a special thanks to **Beth Knight**, Chief Operating Officer for [Osceola County](#), for providing a County update on a variety of relevant topics including economic development, transportation, housing, and so much more.

CFHLA would like to thank our 2025 Osceola County General Managers Meeting Sponsors:



Partners in Action - Hampton Inn & Suites and Hyatt House Orlando Airport Helps Students in Need at Little River Elementary

A big thank you to our Partners in Action at the [Hampton Inn & Suites Orlando Airport at Gateway Village](#) and [Hyatt House Orlando Airport](#) who recently worked together to support their [Adopt-A-School](#) partner [Little River Elementary](#). By working together, they were able to collect more than 300 school supplies and drop off these much-needed items to the school.



Thanks again to the teams at the Hampton Inn & Suites Orlando Airport at Gateway Village and the Hyatt House Orlando Airport, for taking the time to help make such a positive impact in our students through the Adopt-A-School program.



Welcome and Meet Dace Stewart

This week, CFHLA President/CEO Robert Agrusa and CFHLA Senior Vice President of Membership and Industry Relations Erin Walsh had the opportunity to officially welcome back **Dace Stewart, Complex General Manager of [Marriott Village Orlando](#)**!

With more than 20 years of experience, Dace began his hospitality career as a Front Desk Supervisor at the Charlotte Marriott City Center and then advanced to become the Director of Finance at Marriott Village Orlando in 2012. Then before being named the **Complex General Manager** in November 2023, Dace served as Dual General Manager of the Residence Inn West Palm Beach Downtown and the Fairfield Inn Wellington, among a few other properties.

Dace now oversees the multi-branded 1,100-room Courtyard, SpringHill Suites, and Fairfield Inn & Suites Orlando Lake Buena Vista in Marriott Village Orlando.

We are excited you've rejoined our Central Florida Hospitality community and we look forward to seeing your continued success!



Avanti Palms Rebrands as the Wyndham I-Drive Avanti Resort & Conference Center



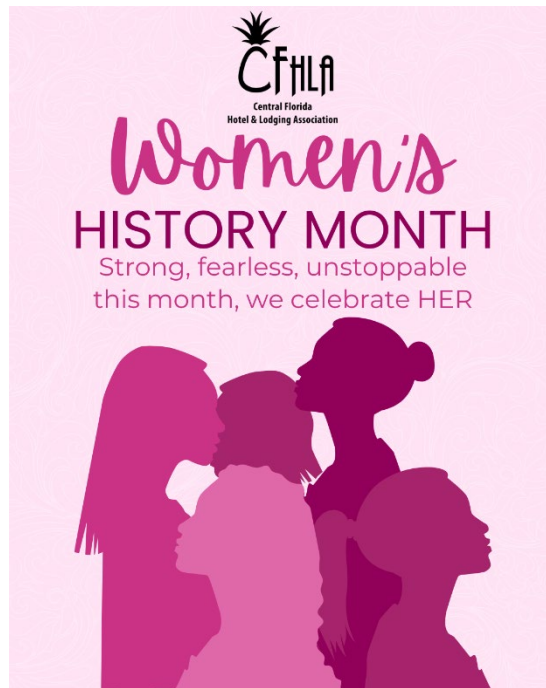
Congratulations to [Paramount Hospitality Management](#) on their recent exciting announcement, as they have rebranded the former Avanti Palms Resort and Conference Center. As a new addition to the Wyndham Hotels family, the resort has been rebranded as the [Wyndham I-Drive Avanti Resort & Conference Center](#).

Situated on 14 acres directly across from Universal Volcano Bay, the newly rebranded 652-room resort provides visitors with convenient access to six major theme parks - in the heart of Orlando's world-renowned International Drive - including the highly anticipated Universal Epic Universe, along with premier attractions such as The Orlando Eye.

The full-service resort also boasts six multi-story buildings and a 14-story tower featuring an atrium serenity garden, making it a standout destination on I-Drive. Plus, with the I-Ride Trolley stop conveniently located in front of the resort, visitors can easily explore the entire I-Drive district.

Once again, congratulations to Paramount Hospitality Management on this exciting transition and we look forward to the continued success of the Wyndham I-Drive Avanti Resort & Conference Center as it welcomes guests to the heart of Orlando's hospitality hub!

Celebrating Women's History Month



March is Women's History Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the incredible contributions of women in all industries—including hospitality. From pioneering leaders to dedicated professionals shaping the future of Central Florida's tourism and lodging sector, women continue to play a vital role in our region's success.

CFHLA is proud to highlight the achievements of the many women making an impact in our industry, from general managers and executives to front-line associates and rising stars. Join us this month in recognizing the women who drive hospitality forward, and let's continue to support and empower future generations of female leaders!

**CLICK HERE TO
PURCHASE FOOTER AD**

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR MARCH MEMBERS OF THE MONTH

Meet Our March Members of the Month

CFHLA is proud to recognize our **Lodging Member of the Month** for March, **Mark Cartotto, Complex Director of Security and Risk Management** for [Caribe Royale Orlando](#)! We are all grateful for Mark's incredible help in hosting the first-ever Safety & Security Summit with OCPS last year, as well as his continued support for many of CFHLA's initiatives and participation at our signature events over the past several years. Lastly, Mark's unwavering support in building the future workforce of the hospitality industry is truly exceptional, and we sincerely appreciate his positive contributions!

We also proudly recognize our **Allied Member of the Month** for March, **Christina Martinez, President** for [Simplefire](#). CFHLA is extremely grateful for her outstanding involvement, participation, and phenomenal support as a VIP Member of CFHLA! This includes her continual participation and involvement in numerous CFHLA events, as well as her service on many of our committees including the Membership Committee this year.

It's because of these positive contributions and continued partnership, we are eager to recognize them both this month!

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



Mark Cartotto

[Caribe Royale Orlando](#)



Christina Martinez

[Simplefire](#)

MEET THE VIP



Did You Know...

Did you know that Dr. Alan Fickett of [Global Sourcing International](#) who sits on PAC Board of Directors has a degree from Florida Tech (now UCF), University of Florida & Florida State University and held aspirations of becoming a College President...

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Missing

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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.