



January 24, 2025

CFHLA Thanks Our Back of the House Sponsors

Finding a health plan is simpler than you think.



If your life changes, your health plan should too. Find out if you qualify for **\$0 monthly payments.***

[LEARN MORE](#)

Florida Blue 
Your Health Solutions Partner

Policies have limitations and exclusions. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc., CBA Florida Blue, is an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.
*Marketplace monthly advance premium tax credit is equal or greater than the premium. ©2025 0125

CFHLA Board of Directors Holds January Meeting & After Hours



On Wednesday, January 22nd, CFHLA was thrilled to kick off the new year with our first Board of Directors Meeting and After Hours reception at the [Orlando Health Dr. P. Phillips Hospital](#) (Thank you President Philip Koovakada).

Thank you to CFHLA VIP member [Clean Tec Outsourcing](#) for sponsoring the January Board of Directors Meeting. Also, a special thanks to **Tyson Smith**, Vice President of Investments with [Raymond James](#) for his financial update and to **Robert Stuart, Jr.** and **Chris Carmody** with [GrayRobinson](#) for updating our Board Members on the important issues that will be considered by the Florida Legislature during the 2025 session.



Immediately following the CFHLA Board of Directors Meeting, CFHLA hosted our first **After Hours Networking Reception** of the year. This networking reception, proudly sponsored by our Silver Partner Members **A&E Hospitality Solutions, LLC** and **GX Solutions**, included more than 230 **CFHLA Lodging and Allied Members** who sought opportunities to do business with other members and enjoyed outstanding food prepared by Orlando Health's culinary experts.





[Click Here to View Board Meeting & After Hours Photos](#)

CFHLA Supports & Volunteers at MLK Million Meal Pack



On Monday, the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association and dozens of our members were proud to partner and volunteer with [U.S. Hunger](#), as a Peace Sponsor for this year's [MLK Million Meal Pack](#).

U.S. Hunger led the effort to package more than one million food relief meals and to honor the life and legacy of **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.** and his dedication of service to others.

Through this partnership, we were delighted to give local families in need a little extra “room” to breathe, serve our neighbors in need, and build a stronger and brighter community for tomorrow. CFHLA was grateful for the opportunity to join in this community-wide day of service held at the [Orange County Convention Center](#).



Universal's Stella Nova Resort Welcomes First Guests



Congratulations to our Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association Member [Universal Orlando Resort Stella Nova Resort](#) on their official grand opening this week! With 750 guest rooms, a massive pool, multiple dining options, and tons of recreational fun, families are going to enjoy this new space-themed hotel within walking distance of the new [Universal Epic Universe](#) theme park this summer!

Thanks to the [Loews Hotels](#) team for giving us a tour of the new property! On behalf of CFHLA, we wish all the best to **Complex Managing Director, Jonathan Barisano** and the entire Stella Nova team on this out of this world, new addition to our community! Welcome to Central Florida!





Register for CFHLA Leadership Development Seminar #1

Register now for the **Leadership Development Seminar 1, Leadership & Management Essentials**. This seminar will be held on **Monday, February 3rd, from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm** at the [Drury Plaza Hotel Lake Buena Vista](#). This is the first in a series of Leadership Development Seminars that CFHLA will be hosting throughout 2025.

The event will be presented by **Dr. Fevzi Okumus**, [UCF Rosen College](#) and **Ally Martin**, **General Manager**, [Hyatt House Orlando Airport](#). The cost to attend is \$30 per person.

[CLICK HERE](#) to register for Seminar 1.



CFHLA Allied and Lodging Members
are welcome for the 2025

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SERIES

Seminar 1, Leadership & Management Essentials

Monday, February 3rd | 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Drury Plaza Hotel Lake Buena Vista

Presented by:

Pricing: \$30/person



Dr. Fevzi Okumus
UCF Rosen College



Ally Martin
Hyatt House
Orlando Airport



This seminar explores critical career transitions, from peer to supervisor & manager to leader, emphasizing leadership styles and their influence on team dynamics. Attendees will gain skills in building strong interpersonal relationships, mastering time management, active listening, and conflict resolution. The session covers balancing daily operations with strategic planning, leveraging data for decision-making, and fostering motivation & engagement in diverse teams. Enhance your leadership journey with these best practices.

For more information, please contact Melanie Anesh at
melanie.anesh@cfhla.org or 407-313-5022.

Hospitality Competition for the High Schools

Last Friday, the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association was proud to sponsor once again the **2025 Hospitality Competition for Central Florida Students**. This year's competition was the largest to date with more than **100 students** taking part from **six Central Florida Hospitality & Tourism Programs!**

Students showed their skills and passion for hospitality by competing in **Guest Service, Customer Service, & F&B Scenarios** and preparing projects focused on Marketing, Entrepreneurship, and B.E.O. Congratulations to all of the students who put their hearts

into it, and thanks to all of the sponsors and CFHLA members for serving as judges for the competition!

Lastly, thank you to our partner [Rosen College of Hospitality Management](#) for hosting this amazing event again this year!





Please Review Your Golden Pineapple Awards Nominations

As a reminder, this week our **Lodging General Managers and Human Resources Departments** should have received an email regarding their nominated associates for this year's [Golden Pineapple Awards](#).

For quality assurance, please take a moment and follow the link below to review the spreadsheet and verify that your nominations have been received by CFHLA, along with the correct spelling and categories of all nominations.

[CLICK HERE TO REVIEW THE 2025 GOLDEN PINEAPPLE AWARD SUBMISSIONS.](#)

Any questions and/or adjustments must be submitted by Friday, January 31 to Kim Gordon at kim.gordon@cfhla.org.



Partners in Action - JW Marriott Orlando Bonnet Creek Resort & Spa Hosts Site Visit for Jones H.S.



A big thank you to our **Partners in Action** from [JW Marriott Orlando Bonnet Creek Resort & Spa](#) who helped students from [Jones High School](#) and [Winter Park High School](#) explore hospitality and culinary careers as part of our [Adopt-A-School](#) Program.

Bonnet Creek volunteers met with students in the **ESE Transition Program**, giving their young guests tours of the hotel to showcase the various career options available to them after they graduate from high school.

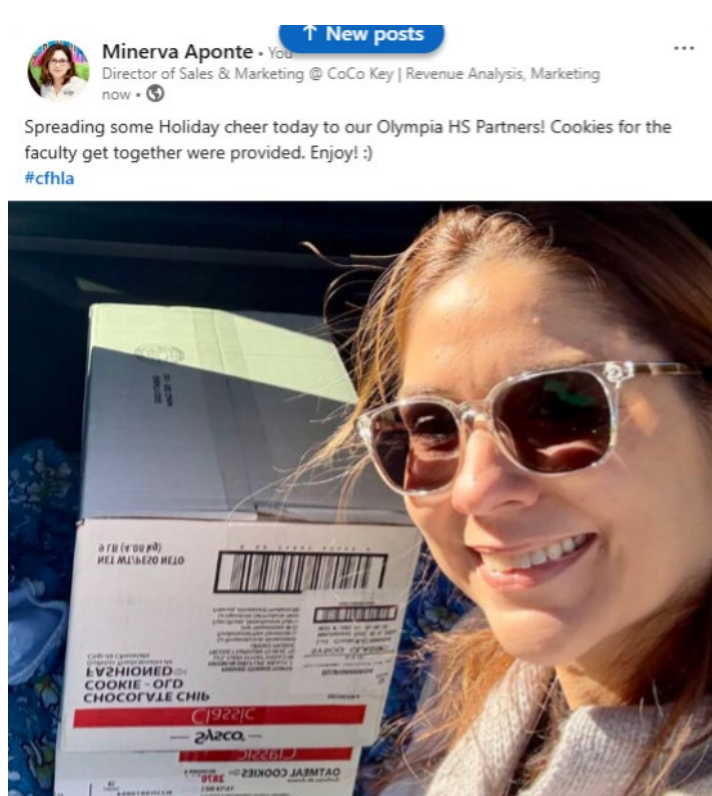
The Bonnet Creek team also took part in Career Day at **Olympia High School**. Students learned about the lifecycle of a group and met with professionals from the resort's Sales, Event Management, Banquet Operations, and Banquet Kitchen Departments. They even got to make their own pizzas for lunch!

Thanks to the Bonnet Creek team and all of our partners who make time to invest in the futures of our students through the **Adopt-A-School** program.



Partners in Action - Coco Key Cookies for Olympia H.S.

Also, kudos to our **Partners in Action** at [Coco Key Hotel and Water Resort-Orlando](#) for bringing holiday cookies to [Olympia High School](#), the resort's **Adopt-A-School** Partner. The cookies gave teachers and staff members a delicious boost during their December staff get together. Thanks again to **Minerva Aponte** and the entire Coco Key team!



CFHLA Hosts Central Florida Regional CEO Roundtable

CFHLA would like to thank the Central Florida business leaders, who joined our President/CEO Robert Agrusa at a **Central Florida Regional CEO Roundtable** on Thursday. This included several leaders from various local Chambers of Commerce and trade organizations across the region.

The goal was to help educate these important leaders on the positive impacts of the hospitality and tourism industry and to discuss collaboration among our organizations, as we advocate for several issues that are important to our region including **the appropriate use of TDT, improved transportation and infrastructure, increased workforce and attainable housing, additional funding for our educational partners, and an increased emphasis on accelerated workforce development programs.**

CFHLA thanks our partners who are working together in the spirit of collaboration to advance our communities priorities, and we look forward to participating in more roundtables throughout 2025 and beyond.



Jon McGavin of Grande Lakes Orlando is Serving on FL Division of Hotels and Restaurants Advisory Council

On behalf of CFHLA, please join us in congratulating our Board's **1st Vice Chair Jon McGavin, Area General Manager, [Ritz-Carlton Orlando, Grande Lakes](#)**, on his appointment to a four-year term on the [Florida Division of Hotels and Restaurants](#)

Advisory Council (HRAC). Jon's term began on December 16, 2024, and he will serve through December 15, 2028.

McGavin will use his significant industry experience to offer guidance and insights to the HRAC to improve relations and communication among the hospitality industry, consumers and the **Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation**. Jon will also advise the **Florida DBPR** about important issues impacting the future of Florida's hospitality industry. Congratulations again Jon, and thank you for your leadership and willingness to represent the Central Florida hospitality industry on this important statewide council!



Go Sports Announces 31 New Board Members for 2025

Congratulations to the 31 Central Florida leaders who were tapped to join the Board at the **Greater Orlando Sports Commission**. These Executive and Advisory Board Members will play a critical role to help Central Florida remain a top destination for sports tourism and to generate millions of dollars for our region's economy.

We especially want to thank several CFHLA Members who are now serving on the Greater Orlando Sports Commission Board. They include Executive Members: **Adam Ball**, [Walt Disney World Resort](#); **Anthony J. Davit**, [Greater Orlando Aviation Authority](#); **Ultima Espino**, [Orlando Health](#); **Lisa Messina**, [Visit Orlando](#); **Jon "JP" Peterson**, [SeaWorld Orlando](#).

We also acknowledge and thank the GO Sports Advisory Board Members who are also CFHLA Members: **Lena Combs**, [Withum](#); **Stephanie Howell**, [Valencia College](#); **John Lyon**, [Crowne Plaza Downtown Orlando](#).

2025 INCOMING BOARD MEMBERS

EXECUTIVE

					
ADAM BALL	ANTHONY J. DAVIT	ULTIMA ESPINO	JOHN FREMSTAD	LISA MESSINA	JON "J.P." PETERSON

ADVISORY

					
KARIM ARJA	REBEKAH ARTHUR	DAN ARTONE	JAMES BERRY	SCOTT CAVANAUGH	RANDY CHASE
					
LENA COMBS	JOEL DRAGAN	RICHARD ENSOR, ESQ.	JOE FERST	SHANNON FRASER	KOLLEEN HOGAN
					
STEPHANIE HOWELL	WILLIE JOHNSON	JOHN LYON	SUNEERA MADHANI	ERIK NILSEN	DR. JEFFREY O'BRIEN
					
EDDIE SERRANO	D.K. TAYLOR	ROD THOMPSON	JOHN TROUTT	JUSTIN WILLIAMS	VERED YAKOVEE
					
CHELSEA ZIRPOLA					



System Tech Services Inc | www.stsi-fla.com
#whereservicemeansbusiness | 407.682.9881
Serving Central Florida for almost 25 years **HVAC**

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



Colin Mills

[Sheraton Orlando Lake Buena](#)

[Vista Resort](#)

Akai Baker

[Daisy Baker Cakes](#)

MEET THE VIP



Did You Know...

[Crown Linen](#) is the largest hospitality-focused commercial laundry provider in the Southeast, servicing over 150 hotels across six states. With state-of-the-art facilities and a commitment to sustainability, we deliver high-quality linen solutions while reducing environmental impact. [Crown Linen](#) prides itself on being a reliable partner, ensuring smooth operations for hotels of all sizes.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

- [Housekeeping Council - Laundry Training Day \(2/5/2025\)](#)
 - [Membership Committee \(2/5/2025\)](#)
 - [Vacation Ownership Council Meeting \(2/11/2025\)](#)
 - [CFHLA Executive Committee Meeting \(2/11/2025\)](#)
 - [Wednesday AM Leads Group \(2/12/2025\)](#)
 - [Wednesday Noon Leads Group \(2/12/2025\)](#)
 - [Downtown Hoteliers Luncheon \(2/12/2025\)](#)
 - [Engineers Council Board Meeting \(2/13/2025\)](#)
-

[Click Here to View Upcoming
CFHLA Meetings & 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.