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AH&LA Recognizes 11 Innovative Environmental, Service, and Diversity Programs

CHICAGO, IL, June 24, 2009 - The American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA) to Achievement Awards, part of the annual Stars of the Industry Awards, which honor stand-out initiatives during the AH&LA Summer Summit at the Hilton Chicago, these awards, which have been awarded to hotels that have developed outstanding programs, events, and campaigns. Winners were chosen in categories including Earthkeeping, guest relations, outstanding community service, special events (one-time event and ongoing initiatives).

The 11 winners this year include:

The Orchard Garden Hotel in San Francisco, California, won the Good Earthkeeping award, making sustainability its guiding philosophy from the day of its ground-breaking. As the first LEED Platinum certification, its developers even selected the site location based on its proximity to public transportation. The hotel is manufactured locally to build 77 percent of the hotel. Guest rooms feature recycled products, energy-efficient lighting, and function with or without active guest participation, and the whole property saves energy costs by using energy-efficient lighting in occupied spaces. The hotel is constantly looking to improve upon their already successful eco-friendly sustainability measures, doing so based on environmental and in-depth consumer research.

Sheraton Seattle Hotel in Seattle, Washington, is the winner of the Good Earthkeeping award (Good Earthkeeping award rooms). The Sheraton's green strategy focused on three major areas: building infrastructure and program involvement; and guest participation. Several successful green initiatives include giving guests the opportunity to exchange for a \$5 gift certificate or 500 Starwood points; creation of a "compost only" associate program; and meals is 100 percent compostable; use of green cleaning products in guest rooms and meeting spaces; and a subsidy for associates. Energy and water conservation measures have saved more than 4,800 Kwh. Through other initiatives, the Sheraton was able to reduce their energy index by 21 percent in the program of materials each month.

Sleeping Lady Mountain Retreat in Leavenworth, Washington, won the award for Outstanding Community Service. The hotel, which won last year's AH&LA Good Earthkeeping Award for a small property, has adopted a commitment to be active in the community and donating to needy organizations. In addition to implementing an

hosts a variety of events including a Special Olympics cross country ski event; the “Chicks on cancer research; and a recycled art show that earns funds for a local recycling group’s initiatives.

Doubletree Hotel Tulsa at Warren Place in Tulsa, Oklahoma, earned the Outstanding Community employees, known as the CARE Committee, made a dedicated effort to help those in need all c banks, participation in the local American Heart Association Walk, time spent beautifying the c students about sustainability, and assisting their long term non-profit partner, the Hospitality Hou and support services for families of patients in Tulsa for medical care. The Doubletree’s hospital stay to a soldier in town on unexpected leave from Iraq, the employees wanted to spread the goodw the leave. They sent 10 dozen of their famous Doubletree cookies to his grateful company.

The West Inn & Suites in Carlsbad, California, the winner of the Guest Relations award, small pr already been ranked the area’s #1 property in terms of guest reviews for the past two years. We offer unique amenities for their diverse guests: free shuttles around town, complimentary Wi-Fi, milk and cookies, and even automated bed-time stories for their younger guests. Courteous and tin before they are even asked – also contribute to the flood of thank you notes and positive guest com

Sheraton Atlanta Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia, is the winner of the Guest Relations, large property feedback system, as well as the high scores it’s been recording. This property is among the first i audio reporting of guests’ spoken feedback, allowing knowledge and resolution of customer iss feedback system has been found to help raise satisfaction scores, reduce recovery costs and heighte unique opportunities to reward consistently outstanding employees, as well as discover, prioritize unbiased guest perspective provides a powerful tool for employee behavior “course corrections” ; on the Internet.

Sanctuary Camelback Mountain Resort & Spa in Paradise Valley, Arizona, is the winner of the S Seven years ago, the Sanctuary decided to get creative to keep guests and locals coming through t heighten awareness of their high-end culinary expertise. The Saturday Lunch & Learn program wa and cocktail pairings adding a dash of education to a delicious three-course lunch. Executive Chef draw in notable culinary “guest stars,” including accomplished chefs such as Ming Tsai and Ai Kicking off seven years ago in a first session that had about 30 attendees, Lunch & Learn now a week of both locals and out-of-town guests. Not only has this program gained rave reviews an revenues of about \$30,000 to the property during its slowest season.

The Ritz-Carlton Lodge, Reynolds Plantation in Greensboro, Georgia, won the Special Events, on annual Lighting of the Lodge event. This is the property’s annual benefit for the Greensboro Drea low-income communities to achieve higher education. It’s also a huge celebration of the holid community residents. A live nativity scene, petting zoo, the “largest gingerbread in the south,” I stage for visitors. The icing on the cake each year is Santa’s surprise arrival – which has been by h Marine Corps 7-ton truck. He joined more than 2,500 visitors last year, who in turn year raised \$3l charities. This annual event has become one of the most well-known and well-attended events in th

The Red Lion Inn, in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, earned the Special Events, one-time only, awa gotten creative with a little bit of history, bringing Christmas to life during their “Stockbridge Ma Normal Rockwell painting. More than 100 wreaths adorn each guestroom door, harpists play “Sil fire, and even a giant candy castle in the main dining room reminds guests of sugar plums. This c engaging local businesses with tours of the Inn and the area’s other historic homes and B&Bs. A property’s doors, making this the Berkshire’s unofficial holiday kick off event. Before the incepti

time were relatively slow. Now the event draws in guests putting the property at 100 percent occup

The Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee, is this year's win property category. The Gaylord Opryland's Christmas spirit earned them this honor for ICE! Feat celebrate the famous book's 50th birthday, the Gaylord hired a team of world-renowned artists to The result was a one-of-a-kind, interactive ice sculpture featuring all the favorite characters in Wh popular attraction boosted group sales to the highest they'd been in six years, and increased sale percent, not including the 30,000 cups of gourmet hot chocolate visitors purchased. The event cre when Dr. Suess' widow toured the exhibit. Even those who may not have attended the celebrati event as an occasion to donate Grinch books to local libraries and adopt a dog from a local anim press events.

The Mandarin Oriental Washington, D.C. is the winner of the Prism award for diversity. This prop able to break down the socioeconomic barriers in their personal lives. In 2008, the hotel took synergized workforce through a community center concept called the Colleague Resource Center employee's personal life and external influences impact team unity and, in turn, the guest exp location where employees can obtain life skills they may not have access to on their own, such computer classes, credit awareness courses, and language software programs. As a result, the differences melt away and employees begin to relate to one another in new ways and find new com

Many of AH&LA's partner state associations choose their own property award winners, which judging. Making the decisions in this year's competition were Bob Craycraft, vice president (Development Association; Phil Hayward, chief communications officer for the National Recreatio of The Maher Group, LLC, and AH&LA's green consultant. The awards ceremony was sponsored

For more information on AH&LA's Stars of the Industry Awards program and a full list of this visit www.ahla.com/stars. To contact any of the winning properties, contact Jessica Soklow, AH& 3153 or jsoklow@ahla.com.

Serving the hospitality industry for nearly a century, AH&LA is the sole national association re lodging industry, including individual hotel property members, hotel companies, student ar Headquartered in Washington, D.C., AH&LA provides members with national advocacy c management, education, research and information, and other value-added services to provide bott climate for the lodging industry. Partner state associations provide local representation and additio

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