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Marriott Recognizes Leading Select-Service and Extended-Stay Owners and Franchisees



Seven companies recognized with Marriott's highest award, the Partnership Circle; Four companies are the first to be honored with the inaugural Horizon Awards

[Marriott International](#) honored top select-service and extended-stay owner and franchise partners at a national conference held recently at the JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Country Resort & Spa in San Antonio, Texas. Approximately 500 executives from organizations that own or franchise Courtyard, Fairfield Inn, Residence Inn, SpringHill Suites and TownePlace Suites hotels attended the three-day conference.

For years, Marriott has been presenting the Partnership Circle Award to companies that embody Marriott's spirit to serve philosophy, fully embrace Marriott's brand initiatives, focus on associates to create a well-managed and engaged workforce, invest in hotel product, and provide outstanding customer service as measured through Marriott's guest satisfaction surveys. Seven companies were awarded for their hospitality excellence: [Buffalo Lodging Associates](#), [Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company](#), [JHM Hotels](#), [Larry Blumberg & Associates](#), [OTO Development](#), [Sunridge Hotel Group](#), and [White Lodging Services Corp.](#)

Commenting on his company's recognition, Beau Benton, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Larry Blumberg & Associates, said, "I want to thank you for this award, and to let you know it would not be possible without the relationship that we developed with Marriott in the early 1990s, when we truly learned that the associate is the most important asset." Benton added,

"That is something that we try to not just have as a company motto, but to really be the culture that we live every day. That is what has led us to the growth we've been able to achieve."

In 2010, Marriott introduced a new award – the Horizon Award – which, similar to the Partnership Circle Award, also recognizes the best of the best in companies that partner with Marriott. While Horizon Award winners currently have smaller Marriott portfolios, they are poised to grow with Marriott's brands and share all of the other attributes of Partnership Circle Award recipients. Four companies were the first to receive the Horizon Award: [3-H Group, Inc.](#), [Easton's Group of Hotels](#), [Kratsa Properties](#), and [Zions Hospitality Management Services, L.C.](#)

"It truly is an honor to be recognized as one of the best in the industry," said David Cocco, Vice President of Development and Hotel Operations, Kratsa Properties. "I want to thank Marriott and my second family, Bill and Nick Kratsa, whom I appreciate for letting me be a part of it all."

"These owners and franchisees have been true pioneers in developing Marriott's select service and extended stay brands," said Liam Brown, Chief Operations Officer, Select Service & Extended Stay Hotels, The Americas, Marriott International. "Our award winners are strong leaders who consistently go above and beyond in developing and operating the highest quality hotels, and are also recognized throughout their communities for their philanthropy efforts."

For more information or photos of award winners, please contact stephanie.hampton@marriott.com

Photo caption: Front Row, L to R: DJ Rama, JHM Hotels; Sue Korycansky, Buffalo Lodging Associates; Brian Welker, Sunridge Hotel Group; Beau Benton, Larry Blumberg & Associates; Steve Gupta, Easton's Group of Hotels; Nick Kratsa, Kratsa Properties; Bill Kratsa, Kratsa Properties; Timothy Osiecki, Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company

Second Row, L to R: Hiren Desai, 3H Group, Inc.; Ron Kendall, Buffalo Lodging Associates; Liam Brown, Marriott International, Inc.; Arne Sorenson, Marriott International, Inc.; David Marriott, Marriott International, Inc.; Mark Laport, Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company; David Cocco, Kratsa Properties; Nick Kellock, Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company

Back Row, L to R: Paul Welker, Sunridge Hotel Group; Corry Oakes, OTO Development; Joel Sybrowsky, Zions Hospitality Management Services; Arthur Holman, Zions Hospitality Management Services; Nate Taylor, Zions Hospitality Management Services; Cole Fach, Buffalo Lodging Associates; Keith McGraw, Concord Hospitality Enterprises Company

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