

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 24, 2020

HAC Announces Recipients of the 2019 Awards of Excellence

(Toronto, ON) - The Hotel Association of Canada (HAC) is pleased to honour six recipients with an Award of Excellence. Each year, HAC recognizes members who demonstrate significant accomplishments and represent some of the finest examples of professionalism, quality, and excellence in the hotel industry.

“Recipients of the 2019 Awards of Excellence share a commitment to enhancing guest experiences, each leaving a significant impact on the hotel industry through their efforts. Together, we proudly celebrate their remarkable achievements,” said Susie Grynol, President of HAC.

HUMANITARIAN AWARD

JJ Hilsinger

Sponsored by: Procter & Gamble Professional

JJ Hilsinger and the Water Tower Inn team has made a lifelong commitment to supporting these communities. JJ’s energy and vision paved the way for tourism in Sault Ste. Marie. JJ spearheaded impressive and fruitful yearly fundraising initiatives for local charities, like the Sault Area Hospital. However, JJ’s sense of humanity stretches far beyond the borders of Sault Ste. Marie and Northern Ontario. When the fires burned in Fort McMurray in 2016, JJ immediately kicked in to raise funds. As a result of his leadership, the campaign to raised \$53,000. JJ also took on a series of global cross-country bicycle tours in Africa for ‘Aids in Africa’, and from Istanbul to Beijing to raise awareness for global warming. It would take a tome to talk about the time, resources, planning, and marketing initiatives he’s donated and the committees he’s formed, chaired or sat on. JJ Hilsinger is a lifelong humanitarian and is a true inspiration to the Water Tower team and to the communities he cares for.

HUMAN RESOURCES AWARD

Chelsea Hotel, Toronto

Sponsored by: JRoss Hospitality

The Chelsea Hotel, Toronto currently employs nearly 650 hospitality professionals. Fondly known as the “*Chelsea U*”, the hotel has cultivated an environment that builds hospitality leaders, not just in Toronto but across Canada and throughout the world. Guided by the results of the *Colleague Engagement Survey*, a new human resources strategy is developed and implemented annually, with special emphasis on programs and policies to hire the best people, set their colleagues up for success, harness potential, engage talent and celebrate their colleagues for commitment. The Chelsea Hotel enjoys a *Colleague Engagement Score* of 89%, a participation rate of 99%, and an enviable turnover rate of just 10.8%. The Chelsea Hotel Toronto has effectively developed and engaged generations of employees and its relentless commitment to delivering an inspiring employee experience.

GREEN KEY ENVIRONMENT AWARD

Fairmont Le Manoir Richelieu

Sponsored by: Ecolab

Fairmont Le Manoir Richelieu, a 4 Green Key rated property, shows outstanding leadership and dedication in every area of hotel and event sustainability. Fairmont Le Manoir Richelieu has enabled systems to conserve energy and cut greenhouse gas emissions, provided electric vehicle charging to guests, converted lighting to LED, installed presence detectors, and implemented systems to reduce heat loss. They have also eliminated plastic bottles and straws from all departments, limiting food waste, while eliminating disposable items. Promoting water conservation efforts, the hotel installed high-efficiency showerheads and tap aerators as well as harvesting rainwater for the pools. The restaurant promotes a menu that showcases their commitment to sustainable food products. Their strong commitments carry over to guests and staff through various education and engagement efforts. Notably, the property hosted G7 Summit in 2018 and maintained all of its green policies for the entire event. They are entrepreneurial in their community involvement, committing to many organizations. Fairmont Le Manoir Richelieu has shown a profound dedication to sustainability.

ASPIRING HOTELIER AWARD

Simran Gill, Hilton Winnipeg Airport Suites

Sponsored by: STR

A graduate of the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology diploma program, Simran Gill began her hospitality career as a front desk agent in Winnipeg, Manitoba. At the Hilton Winnipeg Airport hotel, her success and growth helped assure her the hospitality industry was where she belonged, as she took on roles of increased responsibility. Simran's manager credits her contributions to the Blue Energy committee as the reason the hotel was a Top 10 finalist in North America, surpassing every internal standard and brand standard. Simran increased arrival and departure scores by 20% and is a Hilton Honours Enrollment champion. She is also a multi-faceted talent, training all new hires and is regularly called upon to help train other departments in Winnipeg and Whistler, British Columbia. Simran is a next-level leader. Her motivation and acumen make her a deserving winner of the 2019 Aspiring Hotelier Award of Excellence.

MOST IMPRESSIVE REPOSITIONING AWARD

InnVest Hotels LP

The acquisition of St. Regis was one of InnVest's biggest milestones in its history. This hotel was a rare repositioning opportunity. Formerly, the Trump International Hotel, the hotel underwent major renovations to transform to the St. Regis - the first ever in Canada. InnVest acquired the unsold hotel condominium assets, comprised of 206 hotel rooms, restaurant and bar, 10,000 square feet of meeting space, a spa and a 35% interest in the parking garage. Not even a full year into operation, the hotel's signature restaurant Louix Louis was recognized by "Restaurant & Bar Design Awards" as one of the best-designed restaurants. The repositioning addressed the need for a natural connection between the branded residences and the hotel, ultimately adding value and luxury services to a community that was not so well-

served under the previous brand affiliation. InnVest's transformation, completed both on-time and on-budget, was meticulously planned and extraordinarily well-executed.

REVENUE PERFORMANCE TEAM OF THE YEAR AWARD

TownePlace Suites by Marriott, Sudbury

Sponsored by: IDEAS

TownePlace Suites by Marriott Sudbury is one of the only extended-stay properties in Greater Sudbury. These amenities uniquely positioned property with a competitive advantage in the market. 2018 was a record-setting year for the TownePlace Suites by Marriott Sudbury, who grew revenue by 4.7% and finished first in revenue performance for their market. In 2019, building on this success, TownePlace Suites by Marriott Sudbury executed an aggressive and thoughtful strategy to increase their ADR by 3% over 2018 and increasing their ADR rank in the market. To achieve this success, the revenue performance team found opportunities to increase rates, revised group strategies, increasing shoulder night business, formed aggressive best available rate strategies, and implemented a marketing program, playing off the advantage of the brand affiliation. TownePlace Suites by Marriott Sudbury has perfectly illustrated how to plan and execute a revenue performance strategy and drive business with loyalty program membership.

The Hotel Association of Canada is the leading voice of the Canadian hotel and lodging industry. For over 100 years, it has worked to enhance the prosperity of the industry through strong member engagement, effective advocacy, and the provision of value-added programs and services. The Hotel Association represents more than 8,250 hotels, motels and resorts that encompass the \$21.9 billion Canadian hotel industry which employs 309,800 people across Canada. For more information, please visit www.hotelassociation.ca.