



# HOTEL MANAGEMENT

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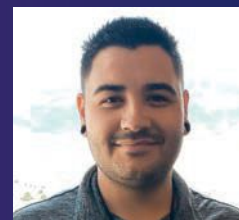
THE LEADING HOSPITALITY NEWS AUTHORITY SINCE 1875 | Vol. 234, No. 10 | October 2019

## THIRTY UNDER

# 30

## THE HOTEL INDUSTRY'S

# TOP RISING STARS







**BIJAL PATEL**

VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE CALIFORNIA HOTEL & LODGING ASSOCIATION AND CEO OF COAST REDWOOD HOSPITALITY, BEN LOMOND, CALIF.

**Tell us about your current position.**

In addition to leading Coast Redwood Hospitality, which owns and operates a portfolio of real estate projects and hotel properties, Patel will become chairman of the California Hotel & Restaurant Association in November, "making me the group's first-ever chairman under the age of 30 and only the third [Asian American Hotel Owners Association] member to serve as chairman in the CH&LA's 126-year history."

**RICKESH PATEL**

VP, PREMIER HOTELS KC, KANSAS CITY, MO.

**What is the biggest concern or threat facing the success of the global hotel industry?**

I see vacation rentals and home



rentals to be a large threat against the hotel industry. The freedom and amenities that the rentals provide for guests can far exceed what hotels can. The rental division is expanding and growing every year, taking more market share away from hotels. I propose addressing it by adding a division of rentals into hotel companies and benefiting from them.

**SAGE PATEL**

SENIOR FINANCIAL ANALYST-OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, PM HOTEL GROUP, CHEVY CHASE, MD.

**Where do you see yourself in 10 years? In 20 years?**

From the time he was little, Patel has been passionate about the travel and leisure industry, according to Jennifer Diamond Haber, PM Hotel Group's VP of communications. He believes the combination of his upbringing in operations, his strong technical skills (investment banking and hotel underwriting) and his time



at PM Hotel Group (financial analysis and portfolio strategy) has set him on the path to achieve his goal of owning and operating his own portfolio of hotels.

**MARISOL PELLERIN**

SENIOR PORTFOLIO STRATEGY AND M&A SUPPORT MANAGER, TUI HOTELS & RESORTS, HANNOVER, GERMANY

**What is the biggest concern or threat facing the success of the global hotel industry?**

I consider the biggest threat to be global warming. As hoteliers,

we have the responsibility to act sustainably! Hotel management definitely has to take actions that both protect the environment and teach our customers to be more sustainable. I would propose addressing it with measurable actions such as replacing plastic straws with metal straws, changing shampoo formats in the rooms and eliminating one-use plastic water bottles.

**JOEL PLAKUT**

REGIONAL CONTROLLER/HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, CHESAPEAKE HOSPITALITY/HOLIDAY INN MILWAUKEE RIVERFRONT

**Tell us about your current position.**

"Joel's commitment to the hospitality industry and Chesapeake Hospitality's standards are apparent in everything he does," said Laurie Valencia, regional controller. "From knowing every detail included in his financial statements to recruiting for open

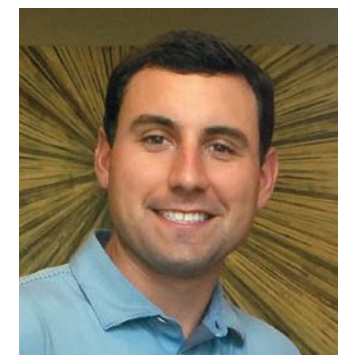
positions, we all know we can rely on him to produce quality results. It is this performance, combined with his drive to learn more, that has led to a recent promotion that will further involve him with next steps along his accounting path."

**JOEL REEVES**

CFO, CHARTER ROAD HOSPITALITY, OXFORD, MISS.

**Tell us about your experience in hospitality before now.**

Prior to this role, I had little experience in working for a hospitality firm. I consider myself well-traveled so, from the perspective of a consumer, I understand the difference



between good and bad hospitality but until three years ago I never understood what it is that creates good and bad hospitality. I like to think that hospitality chose me because I love to serve people and see the smile on their face when they receive good service.

**MIMI ROGERS**

PRESIDENT, WATERWALK INTERNATIONAL, WICHITA, KAN.

**What is the most pressing challenge you've faced on the job in the past year?**

The biggest issue for Rogers has been to learn how to make tough decisions while lacking experience, said Gina McKee, WaterWalk's VP of franchise services. "She has learned to become highly self-aware of her strengths and shortcomings and to leverage her strengths, such as



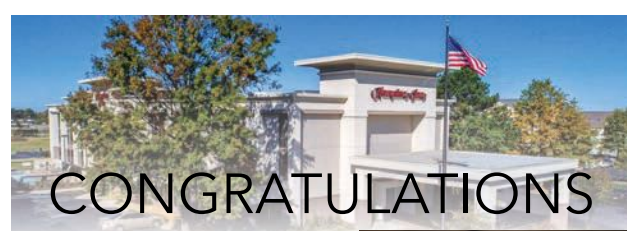
**CONGRATULATIONS SARAH GARIEPY**



On Being Named One of Hotel Management's Thirty Under 30

MARRIOTT SPRINGFIELD DOWNTOWN  
2 BOLAND WAY, SPRINGFIELD, MA 01115  
413.781.7111

*Tower Square Hotel is in the process of reimagining and designing the building to reopen as the Marriott Springfield Downtown in 2020.*



**KYLE CARPER**

For Being Named One Of Hotel Management's Thirty Under 30 For 2019.



From all of us at McNeill Hotel Company. You truly exemplify our culture of People Serving People.

**McNeill** HOTEL COMPANY



female motorcycle convention. This program was a full buy-out of the hotel and much larger than our Courtyard Marriott had seen before. The team gathered and figured out how to make it work, with all leadership team members pitching in and doing jobs outside of the norm.

#### KRISHNA DEVA

VP, MAYA HOTELS, CHARLOTTE, N.C.

#### Where do you see yourself in 10 years? In 20 years?

I see myself working toward two major goals: helping grow my family business and promoting women's economic



independence in each community where we have a presence. Over the last decade, I have been thrilled to work with multiple organizations, including Dress for Success and Career Wardrobe, that help women find jobs and educate them on personal finance. I have seen their successes after helping them on their resumes, interview skills and career coaching.

#### ANGELA DIEP

OPERATIONS MANAGER, HYATT PLACE COLUMBUS (OHIO)/ WORTHINGTON

#### Tell us about your experience in hospitality.



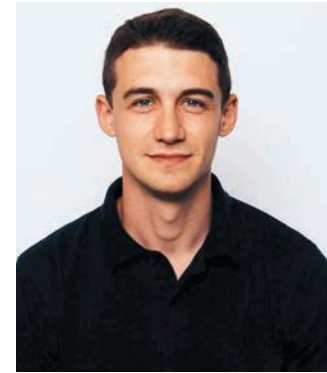
According to GM Tim Whitehead, Diep began her hotel career as a front-desk clerk in a limited-service property while in college. A few months later, she was promoted to front-office manager and a few months later she was promoted to the director of sales in addition to front-office manager—all while she was still attending college. "She definitely had a very strong knack for the business and it was easily identifiable," according to Whitehead.

#### BRYAN DUNN

VP ACQUISITIONS, LIFE HOUSE HOTELS, NEW YORK

#### Tell us about your current position.

According to Rami Zeidan, Life House Hotels' founder/CEO, Dunn leads all asset-light growth efforts for Life House and was fundamental to securing the company's pipeline of nine signed long-term hotel management agreements and 11 additional signed term sheets during the first year of operation. To the team's knowledge, he



is the only 26-year-old in the asset-light hotel management space who has sourced and closed a dedicated \$100 million investment vehicle to propel his company's growth.

#### SARAH GARIEPY

ACCOUNTING SUPERVISOR, MARRIOTT SPRINGFIELD (MASS.) DOWNTOWN

#### What is the most pressing challenge you've faced on the job in the past year?

Last year my hotel was sold and transitioned ownership and managing company. I moved from accounts payable to accounting supervisor. This



quickly turned into a department of only me. I took the position in stride and learned everything I could with each month end getting better than the last. I not only learned and became efficient in a record amount of time, but I built a whole accounting department from literally nothing.

#### WHITNEY GIRARD

GM, BASK HOTEL AT BIG ROCK LANDING, A TRADEMARK COLLECTION HOTEL, MOREHEAD CITY, NC

#### Where do you see yourself in 20 years?

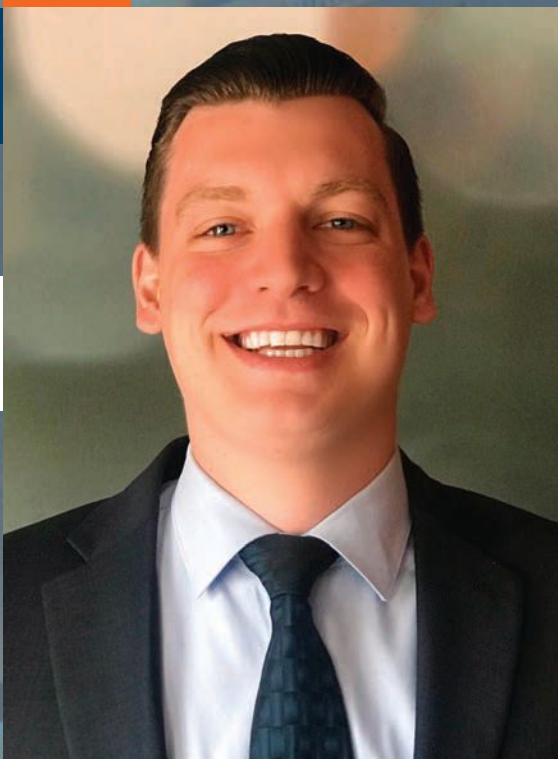
In 20 years, I hope to have



CHESAPEAKE  
HOSPITALITY

## DEVELOPING OUR NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

Congratulations Joel Plakut for  
being named a Top 30 under 30



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