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## **CFHLA ANNOUNCES THE 2025 DISTINGUISHED LEADERS IN HOSPITALITY AWARD WINNERS**

*The Annual Signature Event Recognizes Supervisory & Management Hotel Employees*

**ORLANDO, Fla.** (June 25, 2025) – On Tuesday, June 24, 2025, at the JW Marriott Orlando Bonnet Creek Resort & Spa, the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association (CFHLA) hosted its annual Distinguished Leaders in Hospitality Awards reception.

This year, CFHLA recognized more than 112 hospitality professionals from 46 different CFHLA member lodging properties who show strong leadership every day to inspire their teams to succeed and to create exceptional guest experiences for visitors to our Central Florida hotels and resorts.

Ryan Elijah from FOX 35 News served as the event's emcee, which attracted 370 attendees.

Throughout the evening, CFHLA recognized and honored the following eight hotel employees as the winners for each of the designated categories.

The 2025 Distinguished Leaders in Hospitality Award winners include:

### **Distinguished Leader in Operations – Front of House**

Aaron Gonzalez, Water Park Supervisor, Coco Key Hotel & Water Resort

### **Distinguished Leader in Culinary**

Addnan Ibrahim, Banquet Chef,  
Four Seasons Resort Orlando at Walt Disney World Resort

### **Distinguished Leader in Operations – Back of House**

Jason Heidel, Assistant Director of Housekeeping,  
Hard Rock Hotel at Universal Orlando

**Distinguished Leader in Sales, Marketing & Revenue**

Carolina Veitia, Destination Sales Executive,  
JW Marriott Orlando Bonnet Creek Resort & Spa

**Distinguished Leader in Events & Meetings**

Maria Paula Chau, Event Services Manager, Hilton Orlando

**Distinguished Leader in Support Services/ Back Office**

Salathia Richburg, Senior Assistant Director of Finance,  
Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center

**Emerging Hospitality Leader**

Jamie Bentley, Assistant Chief Engineer, Walt Disney World Swan Resort

**Executive of the Year**

August Decker, Golf General Manager, Ritz-Carlton Orlando, Grande Lakes

The Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association's mission is to represent the Central Florida Hospitality Industry, by setting the standard of excellence through advocacy, collaboration, education, recognition, and service.

As the largest regional lodging association in the United States, CFHLA represents approximately 80 percent of the more than 129,500 hotel rooms throughout the Central Florida Region (including but not limited to Lake, Orange, Osceola, Polk, and Seminole counties) and more than 500 "supplier" organizations that do business with the hospitality and tourism industries.

For more information on the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association, please visit [www.cfhla.org](http://www.cfhla.org).

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