

FOCUS



Winegardner & Hammons, Inc.
HOTELS AND RESORTS



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Focus is published for the associates at our properties who continually strive to exceed our customers' expectations. Thanks for your efforts and commitment.

Big Six proves to be big differentiator

In the fall of 2009, Kent Bruggeman, senior vice president of operations and HR, and Mike Conway, senior vice president of marketing, developed Big Six, a revenue-generating initiative designed to capitalize on opportunities to maximize revenue in 2010.

The strategy's vision – all hotels will execute on the six sales fundamentals deemed key to boosting revenue. The goal – to beat last year's results as well as current market results.

Conway states: "The concept is simple. In difficult times, we need to provide focus, leadership and a disciplined plan to grow revenues and market share. The Big Six strategy identifies the six disciplines with the highest potential for revenue and market share growth for 2010."

Bruggeman adds: "These six strategies sound easy, but no one else is doing them. We're bucking the trend and leading the industry."

Big Six results: Through May 2010, gross revenues have increased 5.3 percent and REVPAR has increased 5.7 percent, beating the U.S. lodging industry and the hotels' local competition.

Read stories of Big Six in action at all WHI properties on Pages 6-8.



Big Six – a small part of the uniform; a big reason for the more than 100 Priority Club enrollments each month.



Strong relationships and repeat business form over strong brew.



Personalized food and drink options boost revenues.

Embassy Suites Lexington, Ky. Top in Brand



Some team members at Embassy Suites Lexington, Ky., gathered on May 28 as the hotel received its trophy for ranking in the Top 10 percent of the brand.

Watercolour remains area's best steakhouse

Watercolour steakhouse and grille has done it again. Tampa Bay Magazine has named Watercolour "Best Steakhouse in Tampa Bay" for the third consecutive year.

Every feature, amenity and menu item at the restaurant located at Marriott Suites on Sand Key, Clearwater Beach, Fla., have been carefully selected with the premium dining experience in mind. Breathtaking views, award-winning artwork and live music in the Watercolour Lounge piano bar greet customers and offer a first-class first impression.

"With all the reputable steak houses in the Tampa Bay area, to come out on top for three consecutive years is very exciting," shares GM Philippe Eversdijk. "We have been able to execute on our owner's vision because of the hard work and dedication of Gary Britton, corporate executive chef; Renee Potoczny, AGM; Kurt Leahy, restaurant general manager; and Jason Poulakis, Watercolour's chef. I'm proud to be associated with such highly talented associates."

Leahy adds: "This award is a tribute to both front- and back-of-the-house associates. To maintain this status three years in a row takes consistent quality product from Chef Jason and his staff. I tell the staff to treat each guest like they are coming to your house for dinner! I'm very proud of each and every team member at Watercolour's."



Watercolour staff, left to right: back row - Robert Rannazzisi, Jason Frank, Michael Leatherbury, James Sarto; middle row - Tiffany Sanford, Taryn Zowin, Megan Walling, Kurt Leahy; front row - Renee Potoczny, Lauren Stallworth, Jacobo Pardo, Jason Poulakis, Sasha Banush, Philippe Eversdijk

Outstanding service recognized

Shannon Staley-Therault, banquet manager at **Marriott Columbus-Northwest, Ohio**, is the winner of the 2009 Event Management Team of the Year. "It takes every department to satisfy one guest," says Staley-Therault. "The entire team at Marriott Columbus-Northwest is proud to contribute to successful event satisfaction for all of our guests. The unsung heroes – from the banquet set-up team to the kitchen utility staff – make a difference and contribute to our continual success in event satisfaction."



Shannon Staley-Therault

Hard-working soldier



Steve Besen (left) and Dustin Vance

Dustin Vance, banquet setup associate at **Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn, Ohio**, recently returned from a six-month deployment in Baghdad, Iraq with the U.S. National Guard. For the month of February, Vance received soldier of the month due to his hard work, dedication and job performance. Banquet manager **Steve Besen** states, "I am proud of Dustin for this honor and can see through his efforts here at the hotel why he was awarded such an honor."

Continued outstanding service recognized



Britni Stephens (center) accepts her Star of the Industry Award.

In the fall of 2009, **Renaissance Hotel Indianapolis-North** guest service representative **Britni Stephens** won the third quarter Hamilton County CVB Star of the Industry Award. In 2010, Stephens, along with the other quarterly winners from Hamilton County, were entered into consideration for the Indiana Lieutenant Governor Hoosier Hospitality Award. She was selected among eight nominees and honored during a special presentation at the State Capitol Building on May 10.

GM **Paul O'Connor** states: "Britni is solid. She's been with us from the beginning and has the natural talent for hospitality. We are so proud that Britni was chosen to represent all of Hamilton County's hospitality. We need to let the whole state know that the Renaissance is the place to get great service, the kind that Britni gives to every guest daily."

ROSE Awards

Best of the best recognized



Jason Woolridge

Renaissance Hotel Indianapolis-North is proud to announce **Jason Woolridge**, Grille 39 supervisor, as nominee and winner of the Indianapolis ROSE (Recognition of Service Excellence) Award. GM **Paul O'Connor**, HR manager **Erin Hayek** and banquet manager **Chris Snyder** accompanied Woolridge to a dinner and award presentation held at Indiana Rooftop Ballroom on March 10. Woolridge was one of 13 winners out of 87 nominees. O'Connor states: "The performance and actions that earned Jason this amazing award are the same that earned him his recent promotion to Grille 39 supervisor. He's one of the best!"

ROSE award finalist



Pasma Bernet

Pasma Bernet, guest service representative at **Marriott Cincinnati-Northeast**, has recently been chosen as a finalist for the Greater Cincinnati ROSE Award. Guest service supervisor **Kristi Polson** writes: "Mama' Pasma's energy and presence is so rewarding to be around. Her commitment and love for her job is reflected in her team and her guests in so many ways. Many examples of unforgettable services have been exemplified by Pasma. She has touched so many guests and, most importantly, every department at Cincinnati Marriott-Northeast in some special way."

ROSE award finalist

Doubletree Guest Suites Cincinnati is pleased to announce **Jack Novak**, front desk associate, as a finalist of the 2010 ROSE Award. Throughout Novak's two years with WHI, he has created his own level of service at the front desk. He looks for opportunities to meet guests' needs beyond expectation and his genuine willingness to help has produced numerous positive comments and letters from guests.

HR manager **Kier Muchnicki** says: "The managers at Doubletree Guest Suites Cincinnati feel that they have many associates that deliver friendly service, solve guest problems and look for opportunities to wow the guest. But there is something particularly special about Jack." Guest service supervisor **Cindy Alles** echoes: "Jack looks for something with each guest he encounters that he can relate to. Frequently Jack does research on the companies of our guests so that he may know more about what brings them to Cincinnati. He notices and picks out this information and uses it to engage in a personal conversation with the guest."



Jack Novak

ROSE award nominee



Rick Terry

Rick Terry, maintenance technician at **Doubletree Guest Suites Cincinnati**, was nominated for the Greater Cincinnati 2010 ROSE Award for going above and beyond. During the largest winter storm of 2009, Terry stayed at the hotel and worked countless hours shoveling seven inches of snow and chiseling two inches of ice off of parking lots, sidewalks, entryways, guests' cars and even fellow associates' cars. On only a few hours rest, he was back at it again at 6:30 a.m. as guests were requesting his services after the incredible impression he left on them the day before. HR manager **Kier Muchnicki** says, "Everyone, employees and guests alike, are appreciative of his hard work and dedication at Doubletree."

Strong spirit recognized

Embassy Suites Williamsburg, Va., is proud to announce that **Kelvin Fieldings**, maintenance technician, is a Spirit of Embassy Suites winner. Since joining the maintenance team full time this year, Fieldings has proven that a smile and a helping hand can go a long way in improving interdepartmental communication and teamwork. He takes the initiative to learn as much as he can in his department as well as in other departments. During his first few months with WHI, he earned Employee of the Month and was the first and only maintenance technician to win both the hotel and national Catch Me at My Best contests.



Kelvin Fieldings

HR manager **Breanna Dill** says: "Recently, his supervisor had to be out for medical reasons and Kelvin stepped up to cover the leadership role during his supervisor's absence. His supervisor said that while he was gone he did not have to worry knowing that Kelvin would be able to handle the role. Kelvin's desire to learn beyond what is expected has set him up to be a great leader."

Dedicated service honored

Roberto Castro, banquet manager at **Marriott Chicago-Northwest**, has been named Event Management Leader of the Year – Marriott Franchise Partner Award. Castro's overall dedication and commitment to guests is exemplary. **Kent Bruggeman**, senior vice president of operations and HR, writes: "You truly are deserving of this prestigious award, and your commitment to our customers is very much appreciated. WHI and the Marriott Chicago-Northwest are proud to have you as part of our team."



Roberto Castro

Delivering superior service

Doubletree Guest Suites Cincinnati has received the 2010 Expedia Insiders' Select Award. The annual award recognizes the very best hotels available in Expedia's global marketplace, as judged by the experiences of Expedia's customers. Based on more than 1 million hotel reviews, the hotel was identified as consistently delivering superior services, an exceptional guest experience and notable value.

GM & AGM PROMOTIONS



Chris Covert

Chris Covert is the new general manager at **Embassy Suites Williamsburg, Va.** Covert joined WHI in 2008 as an AGM at **Marriott Austin-North at Round Rock, Texas.** **Dave Gordon**, VP-HR, states: "In this role, he was able to significantly increase GSS scores in food and beverage as well as arrival and departure experience. Financially, the hotel accomplished a more than \$400,000 increase at EBITDA year over year and received excellent ratings on both METS and life/safety inspections."



Jeremy Berlin

Jeremy Berlin has been promoted to general manager at **Marriott Dallas/Fort Worth Airport-South.** He began his career with WHI as an AGM at **Embassy Suites Williamsburg, Va.** He progressed to AGM at **Marriott Columbus-Airport, Ohio,** and **Marriott Birmingham, Ala.,** and most recently served as GM at **Embassy Suites Williamsburg, Va.**

"During his time in Williamsburg, Jeremy was instrumental in achieving the highest guest satisfaction scores in hotel history. The hotel also experienced a 16.6 percent increase in REVPAR index, along with an 18 percent increase in group sales year over year," states **Dave Gordon**, VP-HR.



Michael Gaietto

Michael Gaietto is the new assistant general manager at **Ohio University Inn & Conference Center, Athens, Ohio.** Formerly, Gaietto served as the food and beverage supervisor at **Doubletree Guest Suites Cincinnati.** In this position, he was instrumental in the hotel achieving a customer service ranking in the Top 5 percent of the Doubletree brand, and he significantly improved restaurant revenues by increasing captures and marketing to the loyal community.

"Mike has been a great addition to the Ohio University Inn team," shares GM **Michael Miraglia.** "He has a wonderful passion for food and a commitment to excellence that fits in with our culture. He will continue to achieve great results." Gaietto is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York.



Todd Metzger

Todd Metzger has been promoted to assistant general manager at **Holiday Inn Cincinnati-Riverfront, Covington, Ky.** Metzger joined WHI in 2008 as a restaurant supervisor at the **Marriott Cincinnati-Airport, Hebron, Ky.** **Dave Gordon**, VP-HR, states: "In 2010, the hotel received the 'Best Place to Work' Award from the Cincinnati Business Courier. In addition, the hotel finished in the Top 20 GSS out of 338 Marriott hotels for two consecutive years and finished second in the brand on last year's Marriott Lodging Quality Assurance Inspection."

Metzger is a graduate of the University of Louisville.



David Kosobud

David Kosobud joins WHI as assistant general manager at **Marriott Cincinnati-Airport, Hebron, Ky.** Kosobud spent the last five years as manager of the Cheesecake Factory, most recently as the senior manager of the Polaris location in Columbus, Ohio. During his tenure, Kosobud was promoted four times and opened two restaurants.

In 2005, Kosobud graduated with a bachelor's degree from the Culinary Institute of America.

PROMOTIONS

from within WHI



Tyler McNamara



Dallas Montgomery



Mike Phillips



Erin Jeffers



Kathleen Schenk



Bryttni Grazetti



Gina Sylvester



Jason Woolridge



Dan Tomamichel



Jacque Newton



Megan Gallimore



Tiffany Smith



Brian Wipprecht



Steve Dinger

CULINARY

Tyler McNamara has advanced to sous-chef from the position of line cook at **Marriott Hartford/Windsor Airport, Conn.** Human resource manager **JoAnn Masi** says, "McNamara's leadership in the kitchen, working with both front- and back-of-the-house staff, is proven in the delivery of outstanding food and excellent service to our guests and associates."

Renaissance Hotel Indianapolis-North has promoted **Dallas Montgomery** from p.m. line cook to sous-chef. Montgomery has a bachelor's degree from Purdue University and currently is pursuing his associate degree in culinary arts at the International Culinary School of Art.

Executive chef **Phil Kromer** states: "I knew when I interviewed Dallas that we were hiring not only a great culinary talent but a leadership talent as well. Dallas already leads the weekly program for a featured entrée and creatively designs a daily amuse to accompany it."

Mike Phillips is the new sous-chef at **Renaissance Hotel Indianapolis-North.** Phillips joined the WHI family as a line cook in September 2007 and, in search of leadership experience, was promoted to p.m. restaurant supervisor at **Radisson Hotel Lansing, Mich.,** in November 2008.

HR manager **Erin Hayek** states, "In January 2010, Mike got what he wanted – a leadership role and a return to the culinary team where his true passion is."

FRONT DESK

Erin Jeffers has been promoted to p.m. front desk supervisor at **Ohio University Inn and Conference Center, Athens, Ohio.** In her nearly three years with WHI, the former sales coordinator has proven to consistently put guest satisfaction first. Jeffers impresses guests daily with her cheerful personality and ability to make everyone smile.

Kathleen Schenk has been promoted to front desk supervisor at **Marriott Hartford/Windsor Airport, Conn.** Schenk's advancement is indicative of her outstanding customer service skills as well as the leadership and technical skills she showed as a guest service representative.

Schenk's professionalism has been singled out by guests as she and the front desk team routinely impress guests.

Bryttni Grazetti is the new p.m. guest service supervisor at **Marriott Dallas/Fort Worth Airport-South.** Grazetti has been with WHI for a year and a half serving as a guest service representative. GM **Nancy Sorrells** says: "Bryttni has always been calm under pressure and has a very common sense approach to the day-to-day operations. She was the natural choice when the position became open."

Grazetti has been developing her leadership skills and doing on-site training in preparation for this new position at a sister property, **Marriott Austin-North at Round Rock, Texas.**

Marriott Cincinnati-Northeast announces the promotion of **Gina Sylvester** to guest service supervisor.

Sylvester has had tremendous success throughout the hotel in several positions, including bartender, guest service representative and night auditor. During this time, she has been awarded Rookie Eagle and Associate of the Month distinctions on multiple occasions, in addition to being nominated for Associate of the Year in 2009. HR manager **Lisa Compton-Martin** says, "Gina is a difference maker whose positive and enthusiastic approach to business makes her an exciting addition to the leadership team."

DINING

Jason Woolridge has been promoted from banquet setup to relief Grille 39 supervisor at the **Renaissance Hotel Indianapolis-North.** Woolridge is a recent graduate of Purdue's hospitality and tourism management program. GM **Paul O'Connor** says, "I am excited to strengthen our management team and Jason has certainly earned the position."

Banquet manager **Chris Snyder** says that he will miss having Woolridge on the banquet team. "It is a great moment to see Jason take on new responsibilities as a manager. I'm excited to celebrate this moment of growth, and I am looking forward to watching Jason grow even more in the months to come."

Dan Tomamichel has advanced from bartender to p.m. Grille 39 supervisor at **Renaissance Hotel Indianapolis-North.** Tomamichel is a graduate of the University of Indianapolis and his background includes owning and managing various bars and restaurants in the area. AGM **Kenny Didier** has been a huge supporter of Tomamichel's growth. He states: "Before Dan was even officially selected to fill the p.m. supervisor spot, the team had already accepted him as a leader. He earned his stripes before they were officially his and we're very impressed with what we've seen so far."

SALES

Jacque Newton has advanced to sales coordinator from the position of banquet server at **Ohio University Inn & Conference Center, Athens, Ohio.** Sales account manager **Betsy Baringer** recalls: "At the busiest time during the year, Jacque was promoted to be the new sales coordinator. Training can often be frustrating, but you would not know this from Jacque's demeanor. She

jumped right in and calmly took over with daily, weekly and monthly duties, and she interacted extremely well with guests. We are very fortunate to have Jacque on our team."

Megan Gallimore has advanced to sales and catering account manager at **Marriott Cincinnati-North.** Gallimore brings with her an enormous amount of operations experience as she has led successful teams at both the front desk and restaurant, and as an assistant general manager. She was formerly the front desk supervisor at **Cincinnati Marriott-Northeast.**

Tiffany Smith has been promoted to sales manager from sales and catering account manager at **Marriott Dallas/Fort Worth Airport-South.** Smith's personality and ability to establish great relationships will benefit her in the sales manager position. "In the short time that Tiffany has been at our hotel, we have seen some real progress in our sales achievements, and we have been very impressed with the work Tiffany has done on developing business for the 2011 Super Bowl," says AGM **Carrie Spain.**

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Brian Wipprecht is the new food and beverage supervisor at **Doubletree Guest Suites Cincinnati.** As the former p.m. guest service supervisor at **Marriott Cincinnati-North,** Wipprecht was successful in leading his team to achieve a No. 1 arrival satisfaction ranking in 2008 and a No. 5 ranking in restaurant service in 2009 within the Marriott brand.

GM **David Sundermann** says: "Brian brings a strong rooms background, as well as food and beverage experience to our hotel. Coupled with his manager-on-duty experience, we are excited about the talents Brian will be contributing to the Doubletree."

MAINTENANCE

Steve Dinger's hard work and dedication contributed to his promotion to maintenance supervisor at **Homewood Suites Dayton/Fairborn, Ohio.** He is a former commercial technician/banquet setup associate at **Marriott Columbus-Northwest, Ohio.** In his two years with WHI, Dinger has received several awards including Employee of the Month, a life safety award and Rookie of the Year.

SHINING STARS OF WHI

Every issue of *Focus* features dedicated associates, stories of superb customer service and individuals who make the workday a little brighter. The “Shining Stars” highlighted in this issue are the hard-working team members who may not receive recognition regularly; however, their impact on the properties at which they work does not go unnoticed.

Maintenance tech **James Barnhart** “Barney” is a team player who is always willing to lend a hand to fellow associates at **Ohio University Inn & Conference Center, Athens, Ohio**. “Barney is reliable and is a role model and team player within the department and other departments,” shares maintenance supervisor **Steve Brickles**.



James Barnhart

Marcia Campbell, laundry attendant at **Ohio University Inn & Conference Center, Athens, Ohio**, works hard every moment of the day and makes everyone around her smile. AGM **Michael Gaietto** shares: “Marcia is an essential piece of the housekeeping team and never hesitates to assist wherever needed. She is reliable and always has a positive demeanor, even on the most demanding of days.”



Marcia Campbell

According to HR manager **Karisa Batchik**, line cook **Connie Varner** is always smiling, happy and radiating positive energy at **Ohio University Inn & Conference Center, Athens, Ohio**. Chef **Meredith Wilde** attests, “Connie is a clear example of someone who is dedicated and passionate about her work.”



Connie Varner

Sandi Young, cook at **Holiday Inn Cincinnati-Airport, Erlanger, Ky.**, is described by chef **Michael Conarroe** as the “glue that holds our schedule together.” Whether asked to work mornings or evenings, Young does so with a smile. “She’s self-motivated, outgoing and always displays a positive attitude,” Conarroe adds.



Sandi Young

While banquet houseman **Andy Purdin** calls the banquet department home, his hard work has not gone unnoticed as he’s helped to fill shifts in the restaurant the last few months at **Holiday Inn & Suites Cincinnati-Eastgate**. “Andy can always be depended upon to be here when we need him and has played an important role in keeping the operation going,” states HR manager **Amy Rahe**.



Andy Purdin

Pam Willoughby, sales coordinator at **Holiday Inn & Suites Cincinnati-Eastgate**, can always be depended on to help with enthusiasm and always puts guests first. The 26-year associate’s primary responsibility is in the sales office, yet she can be counted on to help out wherever needed in the hotel. “Pam is an outstanding example of what all associates should strive to be,” shares GM **Jennifer Porter**.



Pam Willoughby

Guest service representative **Maggie Harrington** has become the go-to associate at **Marriott Cincinnati-North**. She works when associates call off, and she has picked up shifts as a hostess in room service in the River City Grille. “Maggie also recently volunteered to help sales account manager **Megan Spiegla** recruit new business at a Proctor & Gamble event,” says **Elizabeth Hill**, HR manager. “She’s a University of Cincinnati student earning extra money for school while gaining good experience.”



Maggie Harrington

Essivi Agblevoh works double duty at **Marriott Cincinnati-North**. The five-year housekeeping associate also works evenings as a hostess at River City Grille. “Her lovely disposition and friendly attitude have been a welcome addition to the restaurant team,” states HR manager **Elizabeth Hill**. “Essivi enjoys her new experiences as a front-of-the-house associate and has done a wonderful job.”



Essivi Agblevoh

Inspirational team player

“**Jorge Angeles**’s willingness to help knows no bounds,” guest service supervisor **Mindi Munch** describes the lobby attendant at **Marriott Austin-North at Round Rock, Texas**. Angeles takes great pride in keeping public areas clean and inviting for guests. Ever conscious of guests, he regularly stops what he is doing to say hello and ask how their days are going.



Jorge Angeles

Munch recalls a recent busy weekend in Austin: “Several guests checked out very late in the evening, and Jorge stayed to clean the rooms so that the hotel could resell them. His endless energy and positive attitude are contagious and inspirational to us all.”

Ambassador of smiles

Gabriela Villanueva personifies hospitality. Although a room attendant at **Marriott Chicago-Northwest**, her unofficial title is ambassador of smiles. Villanueva has been recognized by guests for providing the best service they have ever received. She also doesn’t hesitate to help fellow associates.



Gabriela Villanueva

Executive housekeeper **William Washington** recalls: “**Gabriela** recently noticed one of our banquet servers clearing approximately 20 tables by herself. She immediately pitched in to complete the job, although she doesn’t even work in that department. Furthermore, she didn’t seek any kind of adulation for her action; she just saw a need and took ownership of the problem.

“There are a great number of qualified associates in the hotel; however, I must say that this unsung hero is a great asset to our property.”

Shines with fellow associates

Mary “Cricket” Colen, commercial lobby attendant at **Holiday Inn Cincinnati-Airport, Erlanger, Ky.**, takes pride in her work, does a wonderful job interacting with guests in the lobby areas and is very helpful and courteous to all.



Mary Colen

Executive chef **Michael Conarroe** recalls instances when Colen has pitched in to help the hotel and other associates during times of need. “During busy times due to airport cancellations, Cricket cleans the lobby areas and then comes back to help clean rooms. She helps out in laundry on a daily basis, and she lends a hand by taking out the trash, when needed. The thing that makes Cricket ‘shine’ is that she notices when her fellow associates need help or are overwhelmed.”

‘Shines’ in tight situations

“**Kathy Freyler**, maintenance tech, is the ‘shining star’ we all love to have around when things get tight,” shares **Mike Clark**, maintenance supervisor at **Marriott Cincinnati-Airport, Hebron, Ky.** Freyler’s excellent performance during her guest-room preventative maintenance routine is evident by favorable customer comments and guest room scores on guest satisfaction surveys. She spends one day a week making sure woodwork in the commercial building is always in tip-top condition.



Kathy Freyler

“Kathy is the glue that binds us together,” Clark continues. “She was the person who came in when no one else could and stayed through the night during last winter’s snow storms. She is definitely one of our unsung heroes, picking up slack when short-staffed or when we are presented with unforeseen challenges.”

Housekeeping hero

Freeman Perkins, housekeeping utility at **Doubletree Guest Suites Cincinnati**, has been dubbed the “Jack of all Trades” in the housekeeping department. On a weekly basis, Perkins is scheduled as a room attendant, laundry attendant, houseperson and an occasional dishwasher. He is responsible for deep cleaning and buffing the floors in all entryways, which involves adding an overnight shift to his duties.



Freeman Perkins

GM **David Sundermann** applauds Perkins for his willingness to step up and tackle a challenge. “Freeman is arguably one of the hardest working associates at our hotel,” adds **Kier Muchnicki**, HR manager.

“Freeman is a hero in the housekeeping department,” shares executive housekeeper **Kacey Knose**. “He can work each role in the department, he has many responsibilities and he keeps the department running smoothly.”

Asset to every department

Cindy Alles, guest service supervisor, wants to recognize F&B supervisor **Natalie Bullock** for her hard work at **Doubletree Guest Suites Cincinnati**. “Natalie helps out in every department, and she deserves some recognition. In a single day, she can be seen helping the front desk with check-ins/check-outs, stocking the gift shop, serving in the Bistro, stocking the buffet, cooking on the line, washing dishes, serving in the banquet rooms, setting up audio visual equipment, lending a hand in housekeeping or helping out in sales.”



Natalie Bullock

“Natalie takes tremendous ownership for more departments than hers alone,” echoes HR manager **Kier Muchnicki**. “She genuinely cares about the success of the entire hotel and goes to great lengths to ensure it runs smoothly.”

Within one month of moving into the role of banquet houseman, **Sukhrob Radjabov** was named F&B Associate of the Month at **Marriott Cincinnati-Northeast**. Assistant banquet manager **Christopher Stone** reveals: “Sukhrob’s willingness to go above and beyond, and his eagerness to learn, have caused him to emerge as a leader within the department. He picks up shifts on his days off, works as a banquet server when asked and is often found assisting other departments in need. He is a true ‘shining star.’”



Sukhrob Radjabov

Houseperson and floor care specialist **Fatri Muso** leaves his mark on more than just the floors at **Marriott Suites on Sand Key, Clearwater Beach, Fla.** “He is an incredibly hard worker who truly cares about what he does,” shares HR manager **Donna Bolich**. “Fatri always does anything asked of him, and you’ll never hear him complain.”



Fatri Muso

Jill Nelson, at-your-service specialist, plays a starring role behind the scenes at **Marriott Columbus-Northwest**. The hotel’s Superstar for 2009, and recipient of the “Make a Difference” award, Nelson is consistently working to make great things happen. Front desk supervisor **Tiffany Freeman** reveals: “Jill is the guru of the hotel’s pre-arrival planning, ensuring that elite and repeat guests, as well as new guests utilizing the virtual concierge, have everything they need for a comfortable stay. Jill is a key component to our current No. 2 Marriott ranking for Staff Genuinely Cares.”



Jill Nelson

Twenty-year associate **Rodrigo Barquera**, maintenance technician at **Marriott Suites on Sand Key, Clearwater Beach, Fla.**, is always up for a challenge. “He is an extremely valuable and respected member of our maintenance team,” states HR manager **Donna Bolich**. “You can always count on Rodrigo to get the job done.”



Rodrigo Barquera

Line cook **Billy Billimon** shines among peers because of his tremendous work ethic and teamwork. **Marty Chermely**, executive chef at **Marriott Cincinnati-Airport, Hebron, Ky.**, states that Billimon’s quality of work and productivity are first-rate, and he recalls one event when Billimon took charge on an unpredictably busy night. “Billy went out into the dining room, took orders from guests, served their drinks, cooked the orders, served the food and told the servers what to ring in. He was everywhere!”



Billy Billimon

Cook **Stephen Smyrski** rarely breaks a sweat although often working as a one-person show in the high-volume Kokomo’s Kitchen at **Marriott Suites on Sand Key, Clearwater Beach, Fla.** “The Kokomo’s team always knows that it can count on Stephen to satisfy guests and get the job done,” says **Donna Bolich**, HR manager.



Stephen Smyrski

SHINING STARS OF WHI

Takes ownership

"Webster Gordan, banquet setup attendant, takes ownership of his position to a whole new level," shares **Kier Muchnicki**, HR manager at **Doubletree Guest Suites Cincinnati**. "He is one of the most independent, self-motivated and responsible associates at the hotel."



Webster Gordan

F&B supervisor **Natalie Bullock** shares: "Webster will come in on a minute's notice and is, most of the time, more aware of the setup and the banquet than anyone else. On one occasion, Webster came in at 12:30 a.m. on his day off, because he thought the shift wasn't covered and couldn't sleep. He worked until 4 a.m. to get the job done."

"Without Webster the banquet department would not run nearly as smoothly as it does," Muchnicki adds.

All smiles

Sheila Richey, room attendant at **Holiday Inn & Suites Cincinnati-Eastgate**, is recognized as a shining star for going above and beyond every day to provide guests with excellent service. Fellow associates call her a constant, caring friend and a team player who is always in a good mood.



Sheila Richey

Richey has cross-trained for banquets and the restaurant while also taking care of rooms. **Kelly Gruber**, room attendant, shares: "Sheila works the restaurant and housekeeping in the same day. She changes workdays to meet the needs of housekeeping and the restaurant. She is a hard worker."

"Sheila was Associate of the Month in March 2010 after being nominated by both managers and co-workers," says **Karen Lindsey**, executive housekeeper. "She is a true team player and has always been so with a smile and always with superior guest service as her top priority."

Dining divas

"Dining divas" is the best way to describe **Marriott Cincinnati-Northeast's** two unsung heroes. **Christine Patton**, a.m. in-room dining attendant, and **Sue Martin**, a.m. concierge, have made it their mission to ensure that every associate working during the day gets the same great service and attention guests receive.



Sue Martin (left) and Christine Patton

"They go above and beyond in our associate break room," shares **Lisa Compton-Martin**, HR manager. "They ensure the product is fresh and of high quality. They clothe the tables and provide props and table decorations on special occasions. These two ladies make sure every day is a great day in our associate break room."



Mauro Hernandez

With a work ethic that is second to none, no one would ever guess that **Mauro Hernandez's** job as a p.m. dining room utility at **Marriott Suites on Sand Key, Clearwater Beach, Fla.**, is actually his second job. "Mauro's team can always count on him to be there when scheduled to do a great job, regardless of how many hours he's worked," says HR manager **Donna Bolich**. "He's like the energizer bunny ... he just keeps going and going."

Holiday Inn Cincinnati-Airport, Erlanger, Ky., has taken a whole new approach to promote its Priority Club Program, and guest service representative **Selma Dizdarevich** is a doing her part. "Selma is our newest associate and one of our biggest membership enrollers," says **Bobbi Ward**, a.m. front desk supervisor. Dizdarevich is a shining star at the front desk as she helps guests save money while helping the hotel.



Selma Dizdarevich



Lazaro Reyes

Lazaro Reyes, housekeeping utility at **Marriott Columbus-Airport, Ohio**, lives the Mission Statement and Marriott's Genuine Care Basics. Executive housekeeper **Thila Narayanan** explains: "Lazaro, nicknamed 'The Machine,' goes above and beyond the call of duty to satisfy our guests. He helps both co-workers and management and is very versatile, working any position in housekeeping. Lazaro is always smiling and constantly makes himself busy at work."

Humble hero

Bert Metas, maintenance technician, works days and nights at **Doubletree Hotel Dearborn, Mich.**, to make sure the hotel runs smoothly. "Associates are happy when Bert is on duty, because he performs every task willingly and with a great attitude," shares HR manager **Sandra Deanna**. Metas and banquet manager **Jason Wade** even temporarily repaired a pothole on the main road in front of the driveway prior to the arrival of a high-profile group.



Bert Metas

Deanna continues: "Bert is always there, has great interactions with guests and other associates, and is someone you can count on. He is not one to brag about himself, so we'll do it for him ... Bert, we would be lost without you!"

Legendary service, legendary smiles

Wanda Hollandsworth is being recognized as a shining star by the team at **Marriott Cincinnati-Northeast** as she retires after 13 years of service. The dish utility attendant has provided thousands of clean dishes for guests and thousands of smiles for teammates.



Wanda Hollandsworth

"Wanda always had smiles and hugs for everyone," recalls HR manager **Lisa Compton-Martin**. "She is a shining example of what 'unforgettable service' is all about. Thank you, Wanda, for the legendary service and the legendary smiles."

A man of great versatility

Houseman **Terry Linville** is an unsung hero at **Holiday Inn Cincinnati-Riverfront, Covington, Ky.** He washes dishes, runs room service orders, sets up meeting rooms, cleans rooms, handles in-room heating/air conditioning repairs, does laundry, cleans the parking lot, helps with guest luggage and changes light bulbs. And these are just some of his undertakings.



Terry Linville

Carissa Steffen, guest service supervisor, shares: "Terry is known by name by many of the guests at our hotel, and he is a favorite of visiting Cincinnati Children's Medical Center patients. His work ethic is tremendous and his positive attitude is contagious. Terry knows the importance of teamwork, and he does what must be done in order to live the WHI Mission."

Sells the hotel

"**Michael Smith**, bartender, was the 2009 F&B Associate of the Year and is truly a shining star at **Marriott Cleveland-East**," says HR manager **Michael Bosch**. Smith receives the most in-house comment cards and Marriott Guest Service Satisfaction comments. "He knows our repeat guests' drink preferences and always has their drinks ready before they even sit down."



Michael Smith

"But what takes Michael above and beyond is his ability to sell the hotel," Bosch continues. "He recently took a local regular to dinner, showing her the banquet space and convincing her to hold her mother's 75th birthday party at the hotel."

"Michael was singlehandedly responsible for bringing in more than \$3,500 in revenue for this event," says **Tricia Brooks**, catering and sales account manager.

Ed Bakscheider, maintenance tech, is what a "shining star" is all about at **Holiday Inn Cincinnati-Airport, Erlanger, Ky.** Maintenance supervisor **Shawn Burns** shares: "Ed works hard and is capable of maintaining and completing many tasks at once. With his knowledge of the METS program, Ed has been able to fill all maintenance positions at a moment's notice to ensure our hotel is achieving excellence during these challenging times."



Ed Bakscheider

"It is a pleasure to have an associate with such a great work ethic and a strong devotion to WHI."



Ty Cates

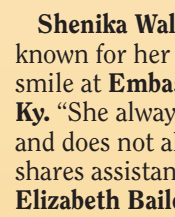
Ty Cates, banquet set-up attendant at **Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn, Ohio**, is completely committed to guests and to the hotel. Banquet manager **Steve Besen** applauds Cates's attendance record. "In three years, Ty has never been late or called off. He also has filled in when needed in the dish tank, dining room and even housekeeping as a lobby attendant. Ty works hard and consistently lives the WHI Pledge."

"The entire team at **Homewood Suites Dayton/Fairborn, Ohio**, would like to recognize and thank **Jeff Kohrman**, project superintendent, and **Linda Vandergriff**, director of purchasing, for the fantastic job they did with the hotel's recently completed 20-year renovation," says GM **Jamie Walters**. "Jeff and Linda were on-site from the start and succeeded in completing the project on time."



Jeff Kohrman

"Although not hotel associates, they are shining stars, and we couldn't have gotten through this renovation without them," adds bookkeeper/HR manager **Gina Moore**.



Linda Vandergriff

Shenika Walker, room attendant, is known for her great spirit and constant smile at **Embassy Suites Lexington, Ky.** "She always has a positive attitude and does not allow stress to get to her," shares assistant executive housekeeper **Elizabeth Bailey**. "Shenika ensures her guests are taken care of and she's very helpful. She's a team player and a huge asset to the hotel."



Shenika Walker

Dexter Crew, kitchen utility at **Embassy Suites Williamsburg, Va.**, works part time and in the summer while attending college. The team player often steps in wherever and whenever needed. "Dexter's co-workers would say he is a little quiet but is always working, whether it's doing the dishes or helping clean the restaurant after service," shares HR manager **Brenna Dill**. "He is a hard worker and is dedicated to making sure that he does his best every day."



Dexter Crew

Zach Cates, p.m. lobby attendant at **Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn, Ohio**, gladly helps in any department and does so with a positive attitude. HR manager **Jacquelyn Evrard** reveals that Cates is very conscientious about the groups in-house and always pays attention to detail. She shares: "During a recent event, Zach was called up on stage and given a military gold coin as a token of appreciation."



Zach Cates

SHINING STARS OF WHI

Sees a need, meets the need

Dora Pina, room attendant at **Doubletree Hotel Dearborn, Mich.**, is the first to volunteer to clean extra rooms, do special projects and help others when she is finished with her assignments for the day. "She will help in the laundry room while waiting for linen, jump in to help the houseman, help inspect rooms ... you name it, she does it," says **Sandra Deanna**, HR manager. "You don't have to tell her what to do; she just does it with a smile on her face.



Dora Pina

"When a recent VIP guest, and group decision-maker, needed clothes laundered, Dora took his laundry home, because the dry cleaner was not available. She also helps translate for our Hispanic associates," Deanna adds.

Silent leader

Maria Morales, room attendant, quietly goes about her day and often steps in when short-staffed to pick up the slack at **Marriott Hartford/Windsor Airport, Conn.**



Maria Morales

According to HR manager **JoAnn Masi**, Morales filled in for the hotel's executive housekeeper when he went on task force for six weeks. "There are not always comment cards to acknowledge this type of behavior, but Maria is always there helping to do whatever needs to be done. And she does it with a smile," Masi says.

Flying under the radar

Ray Hurley, maintenance technician at **Renaissance Hotel Indianapolis-North**, spends 90 percent of his time behind the closed doors of guest rooms doing preventative maintenance. The other 10 percent of Hurley's time is spent assisting other members of the maintenance team with special projects to ensure all equipment runs to perfection and the hotel remains pristine.



Ray Hurley

"Guests and other associates don't see Ray, but they definitely see his contribution," shares HR manager **Erin Hayek**. "Since our opening in 2008, GSS components of maintenance have never slipped outside of the Top 10, and rarely do they fall out of the Top 5."

Maintenance supervisor **Bryan Miller** adds: "Ray is an unsung hero. He works so hard for our hotel and does an amazing job. He never asks for recognition ... it would never occur to him. I'm so lucky to have Ray on my team!"

Makes his way around the hotel

New associates at **Marriott Pittsburgh-North** might have a hard time pinpointing the position and responsibilities of **Dave Raso**. Hired in 2006, the maintenance tech continues to awe guests, whether it is in the kitchen, housekeeping, restaurant or maintenance.



Dave Raso

Michael Schlutz, HR manager, details a prime example of Raso's dedication during the 2010 snowstorm: "Pittsburgh received more than two feet of snow in less than 24 hours, and Dave offered to work a double shift out of concern for his co-workers. He dug guests' vehicles out of the snow, helped with snow removal, and then went into the restaurant and began bussing tables. Several guests commented on how he was amazing in his attempt to help all in need. Dave took the initiative to make sure our guests received top-notch service."

Takes initiative

Scott Scheidemantle, houseperson at **Marriott Pittsburgh-North**, has taken on many roles in the housekeeping department and has been labeled the go-to guy. "His duties go beyond the daily duties

of a houseperson," explains **Michael Schlutz**. "He orders all supplies for the department and keeps inventory. He knows the departure report at the front desk, and he is in the process of learning the PMS system. He is constantly going and takes initiative rather than asking what to do next.



Scott Scheidemantle

"When Scott is not working, many associates feel that the day is going to be very difficult without his hard work and dedication to the team," Schlutz adds.

Improving the customer experience

Although not always seen by guests, **Angela Greenhow**, assistant bookkeeper and sales assistant at **Embassy Suites Williamsburg, Va.**, improves guests' stays with her hard work behind the scenes. "Angela fills in, when needed, at any position," shares HR manager **Brenna Dill**. "She covers shifts at the front desk, helps train new associates, lends a hand bussing tables and getting food in the restaurant and, on occasion, puts on her Embassy T-shirt and helps out in laundry when it is short-staffed.



Angela Greenhow

"Angela is always willing to help the team with anything and is a true team player. Her job is not just sales and bookkeeping but guest service," Dill continues. "She helps in any way she can to make it the best experience for guests."

Makes a good story

Room attendant **Amy Chapman** trains all new hires in the housekeeping department at **Marriott Pittsburgh-North** on everything from daily procedures to life safety. She developed life safety training standards and is a big reason the hotel scored a 97 on its most recent audit.



Amy Chapman

"What makes Amy an unsung hero is the amount of pride she takes in her work," shares HR manager **Michael Schlutz**. "Her ability to maintain standards and WOW guests is unbelievable. A recent guest told the front desk staff how he had gone out to replace a broken pair of glasses and noticed his old glasses, repaired and with a handwritten note, in his room upon his return. The note from Chapman read: 'I saw your glasses were missing a screw, so I placed them back together for you. Hope you have a great stay, and please let me know if there is anything else I can do for you.' The stories go on and on, but this story sums up the amount of heart Amy has."

Daily facelift

Maintenance tech **Ilimdar Bilova** keeps the walls and public spaces at **Embassy Suites Williamsburg, Va.**, looking their best. "On any given day, you can see Ilimdar in the halls painting, plastering or putting up wallpaper," says HR manager **Brenna Dill**. "He quietly keeps us looking good all of the time."



Ilimdar Bilova

Bilova also takes on larger renovation projects from time to time. He built a shelving area for a new drink machine and refrigerator in the break room, figuring out how to run and conceal a new water line. Dill recalls that when the hotel was devising a concept for new bussing stations, Bilova "took the plans for what we wanted and just built it. We now have stations that have helped us to service our guests better."

Dill adds of the unsung hero, "Many people don't even know he does these projects throughout the hotel."

BIG SIX

Big Six components:

Top 5 Existing Customers: Focus on increasing revenue from current customers. These customers are loyal and can provide additional business referrals within their organizations, companies or subsidiary businesses.

Top 5 Prospective Customers: Identify the best and highest potential customers staying at competitor hotels and steal the business. Research these customers to fully understand their needs and the revenue and profit potential they represent.

Frequency Program: Sign up new members for hotel loyalty programs and ensure these most loyal guests are pleased with their stays, creating satisfied customers and repeat business. (These customers represent between 40 percent and 50 percent of the room volume in most WHI hotels.)

24/7 Sales Office: Make certain WHI hotels are accessible when a customer wants to do business. Strive to be the easiest hotel with which to do business. MODs are trained to handle customer inquiries 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

A la Carte Revenue: Provide the great food and beverage experience – one of the most significant "points of difference" between a full-service and a select-service hotel – critical to creating satisfied customers, resulting in repeat business and generating incremental revenues and profit.

Catering: Focus on catering and event planning, the highest food and beverage revenue and profit margins at WHI's full-service hotels. By utilizing WHI hotels' quality meeting and conference spaces to maximize room occupancy and food and beverage revenues, meeting spaces become the "competitive points of differentiation."

Revenue Management: Accurately forecast and effectively manage pricing and room inventory to maximize revenues in both up and down markets. Identify changing market conditions affecting business.

Teamwork increases revenue

Doubletree Guest Suites Cincinnati focuses on increasing revenue in the hotel's Bistro restaurant through teamwork. Associates and housekeeping employees joined in an effort to promote nightly features at the restaurant with discount coupons, while servers and bartenders increased sales of add-ons from the tapas, coffee and dessert menus. Employees who were successful in the effort received small bonuses on their paychecks. "Getting the whole team involved has really paid off," says **Kier Muchnicki**, HR manager. "Food revenue has increased year over year by 26 percent."



Menus make experience personal

Tailoring food and drink options to guests has become a revenue-producing priority for **Holiday Inn & Suites Cincinnati-Eastgate**. Initial nightly specials expanded to personalizing special menu items for regular priority guests and creating feature menus for visiting groups. **Stephanie Adkins**, executive chef, says, "My staff and I hold tastings with the service team to educate them on the daily specials and new items to the menu so they may up-sell them to our guests."



Stephanie Adkins

For event groups that did not have a catering component, the hotel has arranged for "grab and go" cash concessions. For a recent young adult group, a gourmet coffee bar and pastry cart was a big hit.

Snack bar yields results

Taking on the Big Six "Obvious a la Carte" challenge, the **Marriott Cincinnati-North** front desk team created and staffed a table in its atrium



Front desk staff at Marriott Cincinnati-North

with a "Now>Then>Later" menu that offers quick snacks, hors d'oeuvres, beverages and desserts from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. "This has been an ambitious undertaking to train everyone at the front desk and give them the knowledge they need to be effective servers," shares **Elizabeth Hill**, HR manager. The undertaking has paid off, generating more than \$1,500 with no additional labor.

Knowing the product

When **Leticia Smith**, executive housekeeper at **Doubletree Hotel Dearborn, Mich.**, heard from her staff that they did not understand how they could affect revenue, per the Big Six, Smith had an idea. She challenged each of them to sell one breakfast a day for seven days, explaining that in just one week, the housekeeping team could increase revenue by more than \$1,000.



Leticia Smith

Smith sweetened the deal by treating the housekeeping staff to breakfast. HR manager **Sandra Deanna** states that Smith wanted her team to "experience how good the food is, and know what they were selling."

The supervisory team also got in on the Big Six fun, crafting bulletin boards in areas of the hotel that associates would see every day.



Competition drives sales

When **Jarrold Mobley**, banquet captain at **Marriott Cincinnati-Northeast**, was charged with coming up with a way to increase revenue, he created the "Big Six Sales Tracking Board." Designed to list any revenue that was generated in addition to the banquet contract, the board is updated daily with sales leaders and has created a heated competition within the department to meet the monthly goal of \$800. Assistant banquet manager **Chris Stone** says, "The heat is on at Northeast!"



Nick Michael (left) and Joshua House join in the competition.

Mix of fun and function spells success

Specialty drink menus and satellite wine bars in the atrium have boosted beverage sales for **Marriott Columbus-Airport, Ohio**, by 13 percent, compared to last year's figures. "We are constantly looking for new ways to increase revenue at night," says **Brent Grimm**, p.m. restaurant manager.

"Our beverage sales are up substantially every night of the week and I would attribute that to fun, interesting drinks at the right price." Grimm brought staff into the fun by holding a sales BINGO contest in February. The contest motivated staff and beat the hotel's average dinner check by more than \$2.00.

The hotel has had success with the "Top 5" element of the Big Six as well. **Erin Daniels**, sales account manager, has taken the opportunity to make consistent contact with existing and prospective customers. Additionally, associates send newsletters to their Top 5 lists. **Brett Caron**, HR manager, shared that they have fun with the information they research, "quizzing associates at our gatherings when one of the groups is in house."

The catering team is ready at a moment's notice, thanks to its revenue-generating plan to have a banquet room set and ready for any last-minute meetings. **Traci Dixon**, sales and catering account manager, says, "We have learned that many of our guests decide the night before or even the morning of that they need a meeting room. By having one set, we can quickly accommodate our guests' needs and increase revenue."

Summer savvy in Dallas

Blazing summer heat is no match for the team at **Marriott Dallas/Fort Worth Airport-South**. The team of **Julie Faver-Dylla**, **Tiffany Smith**, **Candi Christie**, **Ruby Rios**, **Karen Ballaban** and **Nancy Sorrells** created summer promotions that allow revenue to rise along with the temperature. The promotion suite includes summer meeting specials, associate referral incentives and business card drawings in the concierge lounge for Texas Ranger tickets.

Pavel Filippov, p.m. restaurant supervisor, and AGM **Carrie Spain** came up with new summer drink recipes that brought customers into the lounge, rather than nearby venues. Bartender **Joel Horton** says, "We have had some great feedback from some of the regular customers."

It is the special touches at DFW Marriott South that make for repeat business. **Paul Davidson**, bellhop, and **Ashley Mattson**, room service, got a glowing customer review recently. According to the appreciative client, Mattson brought ice cream and chocolate cake to her room for her birthday.



Brent Grimm



Erin Daniels



Brett Caron



Traci Dixon



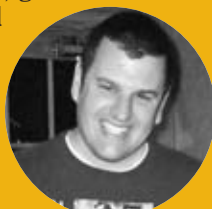
Big emphasis on the Big Six

Ensuring the Big Six is on every employee's mind is the mission at **Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn, Ohio**. AGM **Kelly Marquart** created Big Six cards that are now a required part of each associate's uniform. The hotel also held a Big Six rally, complete with Big Six bingo. Marquart cites the front desk's increased average of "over 100 sign-ups a month in the Priority Club" as evidence that the Big Six is working.



Honors program increases

The management team at **Homewood Suites Dayton/Fairborn, Ohio**, challenged the staff to increase the number of Hilton Honors membership sign-ups year over year. To accomplish this goal, **Ryan Pelfrey**, guest service representative, created forms for housekeeping and maintenance employees to leave in rooms to ask guests to sign up for the Frequency Program. Employees received a dollar for every sign-up. **Gina Moore**, bookkeeper/HR manager, says that Hilton regional vice president **Jim Wogsland** "noticed the increase in sign-ups and called the hotel to express his excitement."



Ryan Pelfrey

Wedded bliss and new business

Marriott Chicago-Northwest is quickly becoming the hotel of choice for weddings in the Windy City. With a focus on catering revenues, wedding couples that take a site tour are given a wrapped frame with an insert that reads "picture your wedding at the Marriot Chicago-Northwest." GM **Lance Misner** states that the frame serves "as a reminder of our property as well as something they can put their wedding picture in, regardless of whether or not they book."

Marriott also has implemented a promotion that awards complimentary upgrades like chair covers, ice sculptures or chocolate fountains to wedding couples who book within two weeks of a site visit. In just one month, the frame and upgrade promotions have earned the property three bookings.

Happy kids and parents

Embassy Suites Williamsburg, Va., is helping busy parents find time to slow down while boosting its a la carte sales. With the hotel's Kidz Zone program, a room is set aside from 5-9 p.m. for movies, games, crafts, and even an entertainer to make balloon animals and do magic. While the kids are busy, parents are welcomed to the bar for food and drinks.



Big Six efforts around every corner

Renaissance Hotel Indianapolis-North is all about VIP treatment and attention to detail. **Chris Snyder**, banquet manager, recalls a frequent group from Chicago, "By talking to them about their preferences, we've learned that those Chicagoans prefer their coffee strong!" Snyder now switches to the stronger Starbucks brew for the group, earning gratitude and return business from the client.



The catering team

A personal touch has helped solidify relationships with existing regulars and form bonds with prospective customers. When **Chanel Esters**, p.m. concierge, heard from one of her regulars that oatmeal cookies were his favorite, she took the initiative to look at his schedule and make sure the kitchen had oatmeal cookies at the ready. **Cheryl Jensen**, a.m. concierge, noticed a top prospect customer was not assigned to a Club Lounge floor and immediately initiated the upgrade, sending a bottle of wine and a handwritten note welcoming him to the hotel.

Jamie Kirkman, group rooms coordinator, is "committed to creating new and exciting packages" through partnerships with local businesses and attractions, says GM **Paul O'Connor**. Also increasing revenue is Grille 39's weekly feature entrée. Executive chef **Phil Kromer** and line cook **Dallas Montgomery** now have repeat customers calling in specifically to ask about the week's feature option.



The reception team

The Big Six has turned into a heated competition for Renaissance reception team members **Briana Goodman**, **Kelly Jorro**, **Nicole Hall**, **Zac Stockton**, **Britni Stephens**, **Jenn Orr**, **Charles Langley**, **Emilia Holton**, and **Amanda Latzke**. The guest service agent who signs up the most guests for Marriott Rewards each month earns a \$50 gift certificate. Reception supervisor **Megan Carter** says, "AGM **Kenny Didier** has led by example, getting involved and signing up new members as well."

The place for business

The 24/7 sales office at **Embassy Suites Lexington, Ky.**, is fun for **Jason Faulkner**, banquet manager. When sales associates are unavailable, Faulkner jumps at the opportunity to show them around the hotel and to get their information. "It gives me a chance to step outside my usual role in operations and it shows that we really are the 'easiest hotel to do business with,'" he shares.

The hotel also has affected revenue management by spending wisely and improving communication and coordination with the sales department about available banquet space.

Value for all

Watercolour steakhouse and grille at **Marriott Suites on Sand Key, Clearwater Beach, Fla.**, has hit its stride with a la carte features like dinner for two and prix fixe menus. To date, promotions marketed to guests and local clientele have generated \$10,832 in additional revenue. Restaurant manager **Kurt Leahy** states, "Our guests are receiving an exceptional value, and additional food and beverage revenue is being generated for the property."



Committed to memory

Big Six along with the Mission Statement and Service Pledge are firmly etched into maintenance technician **Matthew Furst's** mind, so much so, he's committed them to memory. He's equally serious about customer service at **Marriott Cleveland-East**. "I like our guests to know how serious I am at making their stay the best in Cleveland," Furst explains. "I realize by following our Mission Statement and our Service Pledge closely, the Big Six falls perfectly into place."



Matthew Furst

Pizza partnership pleases hungry sports fans

The hungry weekend sports guests now have pizza on the menu at **Marriott Columbus-Northwest, Ohio**. To boost revenue with a la carte options, **Katy Loop**, restaurant supervisor, partnered with local parlor Bridge Street Pizza to create the "Pizza Party Pack." **Amanda Ritchey**, HR manager, states that Loop "consistently achieves success with her revenue-focused initiatives." Ritchey also notes that the a la carte program generated an additional \$1,000 in its initial weekend rollout.



Big Six component-specific results:

Top 5 / Top 5: Preferred and group customer revenue has increased 11 percent.

Frequency Program: Room nights have increased 2.8 percent.

A la Carte Revenue: A la carte revenue has increased 4.7 percent.

24/7 Sales Office: Numerous examples of hotels booking business after-hours.

Catering: Banquet food and beverage and meeting room revenue has increased 8.2 percent.

Revenue Management: REVPAR index has increased 2.8 percent to 109.5, and the average daily rate index has increased 1.4 percent to 113.7, as reported by the Smith Travel Index.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Supporting literacy worldwide

Jeffrey Winkenwerder, sales account manager at **Marriott Chicago-Northwest**, is actively involved with Schaumburg AM Rotary. The club supports major community and international service projects, including literacy efforts. This year, Winkenwerder, along with the hotel team, collected new and gently used books to send to Africa, expanding the variety of reading materials available, especially for children.



Jeffrey Winkenwerder

Teamwork away from the hotel

Debbie Harding, executive bookkeeper, and **Gina Sylvester**, guest service supervisor at **Marriott Cincinnati-Northeast**, dedicate four hours per week volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House. From assisting families with their arrivals to cleaning rooms after they depart, Harding and Sylvester go above and beyond to make sure that families that are away from home have a little extra TLC. The duo organized a Marriott Day during Associate Appreciation Week at which a team from Marriott cooked dinner for the families. They also have organized a pop tab contest to collect tabs from each department to give to the Ronald McDonald House.



Debbie Harding (left) and Gina Sylvester

Teaching youth



Jacque Evrard

Jacque Evrard, HR manager at **Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn, Ohio**, spent an hour a week for five weeks volunteering through Junior Achievement at a nearby elementary school. She spent her time with a first-grade class at Huber Heights Elementary discussing the concept of "family" and the importance of family to a community.

"I became aware of Junior Achievement through my own son and was impressed with the program. I like how it invites local businesses into the schools and educates the students with simple concepts," Evrard states. "Junior Achievement is a partnership between the business community, educators and volunteers, all working together to inspire young people to dream big and reach their potential."

TAB-A-PULL-OOZA

For the third year in a row, **Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn, Ohio**, participated in the Dayton Ronald McDonald House TAB-A-PULL-OOZA by holding a competition between the hotel departments. Congratulations this year go to **Denise Swihart**, banquet server, and **Bruce Fischer**, kitchen utility, for their efforts in collecting pull tabs throughout the year. The team at Holiday Inn is happy to contribute to this fundraising event that generates an average of \$14,000 for the local Ronald McDonald House every year.



Coaching for a cause

Holiday Inn Dayton/Fairborn, Ohio, executive housekeeper **Mike Albrycht** is one of several volunteers who run the West Carrollton Moraine Basketball Association. The program consists of more than 350 youth ranging from ages six to 18. Albrycht has been both a boys and girls coach in the program for the past 10 years, served on the board for the past eight years and served as a volunteer referee for the past five years. "Although the program requires a lot of effort, the rewards are great," Albrycht says.

As part of the program, Albrycht and others organize a benefit game each year between West Carrollton and Miamisburg coaches to raise money for a local scholarship fund. Albrycht adds, "The program is long and takes a lot of time and dedication, but I look forward to each basketball season and what it brings to me and to the players."



Mike Albrycht with one of the boys basketball teams he has coached.

Teaming up to feed the hungry

In conjunction with the Doubletree brand, **Doubletree Hotel Dearborn, Mich.**, teamed up with Allendale Elementary School to collect food for a local food bank. In an effort to teach young children about world hunger and the need for donations, the CARE committee went to the school and taught a lesson to third graders. The principal of the school was very supportive and challenged the whole school to a contest, promising the winning class a pizza party.

The hotel was among the Top 10 winners within Doubletree Hotels worldwide, collecting the most amount of food. In total, students collected 5,000-plus pounds of non-perishable food items. The school received a special recognition plaque from Doubletree Hotels, which it proudly hung in its lobby. Doubletree plans to work with the school again on future community projects.



Helping community grow professionally

Erin Hayek, HR manager at **Renaissance Hotel Indianapolis-North**, volunteers with the Hospitality Certification Program, allowing individuals with disabilities, veterans and recently released non-violent felons the opportunity to go through an eight-week program teaching skills in the hospitality field. Hayek explains: "I spend three hours interviewing the individuals as if they were applying for a position at the Renaissance. When the interview is over, I give them advice on how to improve their presentation and interview techniques, and I give them information about what the jobs entail. It's a humbling experience and I love that for just one day I get to help those people who want their future careers to be in hospitality."



Erin Hayek

BIG SIX

Demonstrated success

The employees of the **Marriott Austin-North at Round Rock, Texas**, are focused on the Big Six and it shows. At the front desk, a monthly contest to sign up repeat guests for Marriott Rewards has grown the program by 70 percent in just four months. The sales management team has made an effort to stay in touch, even when they are away from the property by listing cell phone numbers on all e-mail communication with customers. **Todd Garvin**, consolidated revenue manager and **Karen Ballaban**, national sales director, have found success with revenue management by closely monitoring trends with competitors' hotels. And room service has initiated an offer difficult to refuse by suggesting guests top off their order with a fresh cookie for just 99 cents.

Anna McNeal and **Kristen Cepak** from the catering team have worked with executive chef **Jennifer Norrell** to create customized menus for groups that pay careful attention to cultural and dietary needs. The catering team recently hosted an event that accrued more than \$20,000 in food and beverage revenue because it was able to meet the group's specific dietary needs.

Dedi Kavanaugh, sales manager, has been very successful in using existing customers as testimonials to present to potential customers. Her efforts have won new business and made Marriott the "go to" hotel in Austin, according to **Jim Coppedge**, senior sales account

manager.

It is the little things that make a difference for Marriott. GM **Kyle Covington** consistently stresses to employees the importance of the "icing on the cake." Courtesies like walking guests to the elevator when they check-in and escorting guests to the ballroom for Easter brunch go a long way toward earning repeat business.

Good questions lead to loyalty

Carrie Falta, sales and reservations coordinator at **Marriott Cincinnati-Airport, Hebron, Ky.**, touches on the Big Six daily, regardless of the hour. By ensuring someone is always available to take incoming calls for business, customers know they will reach a live person any time, day or night. Part of Falta's success is looking for sales opportunities by understanding the customer's needs. "I make sure to ask the right questions to drive revenue," Falta shares. "I've found it helps to build client loyalty and repeat bookings to follow up with the Marriott Rewarding Events program."



Jim Coppedge



Carrie Falta

Focused on families

Bring your child to work day has been supported since 2004 at **Marriott Pittsburgh-North**. Over the years, the number of children that have come to work has grown from four to more than 25. Several departments, including culinary, banquets, front desk, maintenance, administration and housekeeping participate. All children receive a name badge and a Pittsburgh Penguins t-shirt.

HR manager **Michael Schlutz** states: "Many guests have approached our staff and said that it is a great thing that our hotel allows the children to come spend the day and learn exactly what it is their parents do for a living and to teach them customer service."



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