

# SACRAMENTO HOTEL ASSOCIATION

Reader Board

DECEMBER 2021

## 2022 Officers and Directors

In December, members of the Sacramento Hotel Association (SHA) elected Officers for 2022.

### BOARD OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 2022 INCLUDE:

- President: Royce Pollard, General Manager, DoubleTree by Hilton Sacramento
- Vice President: Barry Miller, General Manager, Holiday Inn Sacramento Downtown-Arena
- Secretary: Nikki Carlson, General Manager, Kimpton Sawyer Hotel
- Treasurer: David Huber, CHA, General Manager, Crowne Plaza Sacramento

Doug Warren, Regional Director of Operations, Courtyard Marriott & Fairfield Inn Cal Expo Sacramento, will serve as Past President for the coming year.

### BOARD DIRECTORS WITH CONTINUING TERMS FOR 2022 INCLUDE:

- Patrick Miller, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Sacramento
- Sami Qureshi, CHA, Area General Manager Sacramento Hilton Arden West
- Matthew Teyler, General Manager, Fort Sutter Hotel Sacramento

### APPOINTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2022 INCLUDE:

The SHA Nominating Committee has recommended the following appointments to the Board of Directors for 2022.

Board Director nominees for appointment to complete unexpired terms for 2022 include:

- Denia Phillips, General Manager, Residence Inn Sacramento Airport Natomas
- Brenda Smith, General Manager, The Exchange Hotel Sacramento

Associate Board Director nominees for appointment to second, one-year terms for 2022 include:

- Issa Ndiaye, Strategic Account Advisor, Commercial Delivery, SMUD
- Dr. JungYun “Christine” Hur, Assistant Professor, Department of Recreation, Parks & Tourism Administration, California State University, Sacramento

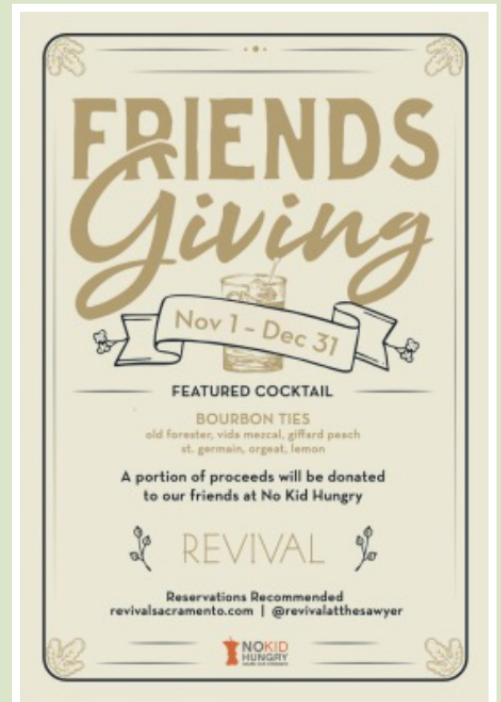


Doug Warren, the 2020 & 2021 SHA Board President, accepts his service plaque from incoming 2022 SHA Board President Royce Pollard.

## Friends Giving at Revival at the Kimpton Sawyer

The team at Revival at the Kimpton Sawyer is sharing the holiday cheer by giving back this season. For the months of November and December, 10% of all the proceeds from the sale of this season's favorite cocktail, Bourbon Ties, will be donated to No Kid Hungry a child hunger organization dedicated to solving problems of hunger and poverty in the United States and around the world.

The featured cocktail recipe for Bourbon Ties features Old Forester, Vida Mezcal, Giffard Peach, St. Germain, Orgeat and Lemon.



# Sacramento Hotel Association

## 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### PRESIDENT

**DOUG WARREN** ..... (916) 929-7900  
Regional Director of Operations  
Courtyard Marriott and Fairfield Inn  
Cal Expo Hotels

### VICE PRESIDENT

**ROYCE POLLARD** ..... (916) 929-8855  
General Manager  
DoubleTree by Hilton Sacramento

### SECRETARY

**LISA WILSON** ..... (916) 408-7777  
Director, Hotel Operations  
Thunder Valley Casino Resort

### TREASURER

**DAVID HUBER, CHA** ..... (916) 338-5800  
General Manager  
Crowne Plaza Sacramento Northeast

### PAST PRESIDENT

**SHELLY MORANVILLE, CHA** ..... (916) 443-0500  
General Manager  
Residence Inn Sacramento Downtown

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBER DIRECTORS

**NIKKI CARLSON** ..... (916) 545-7100  
General Manager  
Kimpton Sawyer Hotel

**BARRY MILLER** ..... (916) 446-0100  
General Manager  
Holiday Inn Sacramento Downtown-Arena

**PATRICK MILLER** ..... (916) 443-1234  
General Manager  
Hyatt Regency Sacramento

**SAMI QURESHI, CHA** ..... (916) 922-4700  
General Manager  
Hilton Sacramento Arden West

**MATTHEW TEYLER** ..... (916) 603-2301  
General Manager  
Fort Sutter Hotel Sacramento

## ASSOCIATE MEMBER DIRECTORS

**JUNGYUN "CHRISTINE" HUR, PH.D.** ..... (916) 278-5025  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Recreation, Parks  
& Tourism Administration  
California State University, Sacramento

**ISSA NDIAYE** ..... (916) 732-5712  
Strategic Account Advisor,  
Commercial Delivery  
SMUD

## STAFF

### Executive Director

**TERESA STEPHENSON** ..... (916) 441-6110  
Sacramento Hotel Association  
P.O. Box 276567  
Sacramento, CA 95827-6567  
(916) 441-6110 • (916) 932-2209 Fax  
info@sacramentohotelassociation.com  
www.sacramentohotelassociation.com  
teresa@sacramentohotelassociation.com



# Holiday Toys for Local Children

## SPIRIT OF THE SEASON

Generous members helped brighten the season for local children by donating toys in conjunction with SHA's Holiday Reception and Toy Collection, held December 7, at the Kimpton Sawyer Hotel.

Members donated a mountain of toys for Operation Cratchit, a project of the Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center. SHA members have been donating toys to the Center for more than a decade. This year's holiday program will serve 775 households and more than 1,500 children in North Sacramento. Julie Rhoten, Executive Director of Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center, joined SHA members at the holiday reception.

SHA members thanked outgoing Board President Doug Warren for his two years of leadership service in 2020 and 2021. Outgoing Board members completing their service were also thanked for their leadership – Past President Shelly Moranville, CHA, General Manager, Residence Inn Downtown, and Secretary Lisa Wilson, Director, Hotel Operations, Thunder Valley Casino Resort.

Attendees also recognized and thanked Scott Vandenberg for his past service to SHA and the hospitality community. Due to the pandemic, SHA did not have an opportunity to toast Vandenberg upon his May 2021 retirement as General Manager at the Hyatt Regency. In addition, he is a Past President of SHA and was involved with the STMD and the STID as well as Visit Sacramento. Vandenberg was also an advocate for the new ballroom at the Convention Center.

SHA members and guests enjoyed the opportunity to gather in person at the Kimpton Sawyer Hotel for the event. Special thanks to the reception hosts at the Kimpton Sawyer for the holiday cheer along with savory and sweet treats.



At SHA's Holiday Reception, Julie Rhoten, Executive Director of the Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center, visits with (L) Doug Warren, Regional Director of Operations, Courtyard & Fairfield Cal Expo and Residence Inn Natomas, and 2020 & 2021 SHA Board President, and Royce Pollard, General Manager, DoubleTree by Hilton Sacramento, and 2022 SHA Board President.



SHA members donated a mountain of toys for the Stanford Settlement Neighborhood Center in North Sacramento at the December Holiday Reception at the Kimpton Sawyer Hotel.

# Hyatt Centric Downtown Sacramento Opens

**THE HOTEL'S DESIGN CELEBRATES THE LOCATION'S STORIED PAST WHILE APPEALING TO TODAY'S SAVVY TRAVELER**

Hyatt and Presidio Companies announced the recent opening of Hyatt Centric Downtown Sacramento, a new lifestyle hotel designed for travelers with an adventurous spirit looking for an experience in the heart of the action. The property is owned by Presidio Companies and managed by Evolution Hospitality, the lifestyle operating division of Aimbridge Hospitality. The hotel's Area General Manager is Paul Resch and the Area Director of Sales is Nancy Wagner.

Located adjacent to the Golden 1 Center and Downtown Commons (DOCO), the Hyatt Centric Downtown Sacramento, at 1122 7th Street, boasts 172 guestrooms and suites, 2,000 square feet of meeting space and a state-of-the-art fitness center. The thoughtful amenities combined with the location's history as an integral part of the Sacramento jazz community, makes the property a can't-miss stay for business and leisure travelers alike.

The original hotel's rich history dates back to 1911, when it first opened as the five-story Hotel Clayton. In 1939, it became Hotel Marshall, named after James W. Marshall, who discovered gold in the American River that sparked the California Gold Rush. For 30 years, through the 1920s to 1950s, Hotel Marshall was the jewel in the crown of Sacramento's vivacious music and jazz scene. The stage in the hotel lobby's famed Clayton Club saw the era's biggest acts including Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday and Cab Calloway.

Now, standing at eleven stories high, the new hotel has preserved two of the original facades and celebrates the property's past with shareable moments at every turn. From Marshall amps stacked behind the front desk, to hand-painted murals of famous musicians in guestroom closets and music studio inspired light fixtures throughout the hotel, guests are whisked away into the glamour of yesteryear while still enjoying modern comforts.

The Clayton Club rooftop lounge located on the sixth floor pays homage to the prohibition era and the music scene the original Clayton Club entertained. Native Sacramentan and integral member of the farm-to-fork movement, chef Ravin Patel helms the kitchen and showcases his mastery of small plates that celebrate the melting pot of cuisines in the region alongside unique craft cocktails. On the ground level, The 7th Street Standard Restaurant, an American restaurant and bar also led by chef Patel, features a breathtaking bar and dining room with high-style cues from the golden age of the hotel and is open for dinner and brunch seven days a week.



# Hilton to Offer Meeting Clients Covid-19 Testing Information

Starting March 2021, Hilton Worldwide will begin offering third-party Covid-19 testing and health screening providers to meeting planners who book or have booked an event at any U.S. Hilton. Hilton is not involved in the transaction or administering of the tests; the added resources include third-party providers for handheld temperature check devices, personal health screening checklists, Covid-19 self-testing options and Covid-19 same-day onsite testing. Included providers of rapid and PCR testing based on event size include Impact Health, Vault Health and SalivaDirect. “As more customers book in-person meetings and events, there has been a steady increase in requests and questions around Covid-19 testing and screening options for event attendees,” said Hilton SVP Frank Passanante in a statement. “In response, we expanded resources within our Hilton EventReady Playbook to include third-party providers that can deliver a seamless experience and offer preferential pricing to our event planners.” In January 2021, Hilton expanded the EventReady program to offer hybrid meeting solutions as well.

## People on the Move



**Amanda Drontle** has joined the **Fort Sutter Hotel** as the Director of Sales. Drontle began her hospitality career in Aspen selling weddings and tour groups before moving

to the San Francisco Bay Area, where she went on to sell corporate events with both Hilton and Marriott. Most recently, she was the opening Director of Sales for Hotel Winters.



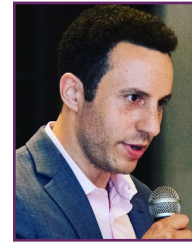
The **Sheraton Grand Sacramento** named **Jeroen Gerrese** as the new General Manager, effective spring 2021. For several years, Gerrese had been

serving as the general manager at The Sanctuary Beach Resort in Monterey. Gerrese’s 30-plus-year tenure includes numerous leadership roles, beginning as a Director of Food & Beverage for Omni Hotels. From Omni, his career continued across the globe for hotel companies such as IHG, Waldorf Astoria, Millennium Hotels and Interstate Hotels. He is no stranger to Marriott, having served as General Manager and Market Vice President for the Moscow Marriott Royal Aurora Hotel and Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa. Further, Gerrese was thrilled to return “home” to Sacramento, a community he is extremely familiar with, having served as managing partner for a hospitality investment firm with several assets in Sacramento County and the Central Valley of California.



**Taylor Neal** has joined **The Citizen Hotel** as the property’s Director of Sales & Marketing. Neal transferred from the Four Points by Sheraton, an

Evolution property, where she has been the Director of Sales since 2018. She has worked as a Director of Sales and in other sales positions for Aimbridge since 2015, at properties such as Aloft Broomfield Denver, Residence Inn and Springhill Suites Pittsburgh, and Aloft Tulsa Oklahoma.



**Jeremy Raynor** was named General Manager at the **Murieta Inn and Spa** in Rancho Murieta. He was previously General Manager for the Westin Sacramento

and Rooms Director at Carneros Resort and Spa in Napa. Raynor’s career in hospitality began with restaurant management and ownership before transitioning into hotels. His career has taken him from Rhode Island, Connecticut, Florida, and Pennsylvania before moving to the West Coast. He has worked in all aspects of operations through positions with Hilton, Marriott, and independent properties.



**Marta Rodriguez** joined the **Sheraton Grand Sacramento** this past summer as its Director of Human Resources. Rodriguez has more than 25

years of experience in the hospitality industry and has spent the last 13 years in the human resources discipline. Her HR journey began at The Westin St. Francis as HR Manager; in 2011 she became the Assistant Director of Human Resources. In 2015 she became the Director of Human Resources for the Palace Hotel in San Francisco. After the Palace Hotel, Rodriguez was the Director of Human Resources for the San Francisco Marriott Union Square. She left Marriott in September of 2018 and, most recently, had been the Director of Human Resources for Team San Jose, overseeing all the HR activities for the McEnery Convention Center and four other performance arts theaters. She celebrates Marriott’s TakeCare culture by gardening and cooking new recipes using the harvest of herbs and vegetables from her own garden.

# Congratulations to Thunder Valley Casino Resort

## RECIPIENT OF TWO INDUSTRY AWARDS

Thunder Valley Casino Resort has received the prestigious AAA Four Diamond rating for the 10th consecutive year.

“Achieving a AAA Four Diamond rating is a true testament to the hospitality, service and attention to detail that our guests have come to enjoy,” said Dawn Clayton, General Manager of Thunder Valley Casino Resort.

“We are thrilled to receive this coveted award,” said Joel Moore, Vice President of Hotel Operations at Thunder Valley Casino Resort. “The Diamond rating celebrates Thunder Valley’s upscale amenities and VIP service. Thank you to our dedicated team who make this achievement possible.”

Thunder Valley Casino Resort also received the 2021 TripAdvisor® Travelers’ Choice Award for consistently receiving outstanding traveler feedback, placing Thunder Valley in the top 10% of hospitality businesses around the globe.

This coveted award program identifies and ranks the very best hotels, destinations, attractions and restaurants in specific categories and geographic areas as rated and reviewed by travelers. The awards take into account the quality and quantity of traveler reviews and ratings.

“Thunder Valley’s continued recognition as an award-winning resort destination is made possible through the hard work and unwavering dedication of our wonderful team members,” said Joel Moore, Vice President of Hotel Operations at Thunder Valley Casino Resort. “We look forward to continuing to provide exceptional experiences for our guests.”

During “A Four-Diamond Fun Fest” this summer, team members from the hotel and High Steaks enjoyed a day of celebration for achieving AAA’s Four Diamond rating once again. Activities included games (Toss the T.P., Make the Bed, Corn Hole), caricature sketch artists, a prize wheel, photo souvenirs, snacks and drinks. The highlight of the event was the Dunk Tank, where members of the management team took the plunge!



## Hilton Ranked #3 Workplace in the World for 2021

For the sixth year in a row, Hilton has been recognized for its exceptional workplace culture and named as one of the **World's Best Workplaces** by Fortune magazine and Great Place to Work. Hilton ranked #3 on the list of the top 25 companies and remains the only hospitality company on the list. Hilton Team Members attribute the company's culture, benefits, and inclusive environment as its foundation to being a great place to work.

Hilton aims to build a culture that supports team members at every step of their personal and professional journeys. The hospitality company also provides best-in-class benefits to both hourly and salaried team members, including expanded parental leave, adoption assistance, and extended bereavement leave. This summer, Hilton also launched a new campaign to increase support for team members' mental wellness, focused on creating dialogue around the topic of mental health, providing team members with new tools and resources, and leaning on Hilton's established culture of well-being.

With a workforce spanning nearly 136,805 people across 119 countries and territories, this recognition is a result of positive feedback direct from team members. Hilton was also named #1 Best Workplace for Women in the U.S.



## Restaurant Menus in 2022 Will Focus on Healthier Planet and Healthier Consumers

Restaurant customers can expect to see health taking center stage on restaurant menus in 2022. The National Restaurant Association recently released its annual *What's Hot Culinary Forecast*, which offers a detailed look at the topics, trends, and products expected to drive restaurant menus in the coming year across a variety of categories including daypart occasions, menu categories, beverages, flavors, global inspirations, packaging/off-premises trends and industry macro-trends.

After demand for comfort food surged during the height of the pandemic, consumers are refocusing on better-for-you options, with foods that are believed to have immunity-boosting qualities and plant-based sandwiches making up three of the Top 10 Trends for 2022. Plant-based proteins are growing increasingly popular on menus and less expensive cuts of protein, such as thighs instead of wings, will have a greater presence in the year to come.

Sustainability will continue to influence menus and how restaurants make decisions across the board. From reusable and recyclable packaging to zero-waste options, restaurants are continuing to prioritize sustainable initiatives. As consumers continue to utilize off-premises options in all dayparts, restaurants are looking to translate their dine-in experience outside the four walls of the restaurant with thoughtful packaging that maintains food quality, retains temperature, and is tamper-proof.

“Look for trends that fuse the traditional meal daypart items with other dayparts and an increasing popularity of snacking and its allied items. Also, with the popularity of cocktails-to-go during the pandemic, restaurants will look to expand both alcoholic and non-alcoholic craft beverage options,” said Hudson Riehle, Senior Vice President of Research for the Association.

Menus will become more refined and streamlined going into the year ahead, while chefs anticipate alcohol-infused desserts, globally inspired items, and even upscale potato chips to find spots on the menu.

The *What's Hot* survey was conducted in October 2021. More than 350 professional chefs of the American Culinary Federation rated 109 food items and culinary concepts compiled by Association experts and Technomic's Menu Research & Insights Division. Download the full report [here](#).

# Fortune Best Workplaces for Women™ 2021

## HOSPITALITY COMPANIES ON THE LIST

---

To determine the Best Workplaces for Women, Great Place to Work® analyzed confidential survey feedback representing more than 5.6 million U.S. employees.

Employees responded to over 60 survey questions describing the extent to which their organization creates a Great Place to Work For All™. Eighty-five percent of the ranking is based on what women themselves report about their workplace, and how fairly those experiences compare to men's reports of the same workplaces. The survey measures the extent to which women report their organizations create a Great Place to Work For All™ -- for example, whether people trust each other and employees are able to reach their full human potential, no matter who they are or what they do. Great Place to Work® analyzed whether different identities women hold change their experience of the workplace. They also analyzed these patterns relative to each organization's size, workforce make-up, and what's typical in their industry and region. They also considered women's daily experiences of innovation, the company's values, and the effectiveness of their leaders, to ensure they're consistently experienced.

Fifteen percent of the remaining rank is based on how well represented women are in the workforce and throughout management, taking into account industry trends. To be considered, at a minimum, companies need to employ at least 50 women, at least 20% of their non-executive managers need to be female, and at least one of their executives needs to be female.

## Hospitality Companies

### #1 - HILTON

*What employees are saying*

Hilton creates a true sense of belonging and is focused on Team Members first. I love that Hilton cares about making an impact in our communities and globally when it comes to sustainability.

### #10 - HYATT HOTELS CORPORATION

*What employees are saying*

They truly care about us as people and many times will go above and beyond for us in our personal lives to ensure that we have a healthy environment both professionally and personally.

### #26 - MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL

*What employees are saying*

It is the people. Our culture is inclusive and even with the uncertainty and changes over the last year, there are always emails going out to connect us. It is uniquely full of positive and motivated people.

### #62 - KIMPTON HOTELS & RESTAURANTS

*What employees are saying*

I truly feel that Kimpton and my boss value me for who I am and how my personality and perspective add value to our work. I honestly feel like each and every person I meet sees me as a person first, not an employee first.

*To ensure survey results truly represent all employees, Great Place to Work requires that Trust Index® survey results are accurate to a 95% confidence level with a 5% margin of error or better. Companies with 10 to 999 people are considered for the small and medium segment; companies with 1,000 or more employees are considered for the large category.*

## Hilton Introduces Shareable Digital Room Keys and More Enhancements for Guests

---

In October, Hilton announced the latest in a series of technology innovations that enhance the guest experience across the company's 18 world-class hotel brands. In a first for a major hospitality company, Digital Key Share will allow more than one guest to have access to their room's Digital Key, which turns the free Hilton Honors app on their smartphones into a room key.

The technology is now available at more than 80% of Hilton's portfolio, or close to 5,400 of Hilton's more than 6,600 properties worldwide. In the coming months, Digital Key Share will roll out globally to all hotels currently offering Digital Key technology.

Hilton also announced an enhancement to a Hilton Honors benefit, providing members with early confirmation of a favorite perk – complimentary room upgrades.

These two enhancements join the recently launched Confirmed Connecting Rooms, another industry first that allows individuals to easily and instantly confirm at least two connecting rooms at the time of booking. Confirmed Connecting Rooms by Hilton, is rolling out globally and is available when booking on Hilton.com or through the Hilton Honors app at participating hotels within any of the portfolio's 18 brands.

# Business Travel News Annual Hotel Report

By Donna M. Airoidi, Business Travel News

Note: The article was edited for space.

The 2021 edition of Business Travel News' (BTN) annual Hotel Report differs significantly from its traditional coverage. This edition's focus is not on brand performance, as there was too little business travel that took place the past 12 months, and some buyers did not feel comfortable rating brands when booking volumes were so low. Instead, the survey includes ratings on a chain-wide level only, and on just four COVID-19-related attributes.

**Hilton Worldwide** earned the top spot among corporate travel buyers, followed by **Marriott International**, **Hyatt Hotels Corp.** and **IHG Hotels & Resorts**, all within a couple hundredths of a point from each other. **BWH Hotel Group** and **Accor**, while not making the final cut due to lower usage rates among survey participants, were close behind, and performed well in certain categories.

The survey asked travel buyers to rate chains on their overall COVID-19 response in implementing health and safety plans—the attribute in which all the hotel companies scored their highest marks—effective client communications during the pandemic, corporate contracting management, and their ability to maintain operational properties in key business locations. Hilton garnered the highest marks for two of the four: its COVID-19 response and ability to maintain operations.

| <b>CHAINWIDE PERFORMANCE</b><br>ON A SCALE FROM 1 TO 5               | <b>Hilton</b> | <b>Marriott</b> | <b>Hyatt</b> | <b>IHG</b>  | <b>TOTAL</b> |
|--|---------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Overall Covid-19 response in implementing health and safety plans    | 4.48          | 4.41            | 4.36         | 4.24        | 4.37         |
| Effective client communication during the pandemic                   | 4.07          | 4.10            | 4.01         | 3.99        | 4.04         |
| Corporate contracting management                                     | 3.99          | 3.94            | 4.01         | 4.07        | 4.00         |
| Ability to maintain operational properties in key business locations | 4.28          | 4.16            | 4.10         | 4.13        | 4.17         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>4.20</b>   | <b>4.15</b>     | <b>4.12</b>  | <b>4.11</b> | <b>4.15</b>  |

“We are really proud of the work we did,” said Hilton SVP of Worldwide Sales Frank Passanante. With Hilton CleanStay, its cleanliness and safety program, “we took what was foundationally very high standards and elevated them throughout the entire stay,” he said. “Flexibility, cleanliness, these are the things customers told us they needed us to focus on.”

Marriott took top marks for effective client communications during the pandemic and second for its overall pandemic response. The company's SVP of global sales, Tammy Routh, said that staying in contact with every customer made the difference, even though the company had significantly reduced its workforce.

IHG outscored its competitors for corporate contracting management. “We've focused on being nimble and responding to the needs of our customers throughout the pandemic,” said IHG SVP of global sales Derek DeCross in an email. “We extended rates and discounts from 2021 into 2022 to maintain flexibility for our customers who are still uncertain about travel programs and budgets.”

Contracting was the one category where both Hilton and Marriott scored below Hyatt and IHG. “One thing we have heard loud and clear from customers is we need rate assurance,” Hilton's Passanante said. Marriott once again offered to roll over rates into 2022, and many buyers took that offer, according to the company. But some buyers noted that Marriott wasn't willing to negotiate RFPs this season.

Hyatt was the only company to score above a four in all four of the attributes rated, with its top score for its COVID-19 response. “It was everything we implemented, including hygiene managers on staff at every property,” said Hyatt VP of Global Sales for the Americas Gus Vonderheide. “As business travel returns, it will be even more important than a year ago to show we are still living and breathing the standards we set.”

## 2021 BTN HOTEL SURVEY METHODOLOGY

*BTN emailed audience members responsible for corporate hotel buying decisions, and 138 participated Aug. 10-Sept. 17 in an online survey to rate hotel chain pandemic performance during the previous 12 months. Buyers rated only the chains with which they have conducted business or hold a corporate contract on four pandemic-related attributes on an ascending scale from one to five. Only chains with multiple brands were considered for this survey, and BTN reported results only for chains with significant respondent usage. BTN also surveyed respondents about the evolution of their hotel program practices over the past 12 months as well as their go-forward strategies.*



# North American Hotel Customer Satisfaction: 2021 J.D. Power Study

## ATTENTIVE STAFF, FLEXIBLE CANCELLATION POLICIES KEEP HOTEL GUESTS SATISFIED DESPITE STRAINS OF PANDEMIC

The hotel industry overall maintains a strong overall customer satisfaction score in the J.D. Power 2021 North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index (NAGSI) Study<sup>SM</sup>.

“Frontline staff have been the real heroes of the North American hotel industry during this past year, managing to navigate a very difficult situation while holding overall hotel guest satisfaction steady and actually improving customer satisfaction with staff interactions,” said Andrea Stokes, hospitality practice lead at J.D. Power. “As we transition to a more normalized travel environment, however, guest expectations are growing rapidly and certain must-haves, such as smart TVs, pleasant views and balconies, are becoming increasingly important to maintaining high levels of guest satisfaction. It is also clear that guests expect breakfast service to resume, especially in limited-service hotels that usually provide complimentary hot breakfast.”

### FOLLOWING ARE ADDITIONAL KEY FINDINGS OF THE 2021 STUDY:

- **Hotel staff, flexible cancellation policies save the day in crisis:** Overall hotel guest satisfaction across the study is 830 (on a 1,000-point scale), which is unchanged from 2020 and 10 points higher than in 2019. The strong performance is driven in large part by the overall hotel staff experience, which increases slightly in 2021. Hotel guests also had higher satisfaction with value for money, reflecting the reduction in room rates many hotel properties undertook to stimulate demand.
- **Satisfaction with breakfast declines:** One area that is a major drag on customer satisfaction in the study is breakfast. In all but one hotel segment, guests were particularly dissatisfied with reduced variety and quality—if breakfast was offered at all. Through the study fielding dates, 36% of hotels eliminated buffet-style serving.
- **I want my smart TV:** During the pandemic, consumers stuck at home increased subscriptions to a variety of streaming entertainment services. It is not surprising, then, that the study shows an increase in demand for smart TVs in hotel rooms. Hotel “need to haves” that have grown the most in importance since 2020 are smart TVs (+9 percentage points), balcony/views (+6 percentage points) and healthy living/wellness amenities (+5 percentage points).

Click [here](#) for more information about the 2021 North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index (NAGSI) Study.

*The 2021 North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index (NAGSI) Study, now in its 25th year, analyzes guest responses to more than 150 questions regarding branded hotel stay experiences and benchmarks the performance of 104 brands across six market segments. This year’s study is based on responses from 32,963 hotel guests for stays between May 2020 and June 2021.*

# Courtyard by Marriott Signals Brand Evolution to Reinvigorate Its North American Portfolio

Marriott International is giving its Courtyard brand in North America a facelift, the company announced in early December. More than 375 of the brand’s properties throughout the U.S. and Canada are expected to complete exterior renovations by 2024, including 60 that already have been completed. Many also will receive new interior designs in their public spaces and guest rooms, according to Marriott.

The exterior updates will include a new façade, signage and landscaping. Interior updates will feature an



“urban-inspired lobby” with individual check-in desks, and with The Bistro Bar as a lobby focal point. There also will be increased lounge seating, the Crate market—with to-go snacks, sandwiches and salads—and a communal table. The brand’s media pods, with their own TV screen and sectional sofa, will remain.

Marriott plans to expand its Courtyard fitness centers, open 24/7, with dedicated weightlifting and stretching areas in addition to exercise equipment. The updated guest rooms will feature solid colors with a “warm and neutral palette,” a platform bed, cove lighting, a sleeper sofa, a “valet station” with refrigerator and coffee maker and a 55-inch TV.

At participating hotels, guest rooms will have electronic locks for digital room keys available via the Marriott Bonvoy mobile app.

*Source: Marriott International*

## HSMAI + TrustYou White Paper: Do You Know Your Guests?

Throughout the pandemic, hotel companies adapted to the new dynamics of customer feedback. During recovery, they're applying the lessons they learned — and implementing solutions that are increasingly responsive, adaptive, and data-driven.

The Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMAI) and TrustYou present *Do You Know Your Guests?*, a white paper that discusses how the pandemic changed guest behavior, including how they travel and what they expect from hotels; best practices for responding to guest feedback; and how automated solutions can help.

Through interviews with industry leaders, HSMAI and TrustYou explored how companies have applied the lessons they learned during the pandemic to implement responsive and data-driven solutions.

### DOWNLOAD WHITE PAPER

[Here](#)

**“It’s about having a  
great human connection  
with your guests.  
You want to be  
honest and upfront  
about how you’re  
addressing the issue.”**



## Hotel Operators Evolve Process of Adapting to Guests’ Needs

By Dana Miller

Hotel News Now, December 1, 2021 | This article was edited for space.

As the global hotel industry continues on a path of recovery, hoteliers are adapting each day to streamline operations while maintaining an adequate level of service and attracting and retaining the talent to deliver that guest satisfaction.

Here are some of the highlights from Hotel News Now coverage over the past six months about the pain points operators are going through and how they're finding solutions.

### GUEST MIX CHANGES AND EMPLOYEES BURNOUT

In July 2021, hotels in the U.S. began running at nearly 2019 occupancy levels, said Remington Hotels CEO & President Sloan Dean. While the increased occupancy was a positive, most of the bookings came from leisure travel, meaning more guests per occupied room that led to more time needed to clean the rooms.

“In our leisure resorts, we’ve had to add more trash cans to the rooms because more people are eating in the rooms, they’re bringing more with them and leaving more in the rooms,” Dean said.

Arbor Lodging Management CEO Sheenal Patel said the entire industry is feeling pain from the lack of hourly employees to spread around duties.

Several hotel brands, including Hilton, have moved to an opt-in model for daily room cleaning.

### HOUSEKEEPERS IN HIGH DEMAND

Some hotel brands in the U.S. shifted to an opt-in model for daily housekeeping over the summer, which executives said can help balance guest preferences with the current labor market.

Hilton moved to the opt-in model at its non-luxury U.S. properties, noting guests had varying levels of comfort with someone entering their rooms after they checked in.

### GUEST SATISFACTION SCORES FLAT FROM 2020

Despite limited services, guest satisfaction scores managed to hold at the same rate as 2020. However, guests were still vocal about what they value during an overnight stay.

The J.D. Power 2021 North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index study released in July 2021 noted on a 1,000-point scale, overall hotel guest satisfaction was 830, which is flat compared to 2020 and 10 points higher than in 2019.

Continued on page 12

# Hyatt Launched 'World of Care' with New Commitments to Advance DEI and Responsible Business Practices



This summer, Hyatt Hotels Corporation unveiled World of Care – a global Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) platform – designed to address the pressing challenges faced by Hyatt’s colleagues, guests, owners, and communities and enact meaningful change within the hospitality industry.

The launch of this platform provides an opportunity to support key milestones and initiatives for Hyatt – including:

- Sharing detailed workforce diversity data, which was initiated in 2020;
- Rolling out a new global human trafficking training;
- Elevating the wellbeing of its colleagues through a dedicated week of programming and new wellness assessment.

## CARING FOR RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

Hyatt Elevates Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) Disclosures

Recognizing the impact of transparency and accountability on DE&I progress, Hyatt will report its diversity data annually. In addition, Hyatt has built on its existing practice of tying annual incentive planning to diversity, equity, and inclusion progress.

## CARING FOR PEOPLE

*Hyatt Combats Human Trafficking, Elevates Wellbeing and Commits to Opportunity Youth*

Hyatt rolled out comprehensive human trafficking trainings in the industry in 2021, and ensured that it is mandatory for all global colleagues. The training empowers members at all levels to be vigilant for signs of human trafficking and take swift action to report and abate it.

In June, Hyatt hosted its first-ever Global Wellbeing Week, focused on emotional, mental, and physical wellbeing to help colleagues understand and prioritize self-care. During Hyatt’s annual Global Month of Service each July, volunteer opportunities are available for colleagues to strengthen communities.

Hyatt will continue to prioritize creating career pathways for youth with diverse backgrounds and skill sets through its RiseHY program, building on the millions of dollars already donated to continue supporting young adults to help them identify and reach their full potential.

## CARING FOR THE PLANET

*Hyatt Works to Advance Environmental Action*

Hyatt’s new environmental framework is focused on climate change and water conservation, waste, and circularity, responsible sourcing, and thriving destinations. The new framework is designed to foster collective action across departments, business vendors, and suppliers, and beyond. Through World of Care, Hyatt’s activities are aligned with key aspects of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) in pursuit of a better and more sustainable future for all.

# U.S. Hospitality Industry Recovery Is Uneven Across Markets

Nationally, hotel performance has been on an upward trend since bottoming out with the onset of the pandemic in the spring of 2020. Beneath the surface, national averages hide the most uneven recovery in the history of the hospitality industry.

Full recovery is not expected until late 2022 or early 2023, according to the latest forecast from STR and Tourism Economics. Revenue per available room, the primary hotel performance metric that reflects both occupancy and average daily rates, is down by 20% so far this year compared to the same point in 2019.

Most of the largest markets have fared worse than the U.S. average because of the types of demand large markets typically rely on. Besides domestic leisure visitors, the hospitality industry in bigger cities is supported by business travelers, convention attendees and international guests — all of which have struggled to recover in the pandemic era.

Some markets have exceeded or come close to 2019 levels, mostly popular beach destinations that benefited from the vaccine-induced release of pent-up leisure travel.

Though not a beach destination, the Inland Empire was also aided by the leisure demand surge, as many Californians chose drive-to destinations with outdoor activities to recharge. Recovery was further bolstered by out-of-state visitors when California fully reopened in June.

With the federal government, and many government contract firms still working remotely, travel demand from the government sector remains very low.

The recent discovery of the omicron variant has injected yet another bout of uncertainty into the outlook for the hospitality industry, but the wide disparities in hotel performance across markets is expected to continue regardless.

The broader hotel recovery depends on everyday travelers, event organizers and corporations seeing travel as a low-risk activity again.

*Source: CoStar Analytics & CoStar Group, December 1, 2021*

## HOTEL OPERATORS EVOLVE PROCESS OF ADAPTING TO GUESTS' NEEDS

Continued from page 10

The survey said 36% of hotels removed buffet-style services in response to the pandemic's focus on social distancing, which caused a decline in satisfaction.

"It's through no fault of the hotel. They tried to do their best, but it was that variety that guests were missing, the quality guests were missing," said Andrea Stokes, Hospitality Practice Lead at J.D. Power. "What hotels were able to do with a small grab-and-go lunch bag of food, it just wasn't what guests were used to."

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE QUALITY UP, WHILE QUANTITY DOWN

Because some hotel brands need to trim the number of items on their menus, they are now focusing on higher-quality items over quantity.

Starting January 1, 2022, brands such as Hyatt Hotels Corp., Hilton and Marriott International will launch new offerings and programs for breakfast, showcasing higher-quality options, including vegan and vegetarian that can be customized.

## HOTELIERS REIGNITE EXPERIENTIAL TRAVEL

Though experiential travel has been a buzz word of the past, it's now top of mind for many hotel brand operators.

Tommy Lai, CEO at Singapore-based investment firm General Hotel Management, said a hotel stay sticks with a guest post-vacation only if the service is up to par and genuine.



~SHA Board of Directors and Staff