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HOTEL MANAGEMENT

THE LEADING HOSPITALITY NEWS AUTHORITY SINCE 1875 | Vol. 234, No. 11 | November 2019

Presenting 34 gems of GMs

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AREA GM, HOTEL JULIAN AND HOTEL ESSEX, CHICAGO

What is the most pressing challenge you've faced and resolved in the past year?

"In life, I enjoy starting from scratch. 20 years ago, I came to the U.S. from Ukraine and started my life and career from scratch. I had a strong foundation to build on, though—my education, dreams and persistence. And now once again, I started from scratch assembling operations teams for two hotels. This time, the 'ingredients' were my mentor and the ownership who trusted and believed in me. I was on the hunt for the best talent to build my team, and at the same time I was immersed in exploring and picking exquisite amenities for our guests. It gave me a sense of joy and satisfaction to watch my 'dream team' feeling proud of what we achieved and our guests being happy with their stay."



the traditional qualifications—education, certifications—are in place but would ring hollow without the key skill of hands-on dedication.

You can get to know some of these special men and women starting on page 28 in this month's issue. For those looking at their own careers, if the road to general manager is the path you're on, you'll find they serve as an inspiration for your aspiration.

In addition, we're aggregating more than 400 responses to our annual Voice of the GM survey that will present a wealth of data straight from the property trenches. Look for this proprietary information online in the coming weeks at www.hotelmanagement.net.

This issue also is filled with conference coverage, showcasing the latest from The Lodging Conference, Best Western Hotels & Resorts, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts and the Legislative Action Summit. And find out more about Caption by Hyatt, the new mix-and-mingle brand, and what Dream Hotel Group CEO Jay Stein is up to in our One-on-One profile.

We'd also like to mark the recent passing of Shirley Gleman, one of the rock-solid personalities at Horizons International Group/National Association of Black Hotel Owners, Operators and Developers. Shirley, assistant to NABHOOD President Andy Ingraham, was always the most helpful and gracious of contacts who helped organize and handle the annual NABHOOD summit, dealing with journalists clamoring for press credentials, interview times, hotel reservations, agendas and IDs on all those pictures from the event. Her email to this reporter scant days before she passed without warning serves as a reminder of how tenuous life is and how grateful we should all be as we sit around our Thanksgiving tables this year. She will be missed. **HM**

Best,

Stefani....

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Every day online and every month in print, Hotel Management is here chronicling the events and shifts within the hospitality industry that keep it spinning and its denizens chattering. For the most part, it's about significant M&As, brand launches, who's got the next top job, what the KPIs look like, what your hotel could look like—prototypes, renovations, new designer dictums—and any number of informational layers that make up the lodging onion. Within all this intel, in each issue we shine a spotlight on a particular general manager, detailing his or her journey to this critical hotel post and how each is thriving and advancing in an increasingly complex accommodations environment. None of their stories are ever boring and none are typical; each brings a different take on the job.

Now, there are pundits and talking heads who will yammer there is nothing "unique" in the world, but we beg to differ. True, in our November issue we're not presenting you with one unique general manager in our annual GMs to Watch edition; we're giving you 34. And like snowflakes, no two are alike. They are, however, similar in mindset, in purpose. Every one of the men and women highlighted in our GMs to Watch has a passion for perfection, for making sure the property that's been entrusted to his or her care is the absolute best it can be.

It takes a certain type of person to run a hotel. First, they have to possess a double dose of humanity, which extends not only to the guest, but to associates, from line employees to junior execs. Second, more often than not they are the bridge between owner (if it's not already themselves) and management company, designer, contractor and myriad other service providers who help keep a property up to speed and running profitably. Third, they are all about community—the one that exists at their property and the one their property exists in. And fourth, they are exceedingly adept jugglers, expert at ensuring all the moving parts of the hotel process keep their momentum, and doing it the majority of the time with a smile. Common-sense smarts and a great sense of humor also are part of a great GM profile.

The list of attributes necessary to wrangle what, ostensibly, are minicities (even budget properties have their various "neighborhoods") is extensive and those selected as our GMs to Watch this year have them in abundance, particularly those who are industry veterans. Of course,