

2024 WINTER NEWSLETTER



A NOTE FROM OUR CEO: BLAIR WILLS

Happy New Year all! As we enter 2024 we want to say thank you to everyone for all of their hard work and efforts over this past year, it is truly appreciated. It is important to take a minute as we embark on a new year with new challenges to reflect on what drives StepStone Hospitality's success. It is each and every one of you. You are the soul of StepStone Hospitality and critical to the success of the organization. It is more important than ever that we treat each other right, with respect and together as a team we can accomplish anything. We are very confident of that. Things are not always going to be easy and we are going to continue to need to evolve and modify how we operate and approach challenges. As we have mentioned before, if we are not evolving and moving forward, we are moving backward. We remain committed to providing each of you with the tools and resources to succeed. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of us with questions, feedback, suggestions and ways we can assist.

I am excited to report that overall the StepStone Hospitality current portfolio has grown to 23 properties strong with over 4,800 rooms under management and over 1,000 StepStone team members. The latest additions to the StepStone Hospitality family are the Homewood Suites by Hilton Pittsburgh-Southpointe and the Home2 Suites New York Long Island City. Both are great properties and with great teams and we look to continue to build upon this growth momentum in 2024.

In addition, our home office team has welcomed several new team members with John Panko (Vice President of Sales and Marketing), Zachary Peck (Regional VP of Operations), Amish Naik (Vice President of Development), Mel Miller (Senior Director, Marketing & Digital Strategy) and Thato Manyoga (Regional Director of Revenue Management) joining in the second half of 2023. We know many of you have already met them but please join us in welcoming them to the team or back to the team!

We look forward to a great 2024 and as a team we will win! Thank you again for all of your hard work!

IN THIS EDITION:

- Sales & Marketing View
- Hotel Spotlights
- Portfolio Additions
- Holiday Fun
- Employee Spotlights
- Hotel Happenings
- Award Winners

SALES & MARKETING VIEW



SALESPERSON PRODUCTIVITY ROLLUP 2023

As we say farewell to 2023, we are filled with gratitude for each and every one of you that has contributed to the achievements in 2023. This year took us all by surprise. What we thought would be another year of endless pent-up demand pouring into our hotels has turned in to a much different story. New supply, lack of leisure travel, outbound international travel, and inflation was not in the forecast. We hit a moment of stabilization and softening that none of us could predict. We had to pivot. There is more pressure on finding base business and fighting for the same business against a growing supply of new hotels. While revenues hit a plateau, we had to react. Instead of reducing costs, we pivoted and invested in our sales teams. The business was there, we just needed the sales power to hit the pavement, stay ahead of the competition, and bring the base business back to our hotels.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are confident that our collective efforts, dedication, and teamwork will lead us to success in the coming year, and maybe even a little magic. We are excited to be together in February at the StepStone Hospitality Conference to unveil the meaning of MAGIC. Stay tuned, and we look forward to seeing everyone soon. Let's congratulate our top performers for 2023!

Top Performers for 2023 (% to goal):

Group Revenue

Eddie Myers and team at the Homewood Suites Orlando Theme Parks - \$657,978 (196% of Booking Goal)

Banquet and Catering Revenue

Eddie Myers and team at the Homewood Suites Orlando Theme Parks- \$64,637 (624% of Booking Goal)

Business Travel

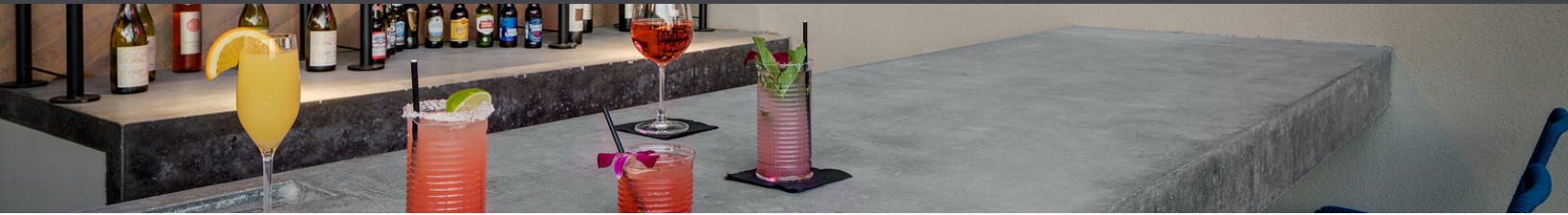
Eddie Myers and team at the Hilton Garden Inn Lake Buena Vista - \$837,096 (124% of the BT Budget)

Most Improved Cvent Lead Response Time, over prior year

Deniz Dunne and team at the Sheraton Suites Atlanta Galleria with an improvement of 12.4 hours for lead response time



PORTFOLIO ADDITIONS



WE WELCOMED 3 NEW HOTELS!



**HOME2 SUITES BY HILTON NEW YORK LONG ISLAND
CITY/MANHATTAN VIEW**



EMBASSY SUITES VALLEY FORGE



HOMWOOD SUITES PITTSBURGH SOUTH POINTE

HEALTH & WELLNESS CORNER

How to Find a PCP That's Right for You

Finding a primary care physician (PCP) that you truly like can feel a lot like dating. It's nerve-wracking putting yourself out there, you have big hopes, and you know some good ones are already taken/not accepting new patients. But you're still hoping to find "the one."

Just like dating, it's worth the extra effort to find a PCP you can have a good relationship with. They are your first line of defense in maintaining your health. **Studies have shown that having a PCP who you see regularly can significantly impact your health outcomes.** In the U.S., adults who see a PCP regularly have 19% lower odds of premature death compared to those who only see specialists.¹

Here are some tips to get you started.



Find a Match Online

Go to your insurance provider's website or app and log in. Logging in can ensure you're searching under the right network for your specific plan. Call the number on the back of your insurance ID card for help.



Chat Before You Agree to Meet

1. **Check their patient reviews** on [Healthgrades](#), [Zocdoc](#), [RateMDs](#) or [Yelp](#).
2. **Call the office and ask the following:**
 - Is Dr. X accepting new patients?
 - Is Dr. X in-network with my insurance? Make sure they confirm that they are in-network, not just that they "accept" insurance.
 - How far out is Dr. X booking for a visit?

You can call around to different offices and ask any questions you may have to get a sense of which ones you like. It may be your first instinct to just schedule online without doing more research, but—just like a first date—you deserve to know what you're getting yourself into.



The First Date

A personal connection is key! Look for a PCP who pays attention and listens attentively without interrupting. **When you have a doctor who truly understands you, you're more likely to trust their guidance, feel comfortable asking questions, speak openly about issues and stay up to date on preventive care.**

When you go to a doctor's office, take note of details that can make a difference in your experience like the staff's friendliness and efficiency. You end up spending a considerable amount of time with staff members like the receptionist and nurses, so these connections are also important.



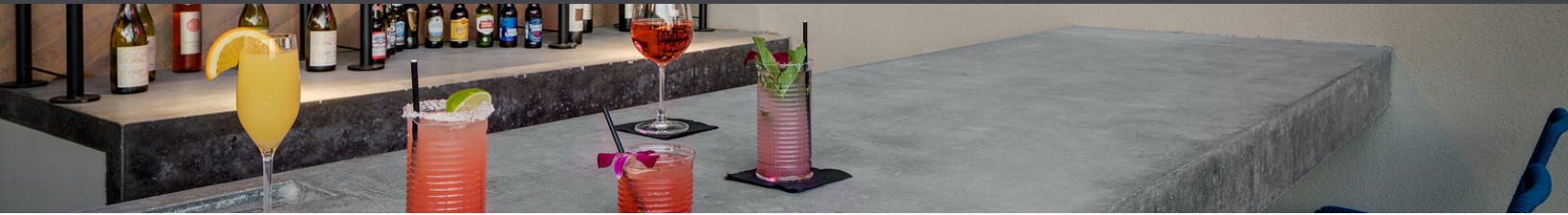
Time to Break Up?

If you aren't comfortable with your current PCP, consider looking for a new

one who better fits your needs. It may be frustrating to start your search again, but it's worth it to find a doctor who really gets you. Your health depends on it.

¹ <https://www.commonwealthfund.org>

HOTEL HAPPENINGS



WHAT HAS EVERYONE BEEN UP TO?



Orlando 3 pack Sales department teamed up with Coldwell Bankers and put together a clothing drive!



Marriott Salt Lake City: We had a blast organizing events for Housekeeping Week 2023! One of the highlights included massages provided at the hotel for our hardworking team. We enjoyed many great meals, including the team's favorite, Chinese food! These associates sparkle with their positive attitudes and they are more than just a team, they are family!

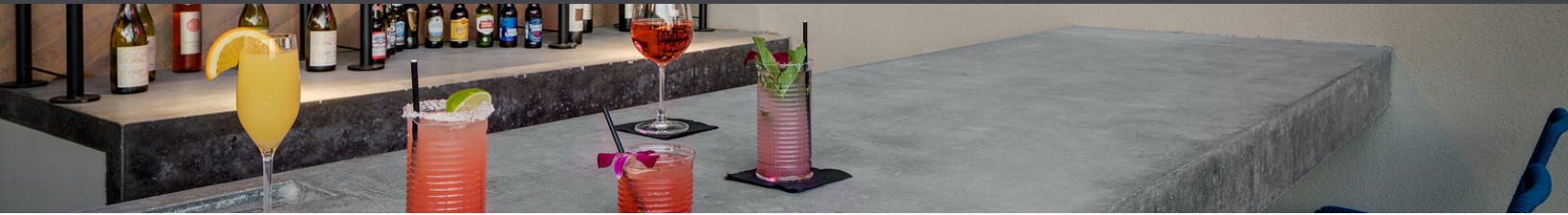


Is always fun seeing my Embassy Suites Bloomington Leadership Team and most of all fantastic HR mock audit with Rick. Working remotely has a lot of challenge specially staying in compliance and ensuring that everything is up to standard. I could not do it by myself without the support of Jason Lott, GM and Francis Ayoub, Controller.



Austin Hotels: This year team members for Hotel Indigo and Holiday Inn Express stuff boxes full of toys for sick kids that will spend their Christmas in the hospital. We wanted to put a smile on those kids faces for the Holidays and boy did everyone com through. We got the Holiday Spirit! Special Thanks to everyone @ Hotel Indigo and Holiday Inn Express who donated a toy for this charity event!

HOTEL HAPPENINGS



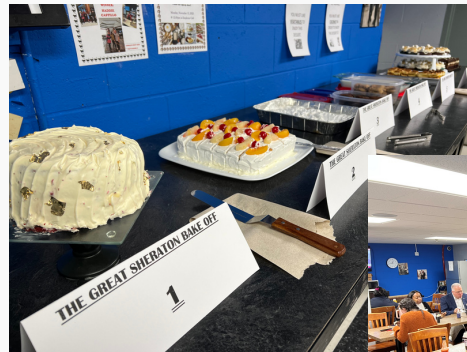
WHAT HAS EVERYONE BEEN UP TO?



Hotel Silver Spring: Birthdays are special occasions that deserve to be celebrated. We enjoy celebrating our team's birthday to the fullest, and here's to another amazing year ahead!



The Delta Marriott Orlando Celebration hosted The Big Red Bus! – On 12/21/23 The Delta employees donated their blood to the Central Florida Blood Bank just in time to make holiday magic for those in need. These two ladies from the blood bank made it all happen!



Sheraton Boston Needham: We did a bowling Manager's outing with the management team. Everyone had a blast and we all enjoyed spending time together.

We love a good, healthy competition here at the Sheraton Boston Needham Hotel. Every quarter, we choose a theme for the competition. We decided on a dessert competition for the 4th quarter. Our employees love to gather together and spend quality time as a team! The winner of this competition was Christine Chan, Director of HR.....she wins everything. :)

HOTEL HAPPENINGS



Teamwork at Holiday Inn Express & Suites Ballantyne



The The Broadmore Miami Beach is ready to welcome in our guests and Welcome in the New Year!

HOTEL HAPPENINGS



Housekeeping Week at Hotel Silver Spring!



Leadership team from the Embassy Suites helping in the local community packing meals for Feed My Starving Children.



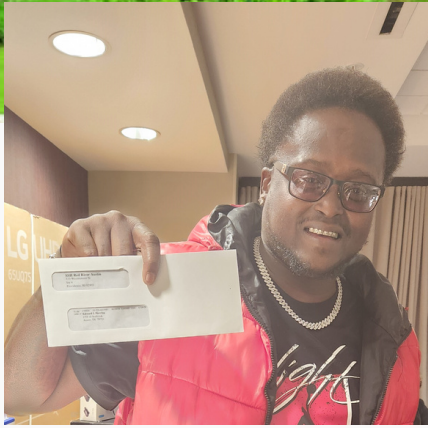
The Charlotte team had a rally filled with costumes, delicious food and fun!



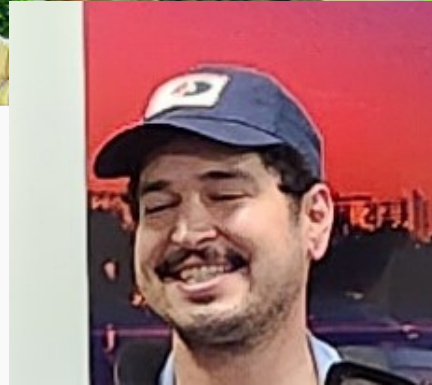
Hotel Amarano Management Team @ Universal Studios

HOTEL HAPPENINGS

CELEBRATING BIG WINNERS!



Austin Hotels: Ed Herring MVP winner for November 2023



Austin Hotels: Robin Wilson MVP winner for October 2023



Austin Hotels: Alejandra Obando MVP winner for Sep 2023



Austin Hotels: Roshelle Moore winner for August 2023



Congratulations to our Assistant Front Office Manager, Javier Ortiz, for graduating from the Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association, Leadership Mentoring Program, Class II. In 2022, CFHLA developed and launched a new Leadership Mentoring Program that was designed to provide a diverse group of mid-level leadership from CFHLA Lodging and Allied Member Businesses, with a unique learning experience that would help grow their leadership skills and help prepare them for career advancement opportunities within the hospitality industry.

HOTEL HAPPENINGS

CELEBRATING BIG WINNERS!



Hotel Silver Spring Star Performer September 2023: John Webb



Hotel Silver Spring Star Performer October 2023: Lisa Eady



Hotel Silver Spring Star Performer November 2023: Jerry Somera

HOTEL HAPPENINGS

CELEBRATING CREATIVITY WITH OUR PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST!

CONGRATS TO LE MERIDIEN/SHERATON CHARLOTTE FOR THEIR WIN!



FROM OUR FAMILY OF HOTELS

SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER WITH SMILES AND DECORATIONS!



Residence Inn Orlando: Spent some time Little Rascaling around on Halloween with the Military & Pink Ladies. We even had our own personal bat make an appearance. No ghosts or ghouls were harmed in the capturing of this photo...or were they? Next we dash into the snow with our display of holiday cheer. Merry Christmas to all from our associates at the Residence Inn Christmas Party! We love displaying our holiday cheer through decoration. Our Christmas tree is always the pride & joy of our hotel. It is an honor to share our Christmas Spirit with our Stepstone Family.



Happy holidays to all from the Hotel Silver Spring Team. Everyone is looking forward to the Christmas holiday as we all sat down together and enjoyed a hearty holiday luncheon with the Hotel Silver Spring Team. Special thanks to Victor, De Veas, cook for preparing delicious meals for the team.

FROM OUR FAMILY OF HOTELS



SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER WITH SMILES AND DECORATIONS!



Marriott Salt Lake City: Celebrating with our amazing hospitality team! We enjoyed great food, amazing company, and fun games during our monthly socials! The holidays are a special time of year to connect and reflect!



Happiest of Holidays from the team of The Broadmore Miami Beach . Spending time as a work family makes us a #Strongerworkteam



Hotel Amarano: Had a great Christmas Dinner with our associates and a guest. Great evening and delicious food by our talented and creative chef and line cooks.



Sheraton Boston Needham: Sales Holiday Photo



Townplace Suites Holiday Party

FROM OUR FAMILY OF HOTELS



SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER WITH SMILES AND DECORATIONS!



Our Delta Leadership team had an amazing time participating in SeaWorld's Reindeer Run, benefiting Advent Health Pediatric Cancer programs, on Saturday, December 9th! With high spirits, "Delta Dashers" dashed through the park's magical winter setting, embracing the festive atmosphere alongside other participants. It was an exhilarating experience filled with camaraderie and shared excitement as they raced through the holiday-themed course, creating lasting memories and reinforcing our team's unity.



Home office celebrating December birthdays!

CLOSING OUT 2023



OUR CORPORATE TEAM HAD THEIR YEAR END MEETINGS + HOLIDAY CELEBRATION IN PROVIDENCE!



SPOTLIGHT AWARDS



Q1 WINNER: Melba Quinteros at
Hotel Amarano!



Q2 WINNER: Roberta Torres at
Hilton Garden Inn - Lake Buena Vista



Q3 WINNER: Yureni Robledo at
TownePlace Suites



Q4 WINNER: Andrea Aranguren at
Homewood Suites - Lake Buena Vista

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



CAROL JOSEPH



Mrs. Carol Joseph started her career at Hotel Indigo and Holiday Inn Express 8 years ago in 2015 when the property was first built.

Carol has worked in the Housekeeping Department her entire career as a laundry attendant. We asked her why has she stayed with hotel for so long, she answered "because I love what I do" and "I am the queen of clean".

Carol is the first one to greet you with a big smile when you enter the department and is always happy to help all team members get what they need.

Thank you Carol for your dedication and do diligence, you Make A Noticeable Difference!



AN IHG® HOTEL

CONGRATS TO OUR AMAZING CEO!

The Top 25 CEOs of Rhode Island for 2023

Posted On : January 1, 2024 Published By : Key Executives



11. Blair Wills

President and Chief Executive Officer, StepStone Hospitality

Blair Wills is the President and Chief Executive Officer of StepStone Hospitality, a company that specializes in the management of full-service hotel and restaurant operations to deliver enhanced value to StepStone clients. The company provides a unique combination of strong, hands-on operations, world-class strategic asset management, and food and beverage expertise, maintaining a balanced focus between revenue enhancement, margin expansion, and guest satisfaction.

Wills was most recently a VP at Hotel Asset Value Enhancement, where he was responsible for the asset management of a portfolio that included Marriott, Hyatt, independent, and other luxury-branded hotels. He also oversaw numerous underwriting and due diligence assignments for client acquisitions, as well as additional consulting assignments.

Before joining hotelAVE, Wills was an analyst for The Plasencia Group, where he developed a proprietary hotel financial analysis model. Additionally, he spent time as a member of the Leisure, Lodging, and Gaming Equity research team at Deutsche Banc Alex Brown, where he was involved in extensive industry research and the development of industry reports. Wills is a graduate of the School of Hospitality Business at Michigan State University with an emphasis in Finance.

[READ THE FULL ARTICLE HERE!](#)