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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ILLINOIS HOTEL & LODGING ASSOCIATION CELEBRATED MORE THAN 500 INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES AT 21ST
ANNUAL STARS OF THE INDUSTRY LUNCHEON NOVEMBER 1, 2018
22 Winners Named at Chicagoland Regional Event

CHICAGO, IL—The **Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association** (IHLA) celebrated the outstanding accomplishments, service and leadership of IHLA member hotel employees in the hospitality and lodging industry at its annual **Stars of the Industry Awards** November 1, 2018. Awards were presented in 11 different categories to individuals from Chicago and Suburban Chicago regions in a celebratory luncheon filled with fabulous food, music, moving tributes and memorable moments throughout the entire afternoon.

"This special event recognizes those who go above and beyond in an industry where service is everything," said IHLA President and CEO **Michael Jacobson**. "It is truly an honor and joy to witness the support and admiration that each nominee is shown by their colleagues throughout the entire event. This is an opportunity for those behind the scenes to get the appreciation and attention they deserve, and we are so thrilled to celebrate them each and every year."

The celebratory afternoon took place at The Hyatt Regency O'Hare and hosted more than 1,000 Industry employees, half of which were nominated for a Star. The event was hosted by WGN Reporter **Cortney Hall** and NBC 5 Meteorologist **Kaylee Dionne** who ignited the crowd and presented each award to the deserving recipients. A special tribute was presented to outgoing IHLA President and CEO **Marc Gordon** for his incredible 21 years of service and contributions to the industry. Guests were treated to a three-course lunch before heading back to their hotels where award-winners were greeted with cheers and applause.



1

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The Stars of the Industry **Central Illinois Regional Luncheon** was held on October 24 in Bloomington, IL and awarded stars to nominees from Central, Northern, Southern and Western Illinois.

Awards were given out in the following categories: Hotelier of the Year, Department-Division Head Employee of the Year, Manager of the Year, Administrative Employee of the Year, Bell Staff Employee of the Year, First-Level Supervisor Employee of the Year, Food & Beverage Employee of the Year - Front of the House, Food & Beverage Employee of the Year - Heart of the House, Guest Service Employee of the Year, Housekeeping Employee of the Year and Maintenance Employee of the Year.

**For a full list of winners, please visit illinois-hotels.org.*

The **IHLA 30th Annual Membership & State Stars of the Industry Holiday Luncheon** will be held December 14 at the Swissotel Chicago (323 E. Upper Wacker Dr.), where winners from the regional level will compete for State level awards. In celebration of the season, and in conjunction with the Chicago Police Department Community Relations Division and Domestic Violence Programs, IHLA will be collecting gently used or new winter coats, scarves, socks, hats and mittens during the luncheon for those in need as part of their annual *Cold Hands, Warm Hearts* donation program. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit ihla.ticketspice.com/starsholiday18.

About Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association

The Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association (IHLA) is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(6) trade association that represents the lodging industry in Illinois. IHLA members consist of over 500 hotels and their employees throughout the state as well as related industry partners and suppliers. IHLA provides significant benefits to its members by advocating the industry's position on political issues, educating through quality, relevant seminars and webinars, providing promotional exposure and access to current industry news, resources, and contacts through IHLA's website, marketing initiatives, member programs, and networking events, and recognizing hotel employees for their outstanding accomplishments, service, and leadership in the Illinois hospitality and lodging industry. For more information, visit www.illinois-hotels.org and follow the latest news on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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2

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