

Lodging Front of House Award NOMINEES 2022

THIS AWARD RECOGNIZES EXEMPLARY PERFORMANCE AND EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE BY AN EMPLOYEE IN A NON-MANAGEMENT POSITION WHO HAS REGULAR CUSTOMER CONTACT, FOR EXAMPLE, FRONT DESK AGENTS, BELLMEN, GUEST RELATIONS AND POSITIONS WHO ARE GUEST FACING.

YLLENYT ALCAIDE BANQUET CAPTAIN, INDIANAPOLIS MARRIOTT DOWNTOWN

Family is everything to Ylleynt Alcaide, personally and professionally. Ylleynt started her journey at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown in 2001 as an opening team member of the property. She joined the team as a coffee break attendant along with her mother, sister, and brother. She quickly became the anchor for the coffee break team and helped install and execute much of the practices and standards that are still followed today.

Ylleynt has delivered top rate service to countless stars of entertainment, professional athletes, and political dignitaries—including a sitting president. Guests always love Ylleynt's warm and thoughtful service she provides each and every day. Ylleynt has been constantly asked to undertake the toughest assignments as a banquet server and teammate. What has made Ylleynt such a unique leader has been her ability to connect with and support the team as if they were her own family, which in many cases was true. Besides working with, basically her entire immediate family, Ylleynt met and married her husband, Eli, while working at the Marriott. They now have two teenage children which has been a journey of its own. As we know, working in this industry does not always translate to a normal home life. However, they have made it work, and they all have flourished as a result.

In past years, Ylleynt had been offered leadership roles on numerous occasions, but her family had to come first. She just couldn't succumb to the hours that the leadership role demanded while raising two small children. That changed in March of 2021. The Indianapolis Marriott Downtown was selected to host sixteen teams for four weeks during the NCAA Men's Basketball tournament. The impact that Ylleynt had during those weeks was astonishing. After spending nearly a year on furlough, due to the pandemic, she immediately jumped into a leadership role with almost no formal training or guidance. As always, Ylleynt executed with excellence and grace on a national stage, on a type event that had never been attempted before. Ylleynt and the team she led directly impacted the many successes the property and city had over those weeks. With her kids growing up and gaining their own independence, and after being asked at least a dozen times if she would take on a leadership role, she formally accepted in the Spring of 2021.

Family is everything to Ylleynt. Although only her mother still works here on a part time basis, Ylleynt has still surrounded herself with family—as her entire banquet team is and always will be part of her family. We could not be more thankful to have such a thoughtful, caring, and talented leader as a part of our Marriott and White Lodging family.

LASENDO BANKS NIGHT AUDITOR, HAMPTON INN MUNSTER

Lasendo is such an amazing team member. Lasendo travels 23 miles to work every day and is always prepared for his shift. It does not matter the weather conditions or days; he is always available. When a fellow associate lost a family member in a tragic passing, Lasendo stepped up and changed his schedule to be there for his fellow teammate. He was extremely supportive to the fellow team member. He was even there for them if they needed to talk. Lasendo goes above and beyond to always make sure the night audit reports are completed and our breakfast is always prepared on time for our guests.

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STACY BEATY

BREAKFAST HOSTESS, FAIRFIELD INN FRANKLIN

Stacy was on the opening team of the hotel, and has been with us for 3 years. She comes to work daily with a positive attitude and a warm smile and a level of professionalism that is unmatched. Stacy is a dedicated, punctual employee that everyone can depend on. Stacy is passionate about the GHC Values, and maintains them on a daily basis. Stacy exceeds all expectations when it comes to her quality of work, as well as her positive impact she has on all of our guests she encounters as well as her fellow employees. Stacy is the first to greet a guest with their favorite breakfast beverage without even being asked. Each guest she encounters is always complimentary of her. She is one of a kind and we are proud that she is on the team!

TK ELLISON

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, IRONWORKS HOTEL INDY

TK Ellison is our nominee for the Lodging Front of House Award. TK joined our team a year and a half ago in March of 2021 as a part-time Guest Services Representative then quickly transitioned into full-time hours due to staffing shortages. TK stepped up beyond the call of duty during this difficult time and became the leader of our 2nd shift front desk team where she ran the shifts and trained the new team members. Many nights she would be the only one on the front desk where she would have to juggle many things in a busy hotel, and she did so with confidence and grace. TK cares so much about the hotel as a whole, that she has even volunteered and came in on her days off to help our housekeeping team, in rooms and in laundry.

In addition to her stellar performance in her job duties, she matched that with her excellent customer service with our guests. TK has received many name mentions in surveys and online reviews from our guests which can be summed up by these quote from our guests, "TK at the front desk was amazing and took care of every detail to make our engagement unforgettable, she took care of everything and made it stress free, I really appreciated everything that TK did", "Huge thank you to TK for helping to make our birthday celebration a great memory". As you can see, engagements, birthdays, anniversaries, and wedding nights are TK's specialty and her personalized efforts for those guests has help Ironworks earn a reputation for being the go-to destination to celebrate your special occasion. Her name mentions online have also been a huge part of Ironworks maintaining the #2 ranking on TripAdvisor for Indianapolis hotels.

TK makes hotel operations look effortless and she focuses heavily on learning the ins and outs of the hospitality industry to grow herself and to bring up everyone around her. Her efforts and willingness to help her teammates and guests has quickly pushed her up the ladder and she was recently promoted to our Administrative Assistant position, where she is now developing her financial skills to match her top-notch customer services skills. This year, TK was also named as our Employee of the Quarter for Q1 2022. It's been amazing to watch her grow at Ironworks and we are extremely lucky to have her as a part of our team. Thank you TK!

DARREN FISH

GUEST SERVICE CAPTAIN, TOWNE PARK

Darren is the best foundation for a team that anyone could ask for. He is the same familiar face that every regular guest of the Westin has the pleasure of interacting with every morning and afternoon. He is the Jack of All Trades of the building, being able to help anybody with any issue they have, and if in a position where he can't do something, he'll make sure to find someone who can. Darren is the type of guy to exchange his phone number with any guest, contact, VIP, etc., just so they have a way



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DARREN FISH (CONTINUED)

of contacting him if they need anything, whether that be transportation, dinner reservations, sports tickets, or just someone to talk to. He loves to tell stories about his glory days playing basketball at Ben Davis to anyone that brings up anything about sports, and then will always be sure to include that he was in the movie Hoosiers. Guests eat it up, and he loves it because it's something that he's proud of. As a 2-time Rose Award winner, the concept of service is deeply ingrained in Darren. Nothing satisfies him more than being able to make a memorable impression on a guest and put a smile on someone's face. He is a natural leader on our team and spreads a positivity to everyone, inspiring them to follow in his footsteps and deliver similar service.

ROSA GUTIERREZ BREAKFAST ATTENDANT, FAIRFIELD INN BY MARRIOTT

Rosa came to us with a vast knowledge and history of Marriott Select Serve breakfast. Pre-Covid she worked at one of our sister properties in their breakfast area. You can always find Rosa in the lobby/Breakfast area with her great big smile on her face talking and greeting guests as they come down for breakfast. Her energy and positive guest-oriented attitude is one that I wish I can bottle up and give to everyone of my associates. Rosa always has the guest in mind for everything we do. Rosa joined the team in the middle of our brand changing their standards for complimentary breakfast. This was a major change from what we were offering and what she was used to. However, Rosa took it with stride and fully jumped in with both feet and started making the changes and helped us with ordering and rearranging the buffet for a better flow. She is always looking for ways to better the experience in our breakfast, trying different items getting guest feedback. When breakfast is over and the guests are all gone, Rosa doesn't stop there. Sometimes she will bring her own items in and she will be in the kitchen or breakroom cooking breakfast/lunch for the team.

I can truly and honestly say Rosa has been a huge impact on the success we have had with moving our Guest satisfaction in breakfast and overall hotel.

JANNSYN KEEFER FRONT DESK SUPERVISOR, JW MARRIOTT INDIANAPOLIS

Jannsyn Keefer is a highly motivated leader with an exemplary work ethic. She was hired into our Front Office Team as an entry level Guest Service Representative in October of last year. She has learned all aspects of the Front Office from our check-in and checkout procedures at the front desk, answering phone calls and following up with Guest Requests within our At Your Service Department, and has completed multiple assignments with our supervisory check list requirements with an outstanding attention to detail. She was quickly promoted to Front Desk Supervisor after her efforts with on-boarding and training our new hires became a focus that she wanted to take on while she was still in an entry level role.

Jannsyn's leadership qualities and characteristics allow her to exhibit excellent communication skills with all team members within our hotel, while she showcases enthusiasm to learn new skills and concepts. She is patient and her resourcefulness attitude always stays positive even under stressful circumstances.

Jannsyn is positively and proactively committed to the loyalty of her job, co-workers and the hotel. She has created an on-boarding and training plan for the Front Office that was specific to both main disciplines of the Front Desk and At Your Service job roles. She has integrated the Digital Learning Zone Platform from Marriott International, Associate Certification for White Lodging Way, and our JW Indy

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JANNSYN KEEFER (CONTINUED)

new hire training standards into a seamless four-week lesson plan with integration calendar that sets all of our Associates up for success.

Jannsyn is a self-driven self-starter who works effectively within a team and also independently. The JW Marriott Indianapolis Management Team and her co-workers know they can trust in her abilities, judgment and follow through. We are very proud to work beside Jannsyn.

T'AUDRA MCGHEE

**GUEST SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE, COURTYARD & SPRINGHILL SUITES
INDIANAPOLIS DOWNTOWN**

T'Audra is a rock start front desk associate that sets the bar high for her team. She is attentive, detail oriented, calm, and reliable. She is the one we rely on to train our new team members and you know the shift is going to be smooth when she's on for the day.

She is consistently in the running for the most positive review name mentions on the team and it's exciting to see the competition against her from her fellow associates as it pushes everyone to improve.

As a recent Hospitality grad from IUPUI we are excited to see where she takes her career and to see her grow!

JOSHUA MCGUIRE

NIGHT AUDITOR, HILTON GARDEN INN INDIANAPOLIS AIRPORT

Josh has been at my front desk since the month I started as Assistant GM 3.5 years ago and has been extremely consistent in his excellent service, punctuality, and positive energy. He started at the hotel working evenings and filling in for morning shifts when necessary. At the start of the pandemic, we had to move shifts around and Josh elected to take over audit.

I can't say enough great things about how well Josh handles guest interactions. He is always courteous and thoughtful and can swiftly de-escalate a situation when it's necessary.

Working on night audit sometimes means his work is not observed by the majority of our staff but having someone like Josh on audit has been amazing for us. I know everything will be taken care of while he is here. Josh's work is remarkable across the board, and he deserves every bit of the recognition he gets from the guests.

SUNITA "SUNNI" NIETO

FRONT DESK AGENT, HOMEWOOD SUITES MUNSTER

Sunita Nieto (Sunni) has been with the hotel since August of 2016. She started off in Food & Beverage and quickly thereafter was promoted to Front Desk because of her sparkling personality and true dedication to the hotel. She has since surpassed all of our expectations and has truly thrived at the Front Desk. She has been named an Employee of the Month every year by her coworkers and managers and was named 2021 Employee of the Year. With Sunni's welcoming personality, she has created long lasting relationships with our Extended Stay guests, she has been mentioned in many comments and surveys by guests and we even have guests that come in for a short time that call ahead to make sure that they will be able to see her while they are staying at the hotel. With the hotel being short staffed, Sunita will work her desk shift while also helping out in Laundry by folding linen in the back office, then she will go over to Breakfast to assist the staff over there, and even after her shift, she will go up on the floors to assist housekeeping even more, by cleaning rooms or simply



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SUNITA "SUNNI" NIETO (CONTINUED)

making beds so that the Room Attendants have 1 less thing to do. She never leaves without checking with every department to make sure that they are set for the remainder of their day and she never hesitates when someone needs help with something. Our hotel, honestly could not function without the help of Sunni and we are honored to have her with us at the hotel. She is a beacon of light that keeps this Homewood Suites going! We are so proud of you Sunni, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

AUDREY RHEINHARDT BELL SERVICE CAPTAIN, TOWNE PARK

If I could clone Audrey Rheinhardt 10 times, I sincerely believe that I would have the best bell service team in the world. I love having Audrey on my team because I know that no matter what situation arises, I know I can count on Audrey to help generate a solution. Not only is she great by Towne Park standards, but she is also just an excellent service associate. A few weeks back, we were requested to assist a famous band with their bags, and they specifically asked for my best bell attendant. I had no hesitation in my mind as to who I was going to have help them. I have been told countless times by guests how much they loved Audrey's hospitality. I make sure to have all our new bell attendants shadow her to make sure they know what an exceptional bell attendant looks and acts like.