



Farouk Rajab
President/CEO

As we look back on the past year, I am proud to say that we did exactly what we set out to do.

Together, we strengthened our voice, expanded our impact, and delivered meaningful results for Rhode Island's hospitality industry.

This year was about execution. We advanced advocacy, grew education and workforce initiatives, deepened partnerships, and reinforced RI Hospitality as the trusted leader and convener for our industry.

As we move forward, our focus remains clear: strong advocacy, relevant education, meaningful engagement, and long-term sustainability. The work continues, but we do so from a position of strength.

Thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your continued belief in the power of this industry.

Top Legislative Wins

Tipped Wage Protection



Would have eliminated the tipped wage by 2031, gradually raising the tipped minimum wage of \$3.89/hr to \$17/hr.

Human Trafficking Training



Mandatory human trafficking training was enacted to help hospitality workers identify trafficking, strengthening protections for employees and guests.

No Tax on Tips



Federal legislation eliminated income tax on tips up to \$25,000, allowing tipped workers to keep more of what they earn.

Hotel Tax Parity



Levels the playing field by requiring short-term rentals to charge the same hotel tax, reducing their pricing advantage.

100% Capital Depreciation



Restored 100% bonus depreciation, allowing businesses to immediately deduct the full cost of qualifying capital investments and encouraging reinvestment and growth.

Small Business Deduction



Preserved the small business deduction, allowing eligible pass-through businesses to deduct up to 20% of qualified income and keep more capital to reinvest and grow.

Nutritional Guidelines Mandate



Defeated a proposed mandate that would have required restaurants serving kids meals to meet strict nutritional guidelines, preserving menu flexibility for small businesses.

Zoning for Co-Living Arrangements



Passed legislation establishing a formal definition for co-living arrangements, paving the way for expanded workforce housing and more flexible living options.

Training & Education

Higher Education Partnerships

With a mission to grow the future generation of hospitality professionals, the RI Hospitality Education Foundation prioritized higher education collaboration in 2025. Together, we helped launch the Culinary Craftsmanship certification and Associates Degree program at the Community College of Rhode Island, we worked with Johnson & Wales University to allow ProStart students who have attained their Certificate of Achievement to earn a full semester of credits at JWU, and we hosted a Hospitality & Tourism Boot Camp in partnership with Salve Regina University for students who are participating in our annual competition.

THC Training

Launched in 2025, the RI Hospitality Education Foundation's partnership with Craft Collective Homegrown delivers an online training course designed to set the standard for safe, compliant THC-infused beverage service and sales in the hospitality industry.

Latino Council

Launched in May 2025, the RI Hospitality Latino Council expanded access to resources through partnerships with the City of Central Falls and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, providing RIHA memberships to Latino-owned hospitality businesses. We engaged directly with restaurant owners, remained active in the community, and hosted our first educational event with AMP Consulting and the Rhode Island Department of the Treasury focused on retirement options and compliance for restaurant owners. The Council also expanded workforce development efforts by offering ServSafe training in Spanish, improving access to essential food safety education.

2025 Numbers



\$6,000

Awarded in Scholarships



1,705

Trained Individuals



\$200,347

Beacon Mutual Shared Earnings



134

New Members



\$247,680.18

Employee Relief Fund



15

Latino added Members

Love the photos? View more at riha.cc/Photos25

Networking & Signature Events | 2025 Highlights

- 9 signature networking, industry, and student-focused events hosted statewide
- 1,000+ hospitality professionals and students engaged
- Celebrated leadership, education, and industry excellence through Women in Hospitality, The ANCHORS, Economic Outlook Breakfast, Annual Golf Tournament, Membership Reception, High School Competition, and Student Career Summit
- Get Served brought CTE students and General Assembly leadership together for a one-of-a-kind lunch where students took the lead and lawmakers served RIHA members lunch



Education Foundation Golf Tournament



Membership Reception



Women in Hospitality | Schooner Aurora



Student Career Summit



Awards for Noteworthy Champions of Hospitality and Outstanding Restaurant Service



Get Served