

Hotelie

SPRING 2017





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business

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venue driven

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platform and strong growth
potential

- Will be one of the largest public
lodging REITs
- High-quality portfolio of 67
premium-branded hotels and
resorts with nearly 35,000
rooms located in prime markets
with high barriers to entry

• CEO: Tom Baltimore

A fast growing, capital efficient
timeshare business

- 46 resorts, representing 7,592
units, located in iconic leisure
and urban vacation destinations
- Successfully transformed to a
capital efficient model
- Long-term relationship with
Hilton

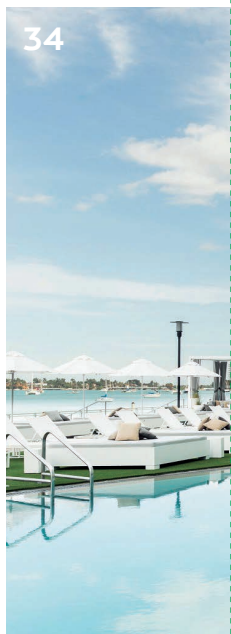
• CEO: Mark Wang

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Hotelie

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KATE WALSH, Interim Dean

DAVID BEBKO
Charles and Janet Jarvie Associate Dean and Chief Marketing Officer, Cornell SC Johnson College of Business

JEANNE M. GRIFFITH
Editor

RUTH DEVINE
Class Notes Coordinator

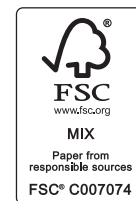
SUSAN WALTER
Production Coordinator

STOLTZE DESIGN
Design

Please send address changes to hotelsociety@sha.cornell.edu.

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A New Opportunity to Define Our Future—Together

Last fall, I asked the faculty to imagine that the year was 2025 and our school was on the cover of a major news magazine. What would that cover say about us? What might we become in the years ahead? Thinking about this question has been bringing our faculty together in a way that we have never come together before, and I am very excited about the important initiatives that we have undertaken together to further strengthen our academic programs and our global standing as the premier institution for hospitality education and research.

The establishment of our college last year presented us with a great new opportunity to define ourselves within the context of this larger enterprise. We have given

Photo by Robert Barker/Cornell Marketing Group

great thought to how best to solidify and extend our commitment to hospitality, in all its forms, as part of the new college.

The plans and initiatives we are beginning to develop will be greatly enhanced by the historic and transformative gift from Fisk Johnson '79 (A&S), M Eng '80, MS '82 (A&S), MBA '84, PhD '86 and SC Johnson to endow the Cornell SC Johnson College of Business. This most generous gift provides our school with significant and permanent resources, including new scholarships and internships for students, funding for faculty recruitment and retention, and support for new interdisciplinary research. Fisk Johnson emphasized his desire to enhance the unique strengths and legacies of each of the college's three schools. Wonderful opportunities are opening before us, and I am personally very grateful to the Johnson family.

Our sister schools offer academic strengths that can help us prepare our students to thrive in their chosen professions and best prepare them for their careers in hospitality. For example, Dyson offers excellent business analytics courses to complement our own strength in this area, and Johnson stands out in terms of its strength in the tech arena on our New York City campus. The college has drawn upon the strengths of all three schools to offer a new minor in innovation and entrepreneurship.

As we look at the careers our students are choosing within the rapidly evolving

hospitality industry, we are giving new thought to our own curriculum and ways to enable our students to tailor their education, building upon a strong Hotelie foundation while tapping into the strengths of our sister schools. To do so, we have launched a comprehensive curriculum review—our first in 20 years—under the leadership of Cathy Enz, the Lewis G. Schaeneman, Jr. Professor of Innovation and Dynamic Management and the academic associate dean of the school, and a dedicated group of faculty.

One question the committee is exploring, with input from you, our alumni, is how to introduce greater flexibility into the core academic requirements for graduation. We currently require all students to complete a uniform 64 core credits, the equivalent of 22 courses. This leaves little room for students to customize their courses and develop a discipline-based specialty. Can we instead enable our students to focus on a chosen area of sub-specialization within hospitality, like real estate, business analytics, or digital marketing?

We are also looking to grow our graduate programs, and are considering developing a scaled, part-time, blended online/in-residence master's degree program, in both New York City and Ithaca, to supplement our residential MMH program. One possibility being explored is to offer this in conjunction with Cornell Tech in New York. Stay tuned!

Our relationships with the hospitality industry are paramount to our success in educating our students. Some even call it our "secret sauce." We invite hundreds of industry leaders to visit our school every year to serve as guest lecturers, mentors, competition judges, advisors, conference participants, faculty research sponsors and collaborators, and more. You provide our students with internships, a crucial part of their education,





Participants in the first hospitality industry immersion trip for faculty are welcomed to Marriott headquarters by Tony Capuano '87, executive vice president of global development. Photo by Erin Scott

and you hire them when they graduate. Thank you! When our graduates become the next generation of industry leaders themselves, the whole virtuous cycle begins again.

Our faculty members, and the ways in which they work with you to educate our students, are essential to this cycle. To continue to foster our connection with you and the industry, we kicked off an incredibly energizing and inspiring initiative this past January. Two dozen SHA faculty members traveled to Washington, D.C. during the winter break to take part in an intensive industry immersion opportunity. This trip was organized by Bob Alter '73, chairman of the Dean's Advisory Board, and co-led with Simon Turner '83. When Bob and I

discussed the idea last fall, he promptly took it from there, lining up Simon's assistance and a top-tier set of speakers. He also recruited enough corporate and individual donors to offset the entire expense of the trip. We owe a great deal to Bob, Simon, and the enthusiastic and generous involvement of many other alumni and other top industry experts and executives. You will find more information about their contributions to this exceptional experience in the article on page 8.

DJ Rama, MMH '96 provided a thrilling capstone to the trip when he presented a check, on behalf of his uncle H.P. Rama and himself, to establish an endowment that will allow us to make these visits a regular part of our faculty development and industry relations efforts and to support the research and teaching initiatives that emerge from the trip. My heartfelt thanks go to DJ and H.P., to Bob and Simon, and to everyone else who

contributed to making this first immersion so rewarding. In addition to the impact that this initiative will have on our ability to study pressing industry issues, our students are sure to benefit greatly from the knowledge shared and the relationships that are being forged.

What will be said about us in 2025? That headline has yet to be written, but we are moving toward the future with renewed excitement, purpose, and commitment to working with you as, together, we prepare our next generation of hospitality industry leaders. Thank you for helping us to do so!

Sincerely,

Kate Walsh

KATE WALSH

Interim Dean and E.M. Statler Professor

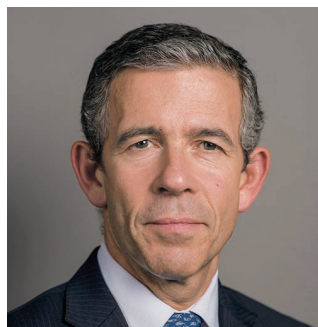
RED ALL OVER



PROMOTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS



GREG DICKHENS '91 joined Honolulu-based Trinity Investments in November as principal and chief investment officer. He served previously as a director of Seibu Properties, one of the largest private land owners in Japan, and as vice president of Prince Resorts Hawaii. Earlier positions included president and senior advisor of Kyo-ya Company and director of Kyo-ya Pacific Company, chief financial officer of Vail Resorts Development Company, vice president of development for Hilton Hotels Corporation, and senior manager for Marriott International. He began his career as a senior consultant at KPMG Peat Marwick. He holds an MBA from UCLA.



FABIEN FRESNEL, MMH '07 was appointed last fall to the position of chief operating officer of Sommet Education, a corporation encompassing the Glion Institute of Higher Education and Les Roches Global Hospitality Education. In his previous position, Fresnel was dean and chief academic officer of the Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne, whose faculty he joined in 2007. He began his career in 1988, working for Michelin-starred restaurants and luxury hotels in France and elsewhere. He also launched Amman College, a hotel school in Amman, Jordan, and expanded a chain of bistros/bakeries in California. In addition to his Cornell degree, Fresnel has a master's degree in economics from the Sorbonne and a PhD in finance from the University of Bordeaux IV Montesquieu.



MARISA LIZAK '01 joined Ethika Investments last August as director of capital markets. She moved to Ethika from Starwood Property Trust, where she was senior vice president and head of underwriting. In earlier roles she was vice president at Coastal Capital Partners, vice president of large loan structuring and underwriting at Countrywide Commercial Real Estate Finance, and investment banking associate at Lehman Brothers. During the course of her career in real estate, Lizak has closed over ten billion dollars' worth of debt-related investments.



RICHARD STOCKTON '92 was named chief executive officer of Ashford Hospitality Prime last November. He made the move from Carval Investors, a subsidiary of Cargill, where he served as global chief operating officer for real estate and a member of the global real estate investment committee. Before assuming that role, Stockton was president and chief executive officer for the Americas at OUE Limited, a Singaporean property company; while there, he negotiated and completed the 367.5-million-dollar acquisition of the U.S. Bank Tower. He had spent the previous fifteen years at Morgan Stanley, where he rose from associate to managing director and head of real estate banking for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Stockton also earned an MBA in finance and real estate from the Wharton School.

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS



KARIM ABOUELNAGA '13, chief executive officer of Practice Makes Perfect, was selected as one of fifteen TED Fellows for 2017. TED Fellows, who are chosen on the strength of their achievements, character, and innovative approaches to solving important problems, are invited to attend a TED conference and to give a TED talk. They are also given access to program resources, which include professional coaching and mentoring and the opportunity to work with a public relations expert dedicated to publicizing their projects, and to TED's network of scientists, artists, activists, entrepreneurs, physicians, journalists, and inventors. Among many other honors,

Abouelnaga has been recognized by the Clinton Global Initiative, as a recipient of Cornell's Robinson-Appel Humanitarian Award, as a Pearson Prize National Fellow, and as a Presidential Fellow through the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress. He founded Practice Makes Perfect with five other Cornell students, including Brennan Spreitzer '13, in 2011. The organization runs summer learning programs to provide leadership development, academic instruction, and career training to underachieving students from low-income neighborhoods.

RECOGNITIONS AND AWARDS



KOBINA ANSAH '08 and the online lending company he co-founded, ModernLend, were featured last summer in *Wired* magazine as winners of the Wired Money BBVA Open Talent Startup Stage. ModernLend uses alternative data metrics to provide credit cards and loans to creditworthy international students and workers who have difficulty accessing traditional credit due to a lack of a U.S. credit history. The firm recently launched, through its online marketplace Credit Without Borders, its first credit card that is fully customized for international students. Cornell was one of the schools selected for the pilot, and ModernLend plans to extend the card's availability to students at many more schools this year.



ALI HOYT '12, director of consulting and analytics at STR, was presented with the Lori Raleigh Award for Emerging Excellence in Hospitality Consulting at the annual conference of the International Society of Hospitality Consultants last September. Hoyt's responsibilities at STR include overseeing consulting assignments, developing analytical models and templates, creating custom products, and presenting industry data. She is a frequent speaker at industry conferences and events.



DAVID SANGREE '84, president and founder of Hotel and Leisure Advisors, was honored by the World Waterpark Association last October with their Executive Board Award for his contributions to the water leisure industry. A nationally recognized expert on waterpark resorts, Sangree has performed more than 600 studies of waterparks and maintains statistical databases concerning waterpark performance figures.



The Cornell Alumni Association honored two SHA alumni, **MARTY SHERMAN '73, MPS '75 (SLOAN)** and **TED TENG '79**, among the six 2016 recipients of the Frank H.T. Rhodes Exemplary Alumni Service Award. Stephen Ashley '62 (Dyson), MBA '64 was also honored. The award recognizes extraordinary service to Cornell through long-term volunteer activities within the broad spectrum of Cornell alumni organizations. Financial giving is not a criterion for selection.

Sherman, a life member of Cornell University Council, has an extensive resume of volunteer service to the council as well as to the Cornell Alumni Association, the Cornell Association of Class Officers (including as vice president, president, and director-at-large), the Class of 1973 (including five times as Reunion chairwoman, ten years as vice president, and ten years as president),



the Cornell Hotel Society, the Cornell Club of Boston (including as president, co-president, and director), the Cornell Club of New Hampshire, the Cornell Alumni Admissions Ambassador Network, the Continuous Reunion Club, and the Sloan Alumni Association. She is currently a lecturer in the Sloan Program, teaching the capstone course Field Studies in Health Administration.

Teng, the president and chief executive officer of the Leading Hotels of the World, is also a life member of Cornell University Council. His Cornell involvements have included Class Council, the Alumni Student Mentoring Program, Cornell Mosaic, and the Cornell Asian Alumni Association, which honored him in 2005. Within SHA, he served for nine years on Michael Johnson's Dean's Advisory Board and also served on the boards of the Pillsbury Institute for Hospitality Entrepreneurship (which awarded him an Innovator Award in 2006) and the Center for Hospitality Research. He has appeared twice in the Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series and several times as a speaker during Hotel Ezra Cornell, where he has also served as a judge for the Cornell Hospitality Business Plan Competition. He has created several

case studies for faculty members, served as an executive-in-residence and a frequent guest lecturer, and coached MMH students for many years in the Leadership Development Program. He established the Ted Teng '79 Teaching Excellence Awards, sponsored Cornell Hospitality Research Summits, and created the Leading Experiential Award for students to travel to his company's member hotels. Teng also took part in a previous school branding effort, providing the long-used tagline "Hospitality Leadership Through Learning."

FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND IMMERSION CONNECTS

BY JEANNIE GRIFFITH
PHOTOS BY ERIN SCOTT



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Tony Capuano '87, Marriott International's executive vice president of global development, introduces Marriott executives Stephanie Linnartz, Karin Timpone, Adam Malamut, and Tina Edmundson.

FACULTY

AND

INDUSTRY



This past January, two dozen Hotel School faculty members did something for the first time that many students do as a matter of course: they took a field trip to learn more about the hospitality industry. And thanks to the outpouring of support that the idea inspired, what began as an experiment became an exceptional learning experience and the start of a new chapter in the school's abiding relationship with the industry.

Faculty of every rank and from almost every one of the school's sub-disciplines joined the three-day excursion, to Washington, D.C., for the opportunity to hear from high-level industry veterans and prominent thought leaders. More than 30 hospitality executives volunteered to be presenters, and their companies helped sponsor the trip. From airfare to lodging to meals to ground transportation to meeting space to guided tours to evening gatherings, the experience was paid for entirely through donations.

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Bob Alter '73 and
Debbie Marriott
Harrison connect at
Marriott headquarters.

NEW GROWTH ON OLD ROOTS

According to Dean Kate Walsh, the idea for the trip came out of conversations she had with Bob Alter '73, the president of Seaview Investors and chairman of the Dean's Advisory Board, and other members of the board. "We wanted to build new relationships, and even strengthen current ones, between the faculty and the industry and make it as seamless as possible for the faculty to bring the industry into their research and teaching," she said. "The trip was a way to use our foundational roots to grow as a faculty and as a school and to create new opportunities for faculty and the industry to connect."

Walsh asked Alter to head the effort to recruit industry participation, and he tapped his extensive network for help in sponsoring the trip. As incentive, he offered his industry associates the opportunity to lecture to the faculty and connect with them at a networking event.

"Everybody was excited about meeting the faculty," he said. "It was really easy to get people behind this."

"Bob just grabbed onto it and said, 'I'm going to make this happen,' recalled Simon Turner '83, who helped him plan and coordinate the agenda. "And full credit to Bob, because when he gets something in his mind, he is a force of nature."

The sessions that Alter organized were held at the Mason and Rook Hotel, a brand-new Kimpton owned by Michael Barnello '87 and his company, LaSalle Hotel Properties. The Cornell group also stayed at the hotel, and the Washington, D.C.-Baltimore Chapter of the Cornell Hotel Society hosted a convivial cocktail party there on the night they arrived. Dozens of area alumni and friends turned out to greet them.

Turner, who was global head of development at Starwood Hotels and Resorts before its acquisition by Marriott International last fall, worked with Tony Capuano '87, Marriott's executive vice president of global development, and Kevin Jacobs '94, Hilton's executive vice president and chief financial officer,





to organize programs at their respective headquarters.

“The astonishing thing is that, when you look at the quality of the agenda and the people that we had—guys like Kevin Jacobs and Tony Capuano at Hilton and Marriott—they said, ‘Sure, we’ll lay on a program.’ In the space of a month, it all came together,” Turner marveled, adding, “I would challenge almost any educational institution in the world to be able to pull together such a high-level set of interactions for the faculty. It’s unparalleled, it really is.”

CORE ISSUES AND CURRENT CONTEXTS

At the Mason and Rook, the faculty heard from fifteen presenters over the course of two days. Robert Mandelbaum ’81, director of research information services, Mark Woodworth ’77, MPS ’78, senior managing director, and Melina Cordero, head of retail research at CBRE Hotels’ Americas Research, led off the program. They and subsequent speakers Scott Berman ’84, a principal of PwC, and Mark Elliott, president of Hodges Ward Elliott, talked about the financial structure of the lodging industry, the

incorporation of food and beverage operations into retail stores, underwriting and valuation, economic forecasting, and more. Woodworth sparked a round of humorous comebacks when he handed out a quiz, saying, “I’ve been waiting 40 years to do this.”

Developers Joseph Bojanowski, president, and Katherine Kies ’11, corporate food and beverage manager of PM Hotel Group, engaged their audience with accounts of what worked and what didn’t with various projects they had completed. Dave Pollin ’90, co-president, and Darren Anzelone, chief investment officer of PM’s parent company, the Buccini/Pollin Group, explained their development and acquisition strategies.

Janis Cannon, senior vice president of upscale brand management for Choice Hotels, discussed brand strategy and differentiation using the example of Cambria, the company’s new and rapidly expanding entry into the upscale market. The day before her presentation, the faculty visited a newly built Cambria; they also toured the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center and the MGM National Harbor.

Hotel School faculty members Jeanne Varney, Adam Klausner, Fang Liu, Helen Chun, and Kristina Workman tour the National Market at the MGM National Harbor.



Mark Carrier '80, president of B.F. Saul and chairman of the American Hotel and Lodging Association, introduced AHLA colleagues Katherine Lugar, president and chief executive officer, Vanessa Sindes, senior vice president of government affairs, and vice presidents Maryam Cope and Brian Crawford. The panelists discussed the refocusing of AHLA priorities on such core issues as raising awareness in Congress

of the industry's impact on employment; leveling the playing field with online travel agencies; countering unregulated "corporate landlords" who offer bookings through Airbnb; and advocating for workers and employers around issues including unionization, the minimum wage, and the future of the Affordable Care Act.

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ABOVE
 Andrew Quagliata, Adam Walden, and Helen Chun enjoy a comment from Kevin Jacobs '94, in the back of the room, to speaker Chris Silcock at Hilton. Laura Fuentes, the next presenter, is seated behind them.

"Getting such a broad set of views from alumni and others in industry, and getting them all in the context of ongoing businesses, is incredibly valuable," said Pam Moulton, associate professor of finance, following these sessions. "It's already deepening my teaching and my research. It makes the whole experience richer and more nuanced. That's what I'm taking from it, as well as all the benefits of these relationships."

The top leadership of Marriott and Hilton, the world's two largest hotel corporations, welcomed the Cornell faculty members to their offices for half-day programs covering their corporate histories,

philosophies, finances, best practices, strategies, and recent and coming initiatives. The faculty heard from Marriott and Hilton's respective chief executives, Arne Sorenson and



.....
LEFT
 Immersion presenters Robert Mandelbaum '81 and Katherine Kies '11 compare notes at the Hay-Adams reception.

Chris Nassetta; chief financial officers, Leeny Oberg and Kevin Jacobs; senior human resource leaders, David Rodriguez and Laura Fuentes; and chief commercial officers, Stephanie Linnartz and Chris Silcock. Marriott's Linnartz was part of a panel that also included Tina Edmundson, global brand officer, Karin Timpone, global marketing officer, and Adam Malamut, chief customer experience officer. Debbie Marriott Harrison, global officer for Marriott culture and business councils, joined Rodriguez, executive vice president and global chief human resources officer, in a presentation of Marriott history, culture, and their TakeCare employee wellness initiative.

These rarified sessions included inside accounts of last fall's Marriott-Starwood merger, which was discussed in detail by Rick Hoffman, executive vice president of mergers and acquisitions, and Turner, and of the then-just-announced partitioning of Hilton Worldwide into three separate companies: Hilton, Park Hotels and Resorts, and Hilton Grand Vacations. Chris Nassetta also previewed Hilton's redesigned

loyalty program weeks prior to its announcement. At Marriott, the group was given the opportunity to explore the full-scale hotel room concepts on display in their innovation lab.

IMPRESSIONS AND IMPACT

"This trip is helping on two fronts," commented Kristina Workman, an assistant professor of organizational behavior and leadership, after the visit to Marriott. She and her colleagues were settling in at the newly opened Tredici Enoteca in the St. Gregory Hotel, where Jay Shah '90, chief executive of Hersha Hospitality Trust, was hosting them for drinks, delectable food, and downtime.

"First, it's really nice to spend time with the faculty—lecturers and professorial faculty—outside of Statler Hall. Periods of change can be challenging," she said, referring to the past year of transition to becoming the Cornell SC Johnson College of Business, "and I think there's a lot of opportunity for the Hotel School faculty to come together in different ways. I've talked

Kevin Jacobs '94, Hilton's executive vice president and chief financial officer, discusses the company's recent reorganization.



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Lodging Association
CBRE Hotels
JLL
PwC



Chris Nassetta, Hilton's chief executive officer, addresses the group.

to some of my colleagues more on this trip than in the two-and-a-half years that I've been here.

"Second, I love doing a deep dive into one company; to spend a whole afternoon at Marriott is really useful. Debbie Marriott Harrison gave me her email address and said to call her anytime to talk about how my research interests align with what they're doing, and that there could be an opportunity for research projects. It's also reassuring and motivating and affirming to see how much people in industry care about the kinds of things that we care about—and 'we' is pretty broad, because there are so many different types of topics being discussed. I didn't have a background in hospitality, so I can learn something from every presentation.

"The other thing that's really amazing to me," she concluded, "is to see the passion, the dedication, the commitment of the alumni who are making this possible, who are donating, who are giving their time—it's an incredible amount of time that some people are giving."

"For me as a new faculty member, this is the best possible introduction to the hospitality industry," said Vince Slaugh, an assistant professor of services operations management who joined the faculty last summer.

"It will improve my credibility in the classroom and also will help jumpstart some research collaborations.

"I really enjoyed learning about the world of finance and the Starwood-Marriott transaction," he continued. "Hearing about that from participants on both sides was a unique opportunity. Hearing a recent alumna, Katherine Kies, talk about food and beverage concepts and seeing the types of problems that she has to solve, the lessons she's learned, gives me inspiration, motivation, and a little bit of content direction for how to prepare students in the service operations course."

Kies also made an impression on lecturers Heather Kolakowski and Douglass Miller, who teach the course Restaurant Management. They arranged for her to speak to the class in April. Meanwhile, Mary MacAusland, a senior lecturer in accounting, is developing a short case contrasting the Marriott-Starwood merger and the spinning off of Hilton Worldwide's real estate and timeshare businesses for her students in Financial Accounting.

Looking back on the trip, Walsh said, "In the month since we got back, four or five faculty who went, and even one who didn't go, have said, 'I'd love more data—

can you share with me your slides?’ or ‘Can I talk with you more about what I’m researching?’ That’s a great outcome. Ultimately I’ll be happy, and we can call it a success, if, a year from now, a few research projects have come out of new collaborations or faculty are telling me that their teaching is better or more informed because of these connections.”

Tony Simons, a professor of management and organizations, approached presenter Dave Pollin about collaborating in employee survey research. He also reached out to DJ Rama, MMH ’96, the president of JHM Hotels, who sat in on many of the sessions and contributed to-the-point insights, examples, and explanations to every discussion. “We’ve already set up a conference call with our HR leaders to exchange data,” Rama confirmed a few weeks after the trip. “So, absolutely, we’re open and we’re ready to help. That’s

our job to share the knowledge that we’ve picked up as an owner, operator, and developer. The hotel industry is so transparent—everybody is very open to each other; there are almost no secrets to the sauce. We’re all in the business of serving people through other people.”

Simons brought Workman and Sean Rogers, another assistant professor who traveled with the group, into the project, which will study the impact of leadership on service climate, guest satisfaction, and hotel financial performance. The three are inviting other operators of ten or more hotels to join the study. They plan to discuss their results at a leadership roundtable next year.

Said Simons, “I had originally thought of this trip as something that we especially need for new faculty, because we need to make sure that they know the

Immersion co-organizer
Simon Turner ’83
introduces Nassetta
and Jacobs.



things that every Hotel School faculty member should know. But this is also paying off for me in so many different ways. I think it's also paying off for the school and for the alums. I'm thrilled that we're building these relationships with industry and, frankly, building relationships among ourselves as well."

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONNECTION

The industry members who gave their time to help make the trip such a success were also glad to be meeting new faculty and reinforcing their connections to the school. "I think we showed once again how engaged the alumni are and how willing they are to give back when there are opportunities to do so," said Jacobs. "I know that, when Bob Alter called me about this initiative and the idea he had, it was something that was really easy for me to get behind, because it was a really good idea and it could benefit the school in such a unique way."

"I've gotten to know some of the members of the faculty pretty well over the years," he added, "but most of the people who were here for the immersion have not been out and about interacting with hotel companies. The questions they asked us at Hilton were really thoughtful, and we had a really engaging conversation. I found it very encouraging that they took the time to come hear what's on our minds and what we think about running the business. They can bring that knowledge to their research and, probably more importantly, relay some of those insights back to their students. The more the classroom teaching experience can be informed in real time by what's going on in the business, the better that will be for the overall academic experience at the Hotel School—which is, at the end of the day, what it's all about."

"To me, a good outcome would be that this is the first step in a rapid acceleration of strengthening

Associate professor Tony Simons has an enjoyable exchange with Chris Nassetta. Surrounding him are Kate Walsh, Mark McCarthy, Reneta McCarthy, Chris Gaulke, Adam Klausner, Kristina Workman, Dave Sherwyn, and Alex Susskind.



the connections between the faculty and industry,” Capuano said following the program at Marriott. “These professors are preparing students for an industry the characteristics of which I’m not sure any of us know right now. We want to inspire them to think with an entrepreneurial mindset that looks at the landscape and asks where there are pitfalls, disruptors, and changing dynamics that might make the world look remarkably different than it does today. To the extent that those relationships get strengthened, it will dramatically improve the career prospects for the best and brightest students; I really believe that.”

“It was interesting for me to hear the perspectives of our executives at Marriott,” said Rama, noting that he had not been able to attend the program at Hilton, “and how happy they were to see the faculty in one room. We sometimes take things for granted, but talking to Arne and Debbie and Tina Edmundson,

they were just excited to be in front of the faculty. You know how, when you meet your fourth-grade teacher, you get excited, you have that affinity? That kind of affinity was there.”

Both Alter and Jacobs reported hearing enthusiastic feedback from attendees at the Americas Lodging Investment Summit two weeks after the trip. “I saw many people there who spoke at the immersion event, and I also spoke to many alumni who had heard of the immersion event. I got tremendous feedback about it and how many of the alumni and industry people felt that it was a fabulous idea and something that needed to be continued,” said Alter.

Another greatly valued feature of the trip was the opportunity it gave faculty and industry members to converse with one another in a social setting. In addition to being guests of the local CHS chapter at their holiday party and having the chance to mingle at Marriott and Hilton, the Cornell group and about 30 members of the industry, many of them immersion program speakers, were invited to the Hay-Adams for an elegant dinner reception at the end of the first day of programming. Hosted by Mark Carrier, whose company owns the landmark luxury hotel, the soiree offered a great deal more than impeccable food and a privileged view of the White House.

Jeanne Varney, a lecturer in properties development and management, was savoring the memory of the experience the next morning. “The energy in the room at the Hay-Adams was just phenomenal. Especially for newer faculty who are trying to understand our culture, to have the amazing array of people who were there to support us and the growth of the industry was an incredible opportunity. We talk about the network all the time, but you can’t really understand it unless you experience it. What we did last night is priceless, irreplaceable.”

ENDOWING A TRADITION

The centerpiece of that special evening, and the capstone of the trip, was the announcement by Walsh that Rama and his family were donating 250,000 dollars to create an endowment to fund future immersion trips and other contacts between industry and faculty. The Hasmukh (H.P.) and Jayanti (J.P.) Rama Endowment Fund for Faculty and Industry Relations, which is named for Rama’s uncle and father, the founders of JHM Hotels, will facilitate data collection, faculty travel to conferences and for working with industry partners, in-class collaborations with industry



executives, and the development of case studies. A portion of the gift helped underwrite the first trip.

“What was really exciting was going to these meetings and reading the faces of the faculty and talking to them during the breaks. It was all just positive reinforcement of why this was important,” Rama said later. “I think they may have been surprised at how fast this industry’s moving. With the consolidation happening in our industry, it becomes even more critical that we build strong ties and relationships with the stronger brands of tomorrow.”

Rama speaks with evident pride of the successes that his father and uncle achieved as hoteliers after emigrating to the United States from the state of Gujarat in western India, where they were farmers. They have maintained close ties to their home state, building hotels and founding AURO University in Surat. The two also founded the Asian American Hotel Owners Association in this country. According to Rama, his

uncle spent a semester at the Hotel School as a faculty member in residence while serving as chairman of the AHLA. “He always had a passion for connecting and building a bridge between industry and faculty, because they are the ones who influence our future leaders’ thinking, relevancy, and ability to overcome their own barriers and challenges,” he said. “If our faculties do not have the tools and resources, they will not be successful, period. This was the genesis of giving the gift. It’s just the beginning, and there will be more to come.”

“We are so grateful for this gift,” said Walsh. “DJ added such thoughtful, engaging, and helpful insight throughout all our visits on the trip; his presence there was just remarkable. But then for him to say, ‘I want to support these relationships that we’re forming with some

RIGHT

Arne Sorenson, Marriott International’s chief executive officer, addresses the group in the innovation lab at corporate headquarters.

BELOW

DJ Rama, MMH ‘96 presents Walsh with an endowment gift to enable ongoing interchange between faculty and industry leaders.





real financial backing,' was really exciting, because that gives sustenance to the work that comes out of this effort. I mean, this whole trip came about through funding from alumni, but to have funding in a sustaining form is wonderful."

"I was overwhelmed by the gift," said Alter, "because what Kate and I came up with as an idea for getting the faculty more involved with the industry can now be part of the legacy of the school's exceptional relationship with the hotel industry. The industry can continue to be part of the school's culture, and the school can remain as involved with the industry as it has been, and continue to be a leader in the hospitality field."

"The beauty is," said Rama, "as we saw with all the CEOs who made time for this, the doors are always open, with the red carpet extended." ■

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RIGHT

Choice Hotels senior vice president Janis Cannon and SHA associate professor of finance Pam Moulton have a meeting of the minds during the reception at the Hay-Adams.





NEW COURSES CARRY ON AN OLD TRADITION

BY SHERRIE NEGREA



By the time Sharonee Vaca '19 arrived at Cornell two years ago, she could inspect a commercial aircraft, take apart and rebuild a jet engine, and repair the entertainment system on a plane. Her five years at Aviation High School did not teach her, however, how the airline business worked, how flight routes were planned, or how airports were managed.

That all changed last fall when Vaca took Airline Service and Operations Management, a class that featured guest lectures by six airline industry executives. Just as the semester ended, she landed an internship at Delta Air Lines for this summer—primarily because of what she learned in the course. “When it came to the interview, I wouldn’t have been able to answer the questions as well as I did if I hadn’t taken the class,” she said.

The airlines course exemplifies a pedagogical approach that has carried through since the beginning of the Hotel School, that of bringing industry executives into classrooms to share real-time, high-level knowledge and insights with students. In some cases, courses are sponsored by companies that want to engage the next generation in their own decision-making and meet talented students with the potential to become their future employees.

“Whether these students directly come and work for us or not, the fact that we’re influencing future leaders in hospitality is really important to organizations of our depth and size that have the opportunity to have an impact in the industry,” said Peter Zilper, MMH ’01, vice president of food and beverage at Aramark Sports and Entertainment. His company has partnered with the course New Product Development in the Food and Beverage Industry since it was introduced in 2015.

For students, the opportunity to learn from industry experts and, in some courses, work on projects for them has been a unique aspect of their undergraduate education. Dakota Smith ’17 said that Hospitality Design Thinking, a course that was restructured last year to include client projects, was “one of the most useful, practical, and interesting classes” he had taken at Cornell. “It was very hands-on, but it had theoretical components that we were able to apply to a real situation with a real client,” Smith said. “It honestly made me more invested in the work I was doing.”

INTRODUCING THE CRUISE INDUSTRY

Mark Tamis ’88, the senior vice president for hotel operations at Royal Caribbean International, said there was one course he took as a student at the Hotel School that was especially memorable—Introduction to Gaming. The class featured guest lecturers who worked in the industry and included a trip to Atlantic City, where the students got to take a back-of-house tour of a casino. “It was this great combination of the Cornell education delivered by its faculty, but it also had people from the industry come talk to us and share real-world examples,” Tamis recalled.

So when Robert Kwortnik, associate professor of services marketing, called Tamis and asked if he wanted to help him create a course on the cruise industry, he eagerly accepted. He already had a model in his mind of what this new offering should look like—the gaming course that he had taken nearly 30 years before.

Kwortnik had wanted to develop a course on leisure cruising since he joined the faculty in 2002, because he had literally grown up in the industry. His father, Bob Kwortnik, was one of the first employees of Cruise Lines International Association, the industry’s global trade group, and he developed the training for travel agents to learn about cruising. He would often deliver seminars during familiarization cruises for travel agents, sometimes bringing his family along.

“Cruising is an absolutely extraordinary experience,” said his son as he recalled those experiences. “There’s something about being out on the ocean at night on

Mark Tamis ’88, a senior vice president at Royal Caribbean International, lectures in the inaugural class session of Introduction to the Global Leisure Cruise Industry, a course he collaborated in creating with Rob Kwortnik, associate professor of services marketing. Kwortnik is seated in the front row. Photo by Jon Reis

the deck of the ship, and you look out and see the wake and there's nothing around you—just nothing—and the stars are extraordinary. I usually enjoy time on the ship more than the destination.”

With the industry growing, Rob Kwortnik, himself a recognized expert on leisure cruising, wanted to create a course that would introduce students to the industry and the career paths it offered. Tamis and his colleague Brian Abel, MMH '97, who is vice president of hotel operations at Royal Caribbean's sister brand, Celebrity Cruises, not only committed a roster of top-level executives to visit the class, but they also facilitated a gift from their parent company, Royal Caribbean Cruises, to defray course expenses over a three-year period.

The maiden voyage of Introduction to the Global Leisure Cruise Industry got underway last spring with 40 students enrolled from across Cornell's campus and with Tamis as the first guest speaker. Every week during the seven-week course, an executive from Royal Caribbean or Celebrity either visited the class or participated via teleconference, teaching the students about cruise-ship financing, onboard hotel operations, cruise marketing, and ship design and construction.

“We wanted to blend the academic experience that Rob brings with the day-to-day knowledge that our team brings,” Tamis said. “When they go up to the school and talk to the class, they're literally talking about business problems they're managing that week. It definitely brings that sense of reality to the students.”

One student in the class, Maria Zhankov '17, had never taken a cruise but was so captivated by everything she learned that she began to think of the industry as her calling. She asked Kwortnik to help her find an internship and was offered a position last summer working for

Abel at Celebrity Cruises in Miami. Zhankov spent the summer developing a strategic plan for the company and working with the onboard marketing team.

“I couldn't have asked for a better internship—it was just above and beyond everything I expected it to be,” Zhankov said. “Every day I called my parents and said, ‘I love this internship and I want to work in this industry.’”

After the course ended, Kwortnik said the students had only one complaint, that it didn't last the entire semester. Though complicated to schedule, he would like to add an opportunity during the semester for his students to spend three or four days working on an actual cruise.

“I'm a big believer in experiential learning,” Kwortnik said. “An immersion experience onboard a cruise will be a challenge to make happen, but the learning impact on students will be worth it.”

DEVELOPING NEW FOOD PRODUCTS

Last April, Megan Larkin '17 stood in Citizens Bank Park, home of the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team, intently watching dozens of fans eat warm chocolate chip cookies topped with mounds of soft ice cream out of fluted paper cups. Larkin and two other students had concocted this treat, called the Cookie Melt, as part of a class assignment.

Larkin, who attended the game that day with her family and a teammate, Stephanie Cressler '16, was ecstatic to see the demand for their dessert at the concession stands. “It was really incredible,” she said. “What was especially rewarding was seeing all these people eat our actual product.”

The Cookie Melt was the most successful of nine concepts developed as part of a brand-new course, New Product Development in the Food and Beverage Industry, in the fall of 2015. The students' semester-long assignment was to develop a new menu item that could be sold in arenas and stadiums operated by Aramark Sports and Entertainment, a foodservice company based in Philadelphia. Other tempting concepts included cheese-cake pops, savory burgers, and deep-fried cookie dough.

At the end of the semester, the students pitched their products to Aramark's Zilper, who sampled them all in the hope—by no means guaranteed—of finding one to develop at a sports facility the company services. It was Zilper's second visit to the class; he had also been there early in the semester to outline the parameters of the project. He repeated the two visits last fall when the course was offered for the second time.

“I actually get a lot of great ideas that I may want to explore further,” Zilper said after the food

BELOW

Rob Kwortnik with Maria Zhankov '17, who is aiming for a career in the cruise industry after taking his class. Photo by Jon Reis





demonstration last December in Statler Hall. “These students aren’t professional developers, but they have some really great ideas.”

The course was developed by Christopher Gaulke and Cheryl Stanley, both lecturers in food and beverage operations, to teach students about the multi-step process involved in developing a new menu item for a commercial food service. Now that the course has been through a two-year trial, it will undergo formal review by the Hotel School faculty, who will decide whether to approve it as a permanent offering.

While he was designing the course as a new faculty member, Gaulke met several executives who were visiting the campus from Aramark. At the time, he was looking for a way to limit the scope of products the students could create, and Aramark’s sports-concession business suggested an appealing angle. Gaulke asked the executives if they would like Aramark to become an industry partner in the class. They immediately agreed.

“I had never intended for Aramark to come in and say, ‘Yes, we’ll definitely launch one of these products at the end of the semester,’” Gaulke said. “It was more a matter of providing a uniform base for the students to develop for, rather than one of them saying, ‘Well, I’m going to develop a new coffee flavor for Starbucks,’

and another one saying, ‘I’m going to develop a new sandwich for Panera.’ This was more uniform for them and for me.”

At the beginning of the semester, the students traveled to Philadelphia to visit an Aramark facility—the Wells Fargo Center, an indoor arena for the Philadelphia Flyers hockey team and the Philadelphia 76ers basketball team. During the trip, the students toured the food operations and evaluated the items offered at the concession stands.

Each of the student teams then chose a stadium or arena for which to create their product, and they analyzed market research that Aramark provided about fans in each of the selected locations. “We introduce them to the idea of market research and make sure that whatever product they intend on developing meets a consumer need or want,” Gaulke said.

At the food presentation in December 2016, Angela Lindsay ’17 and Cierra Benson ’18 presented the Bao Bun, a Chinese delicacy consisting of steamed dough filled with savory chicken and vegetables. The students said the product would appeal to Seattle Seahawks fans because of that city’s large Asian population.

While Zilper didn’t announce a winning product at the presentation, he said that the Bao Bun might be

ABOVE

Aramark vice president Peter Zilper, MMH ’01 listens as a student presents a new idea for a sports concession product in New Product Development in the Food and Beverage Industry. Next to Zilper is lecturer Christopher Gaulke, who co-created the class, and faculty guest judges Ravinder Kingra and Douglass Miller. Photo by Chris Kitchen/Cornell Marketing Group



ABOVE

The Bao Bun, a creation of Angela Lindsay '17 and Cierra Benson '18.

Photo by Chris Kitchen/
Cornell Marketing Group

marketable because it could be filled with a variety of food combinations. “The Bao Bun could be a fantastic carrier for a lot of things,” he said. “It could be a potential concept that could work for us.”

Benson called the course a highlight of her education at Cornell, saying it was instrumental in giving her an overview of how to develop and market a new product. “Having the opportunity to present to an Aramark representative really put the class in perspective and will no doubt help me throughout my career,” she said.

RETHINKING THE DESIGN PROCESS

At the University of Rochester Medical Centers, chief patient experience officer Jackie Beckerman faces the same challenging question when she arrives for work every day: how can a large, crowded academic hospital create an environment that promotes comfort and healing, particularly for families visiting loved ones for prolonged periods of time?

After working on the issue for several years, Beckerman asked a team of SHA students in the course Hospitality Design Thinking to walk through the hospital, interview patients and family members, research practices at other medical centers, and come up with some suggestions.

Beckerman was so impressed with the solutions the students proposed that she would like to implement several of them, including offering massages for family members and bringing more music and art into the hospital. Another idea—designing a kitchen where patients and families could bake together—is also high on her list.

“We had a group looking at these suggestions, and I told them, ‘There is no better hotel school than Cornell’s,’” Beckerman said. “They came up with some fresh new concepts that supported the direction we know we need to go in, and that’s always helpful.”

Before the students proposed their list of ideas to the

hospital, they learned how to use the design-thinking process to develop a solution based on the needs of the client. As course developer and senior lecturer Stephani Robson describes it, design thinking is the discovery of not only the facts but also the more ambiguous aspects of an organization—its identity and culture—before trying to solve a problem.

“Design thinking is about amassing as much information as you can,” Robson said. “The process is the one that designers typically use, which is, they don’t start with a solution and back into it. They start with trying to identify what the real root of the problem is and then coming up with multiple options as to how that might be resolved.”

Last year, Robson and visiting lecturer John Sergi, MPS ’89 restructured a course he had been involved in previously, Strategic Design for Sports and Entertainment, by broadening its scope to include other industries such as retailing, healthcare, and the arts. They then arranged projects with five clients in those sectors for the students to work on throughout the semester.

In one project, Alana Askari ’17 and two other students created a concept for a café in Home Depot that would provide a central hub where contractors, customers, and sales associates could gather and explore home design projects. While researching the project, the students visited the Home Depot in Ithaca, observing and interviewing customers, and discussed their idea with an executive at the company’s headquarters.

“This was a lot different from many of my other courses,” Askari said. “There really is no right answer, and you’re learning a way of thinking and a way of approaching a problem. I think that’s applicable to any problem that you solve later in life.”

Dakota Smith and his three teammates developed a new restaurant concept for Cayuga Medical Center’s Convenient Care facility in Ithaca. Although Convenient Care has a café, Smith said it is not visible to most patients and visitors and is primarily used by employees.

After visiting the space and talking with hospital officials, the team proposed “Cayuga Kitchenette,” a homier take that would offer an expanded menu, with grab-and-go sandwiches and salads, as well as a greater variety of table sizes and seats to accommodate various groups of customers.

Smith, who already has developed his own clothing label and wants to work in the field of hotel design, believes the course has already helped him think about how he can help some friends rebrand a small inn they own in the Berkshires. “Through this class, I could see

how I could help other companies rebrand or realign themselves to make sure that they're operating at their full potential," he said. "I feel more confident about making suggestions and commenting in the process that leads up to those suggestions."

EXPLORING THE AIRLINE INDUSTRY

From the parking lot at St. Bernard High School, Sean Rogers could watch the airplanes taking off from Los Angeles International Airport—huge machines that seemed to lift off effortlessly into the sky. When the last bell rang each day, Rogers would sneak away to the airport and take a window seat near the end of Terminal 7 to see the airplanes gliding across the runway.

It wasn't a surprise, then, that Rogers ended up at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida, where he earned his bachelor's degree and MBA. Since he was more interested in the business side of aviation, he spent the years that followed at five different airlines and logistics companies, working in schedule and network planning, pricing, finance, and industrial engineering.

After earning a PhD at Rutgers University and teaching at New Mexico State University, Rogers landed at

Cornell in 2015 as an assistant professor in the Hotel School. One of his first assignments was to take over the teaching of Airline Service Management following the retirement of professor Mary Tabacchi.

From his extensive list of personal industry contacts, Rogers invited top executives from the major airlines, aircraft manufacturers, and consulting firms to visit the class. He created hands-on assignments for the students to learn how to analyze the fundamental components of the airline business—network planning, scheduling, pricing, revenue management, and fleet analysis.

"As opposed to only learning about the industry on a conceptual level, which we spend the first few weeks doing, here we actually get into it," Rogers said. "Using real industry data, the students do some of the same analyses that an entry-level analyst in route strategy or revenue management might do."

The students explored another key aspect of the industry—the airline cargo business—with Jim Butler '96, president of American Airlines Cargo in Fort Worth. Like all of the speakers invited to the class, Butler met with the students the night before at a reception on campus, where he talked to them about his career and their interest in the industry.

BELOW

John Sergi, MPS '89 comments during a meeting of the course Hospitality Design Thinking. The course is taught by senior lecturer Stephani Robson, third from left. Between Sergi and Robson is visiting entrepreneur Lauren Genatossio. Photo by Jon Reis



Sharonee Vaca '19 meets with assistant professor Sean Rogers after landing a prestigious internship with Delta Air Lines. Photo by Jon Reis

"I think it's a great opportunity not only to talk about the value of the airline industry and cargo specifically, but we're constantly recruiting great young minds who want to come and work in the industry," Butler said. "We'd be happy to bring folks in once they're done with their education at Cornell."

The visit to the airlines class last November was the first time Butler had guest-lectured at Cornell. With American Airlines now serving the Ithaca market following its merger with US Airways in 2013, he said it was an opportune time to forge a relationship with the Hotel School.

"A general partnership with the Hotel School is something that's important to us," Butler said. "It gives us the ability to broaden the perspective of the students, and I think there's a lot of value in that."

Rogers knows from his own considerable experience that no one becomes an expert in the airlines in just one semester. "There are entire degrees in this," he tells his students, "but I will give you enough information so you can really engage in conversation with someone in the industry and know what you're talking about." That was his goal when he restructured the course.

Sharonee Vaca, the Aviation High School graduate, found her internship at Delta after meeting an airline executive at a career fair at Cornell. But while she made the initial contact with the company herself, she turned to Rogers throughout the semester for help in preparing for her interview.

When the day came, the interviewer from Delta asked Vaca a hypothetical question about network planning, and she was able to answer it because she had learned about it in class. "Everything I learned in the class I was able to apply in the interview," she said.

And who knows where this kind of success will lead? Vaca and Zhankov and Smith and Larkin may well end up back in the classroom not so many years from now, sharing their invaluable industry knowledge as they help the school ready another flight of students for takeoff. ▀



SHERRIE NEGREA is an Ithaca-based freelance writer specializing in higher education and healthcare.





THE VALUE OF CULTURE

DUETTO'S HAPPY
MEDIUM FOR GROWTH

BY SANDI MULCONRY





ABOVE

Duetto's first three employees were 2013 classmates Nat Green, Carolyn Nieberding, and Vince Cusma.

The company now employs about 100 people in ten offices around the world.

Photo by Steven Yang

LEFT

Marco Benvenuti, MMH '05 addresses the students in Distinguished Lectures in Hospitality Management in October 2016. Photo by Patrick Shanahan/Cornell Marketing Group

its open work space, in a mixed-use Las Vegas mall, is filled with televisions, PlayStations, hoverboards, even a drone—not all that unusual for a high-tech startup (except, perhaps, the drone, a flying Millennium Falcon). But at Duetto, the hospitality software company co-founded by Marco Benvenuti, MMH '05, the toys are secondary. So, too, are the flexible work hours, relaxed dress code, and daily happy hours. Duetto's singular approach to culture allows people to be who they are while encouraging them to grow. That culture (and the low turnover that results), coupled with whiz-bang technology, has fueled Duetto's growth and sparked a revolution in the pricing of hotel rooms.

Benvenuti (whose name, fittingly for a Hotelie, means “welcome” in Italian) is a man who challenges convention—in his approach to technology, to corporate culture, to life. “I, personally, and the company stand out for being different,” he said.

Dispensing with the industry standard offer of best available rate, Benvenuti leveraged cloud technology to offer hotels software that allows rooms to be priced individually and customers to be recognized with personalized loyalty pricing. In so doing, he hopes to level the playing field with online travel agencies (OTAs), which—aided by advanced technology and better data—have been siphoning off revenue from hotels.

The company's first product, aptly named GameChanger, has a unicorn as its mascot. (In Duetto's main boardroom, a large unicorn head peers majestically over the conference table.) “We decided early on that we would have spirit animals for all our products,” said Benvenuti, who is also Duetto's chief analytics and product officer. Duetto's second product, ScoreBoard, is represented by the narwhal, the unicorn of the sea. “Unlike traditional B-to-B companies, we try to create an emotional connection between the user of the product and the technology itself, which is inherently pretty boring,” he said. “We go the extra mile to create that connection.

“Our biggest challenge is to make the industry understand that dollars spent on technology will produce a larger, longer-term return on investment than dollars spent elsewhere. Without this investment, they'll be commoditized, and the OTAs will gain an even greater share of the market.” To educate hoteliers about the need to upgrade and the opportunities that will be lost if they don't, Duetto employees present their technology at industry conferences and lecture at universities worldwide.

For the hospitality industry, Benvenuti believes the significance of cloud technology rivals that of the Internet. Supporting that contention is the fact that Duetto has raised 63 million dollars in venture capital and doubled its revenue in each of the last

three years. Counted among its clients are over 2,000 hotels, both chains and independents, that typically see increases of six-to-eight percent in their bottom lines after signing on with Duetto. At the start of its sixth year, the company has more than a hundred employees, including about a dozen Hotelies, and offices in San Francisco, Las Vegas, Austin, Cleveland, New York, London, Dubai, Singapore, Sao Paulo, and Munich.

THE ACCIDENTAL ENTREPRENEUR

Benvenuti grew up in Livorno, a port city on the west coast of Tuscany, and came to the United States (attracted, he said, by a daily diet of *Beverly Hills 90210*) to attend the

University of Nevada at Las Vegas. He intended to stay a few years, have fun, and learn English, but his plans changed

when he met a professor and fellow countryman who encouraged him to pursue a career in hospitality. They changed further at the start of his senior year, following the September 11 attacks, when another professor and the dean of UNLV's Harrah College expressed concern that he would be unable to procure a visa or a job and advised him to apply to graduate school. The professor, Robert Woods, MS '87, PhD '89, inspired him to set his sights on Cornell.

After gaining admission to the Hotel School, Benvenuti received an unexpected job offer from the Four Seasons in Chicago and was allowed to defer enrolling for a year to gain operations experience as a manager-in-training. He arrived on campus in fall 2003 and became a graduate assistant for Sherri Kimes. Kimes, he said, "changed my life and made me fall in love with the new field of distribution and revenue management for hotels. She took me under her

wing, taught me everything I know about revenue management, and tailored a curriculum for me that was very different from that of other MMHers. I took courses in data-driven marketing, PhD-level statistics, and coding, which made me a different breed, almost, of Hotelie. I always say that without Professor Kimes, I don't exist and Duetto doesn't exist."

Following graduation, Benvenuti did a brief stint with Expedia, in Seattle, at a time "when the distribution world was changing drastically." Less than a year later, he moved back to Las Vegas to take a job at Caesars Entertainment as it was merging with Harrah's. As president's associate, he optimized revenue management for Harrah's Las Vegas campus, which booked some 25,000 rooms a night. He later became information technology director at Wynn Las Vegas and executive director at Wynn and Encore resorts, where he founded and

BELOW

Nat Green '13 hovers with a few teammates in Duetto's Las Vegas office. Photo by Steven Yang



managed the Enterprise Strategy Group. Wynn Las Vegas did him the kindness of sponsoring his green card, and he now holds dual U.S. and Italian citizenship.

While at Wynn, Benvenuti met Patrick Bosworth, a recent Harvard graduate. In 2010, the two left Wynn to found Duetto Consulting to help hotels and resorts improve their revenue management, marketing, and distribution. “When Patrick and I founded Duetto as a consulting practice, it was important to each of us that we create a new way of pricing specifically for hotels,” said Benvenuti, calling the technology at the time “extremely sub-par.” Their first attempt was an Excel spreadsheet designed to create personalization of pricing and break the rate parity between OTAs and hotels. They started to sell their spreadsheet and, one day, beat out an established revenue management software brand to win an account with an Atlantic City resort. “It was then that we realized we were onto something,” he said. In another big leap, they abandoned the consulting side, took on a new partner—Craig Weissman, then chief technology officer at Salesforce—and developed their spreadsheets into a cloud technology application. In 2012, the software company known simply as Duetto was born.

Besides representing the company’s founding duo, the name Duetto also pays homage to the Alfa Romeo Spider 1600 convertible—a 1960s two-seater known as the Duetto—that Benvenuti and Bosworth both drove in their youth. (Fun fact: SHA senior lecturer Giuseppe Pezzotti once made clutches for the car.) Duetto’s logo is a stylized version of the Alfa Romeo grille turned sideways. His company’s values, Benvenuti said, align with the car’s sassiness, agility, and irreverence.

Benvenuti noted that in the company’s earliest days, the founders learned a lesson that set Duetto’s course: hotels and casinos can be much more profitable if they set price first and control demand second. To facilitate that process, they developed GameChanger, a predictive analytics platform that allows hotels to customize their pricing



in response to market dynamics and competitor activity. “Our algorithm recommends a room rate that has been optimized, based on a number of unique data sets, for the highest-bottom-line hotel profitability,” he said. With ScoreBoard, the world’s first hotel revenue intelligence platform, they simplified forecasting and budgeting.

A HAVEN FOR HOTELIES

Duetto began a tradition of Hotelie hiring with the first three members of its customer success team, Vince Cusma ’13, Nat Green ’13, and Carolyn Nieberding ’13. All three started with the company as interns, worked on a variety of projects from Ithaca while winding down their senior years, and became full-time employees upon graduation.

Cusma came to the attention of Duetto several months after returning from a semester abroad in Beijing. He had gone there to develop greater fluency in Mandarin, with the intention of returning to China after graduation. During the Cornell Hospitality Research Summit (CHRS) held in October of his senior year, he ran into his boss from a Starwood internship the summer before, who introduced him to Bosworth. After the two struck up a conversation about Duetto, Bosworth told Cusma he thought he would

be a good fit for the nascent company, which surprised Cusma, given his lack of expertise in revenue management or technology. Unbeknownst to Cusma, Sherri Kimes had already mentioned him to Benvenuti.

Still intent on moving to Asia, Cusma had further conversations with the Duetto founders, who said that, although there were no immediate plans to expand to Asia, they would move him there when the timing was right. “I was blown away by that,” Cusma said. “It was amazing for a company to be so willing to help someone just out of college with his personal goals. That went a long way in convincing me to consider Duetto more seriously.” Just two years later, Cusma was in Singapore assisting with Duetto’s expansion into the region. Now Duetto’s director of customer success, Cusma said what he values most about the company is the opportunity to learn new things. “If you’re willing to put in the time, they’re willing to teach you anything,” he said.

Carolyn Nieberding focused on international business development at Cornell—with internships at Kerzner International,

ABOVE
Carolyn Nieberding ’13 celebrates the results of the company’s annual hackathon in December. Photo by Steven Yang



Interstate Hotels and Resorts in Shanghai, and Hilton Hotels in Istanbul—and was drawn to Duetto by its international ambitions. Upon graduation, she, like Cusma and Green, became a customer success manager, “managing the customer with regard to everything post-sale. We worked with the customer during onboarding, we deployed the product, we trained on that product, and then we improved adoption.” Next, she was promoted to senior manager before transitioning into operations. Currently, as associate director of customer success operations, she manages and improves processes across the department’s international offices to make them more efficient and scalable.

Nat Green, who, incidentally, is a car buff (and the son of Cindy Estis Green ’79), also met Bosworth at CHRS. Unlike his two classmates, he was already fascinated by

technology and knew he wanted to join a startup. Like Cusma, he had spent a semester in China and hoped to return. After a two-hour meeting with the team in San Francisco, his

mind was made up—he signed with Duetto that evening. “I met up with Carolyn and Vince and said, ‘There’s no question in my mind that Duetto is where I want to work.’ It just seemed primed for success.”

A few days after graduation, Green and Cusma left for a month in China to immerse themselves in the Asia-Pacific market, renew their relationships with hoteliers and others, and introduce them to Duetto. Upon their return, they helped set up Duetto’s Las Vegas operation, doing odd jobs around the office in addition to their real work. “Carolyn, Vince, and I still joke about the fact that we had to wire the office,” Green said. Later, as customer success manager for Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts, he visited their properties throughout the Asia-Pacific region. When he and Bosworth presented on the future of revenue management at Banyan Tree’s general managers summit, “it hit me just how amazing the opportunity at Duetto was, and the magnitude of the impact that Duetto could have on the industry,” he said.

“Technology transcends cultural barriers, which I think is the most amazing thing,” said Green. “With technology, you can break the hotel industry’s traditional rules—it’s one of the most creative fields

on Earth.” In the future, he believes hotels will be reshaped by five major technological advances—robotics, augmented reality, virtual reality, the Internet of Things, and big data.

Green next managed Duetto’s global expansion as commercial sales manager for Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. “It was really cool, as a 22-year-old, to leave school and within a year see the impact I was having within the organization,” he said. “There’s no better way to have learned so much about the nuances of the hotel industry around the world than from that

function.” At the end of 2014, Green moved into solutions engineering, serving, he said, “as a utility person between our sales and marketing, account management, and product development teams.” Today, he is a senior global solutions engineer based in London. “It’s all been so much fun,” he said. “I’ve learned so much about myself and about interacting with other people and other cultures, and it really stems from Marco, Patrick, and Craig’s trust in a few 22-year-olds to go out and change the world, because we had that same desire to change it as they did.”

PRIORITIZING CULTURE

Earlier in his career, Benvenuti struggled to fit in. He didn’t like wearing suits and ties, or working in a dimly lit basement, or being told what to do. When he and Bosworth started Duetto, he said, “We didn’t know what we wanted, but we knew what we didn’t want. We took the stuff we’d learned from big corporations and made a list of what they did that we wouldn’t. We said, ‘We’re not going to be these things, and then we’ll see how the culture evolves.’”

The result? Nobody has an office. Work hours are flexible. Dress is casual, and

ABOVE

Benvenuti offers career advice to Rudraksh Singh, MMH ’17 during a visit to campus as an entrepreneur-in-residence. Photo by Chris Kitchen/Cornell Marketing Group

includes the company's own branded apparel. ("Early on, we used to joke that our fashion line was more popular than our software," Benvenuti said.) Employees receive free memberships to a gym in the mall. There are beds for naps. Such features make the work environment a living-working space, where people can, and do, spend twelve-hour days (sometimes working through the night to service customers around the world). "People use the office as their home away from home—it's become a hangout, a communal space where you happen to work, rather than a place you can't wait to escape," he said.

Duetto's approach to diversity is different, too. "I'm a gay man from another country," Benvenuti said, "and it's been my experience that, although companies pride themselves on diversity, once they hire the diverse person, they expect them to conform to company norms. Here, we encourage people to be themselves as much as possible, both at work and with our clients. Duetto is a big family of diverse people who embrace each other's diversity and try to experience each other's lives."

Another hallmark of the culture is that good work is rewarded by greater empowerment and greater responsibility. "We attract and retain top talent because we're focused on creating an innovative environment where our team can learn and grow and enjoy their roles," said Nieberding. "Everyone is encouraged to grow their skills. For me, my extra projects turned into a new full-time position only because Duetto empowered me to become involved in all aspects of the operation."

Duetto's holiday parties—and gifts—are the stuff of legend. Parties have taken place at a mansion in Sonoma, with employees staying overnight, and at the Mob Museum, where a mystery unfolded over dinner. At one party, an executive dressed up in drag as Oprah to distribute the gifts. "It's like going down the rabbit hole in *Alice in Wonderland*," said Green. "We never know what to expect, but we know it's going to be fun." Gifts have included Duetto iPad Minis,

customized Duetto Beats headphones, and hoverboards (which now serve as the main mode of transportation around the office and the mall). "Such high-end gifts make it very apparent that nobody is more or less important than anyone else—every single one of us has a high value to the company."

"Marco, Patrick, and Craig," Green said, "have created a community where, no matter what's happening politically or socially in the real world, everyone is equal at Duetto. Everyone cares about you. It is the most beautiful family environment I've been able to work in."

Benvenuti characterizes Duetto's culture as "the strength that made what could have been your typical, boring B-to-B company selling software into something unique. It's a strength that needs to be fostered, cherished, and protected as the company moves forward," he said. "That's what keeps me up at night: how do you keep the culture the same as the company grows?"

CONTROLLED CHAOS

Hackathons help. For Cusma, who helps plan the company's annual hackathons, they're among "the best, most fun experiences at Duetto." In the three days leading up to the annual December holiday party, small teams work round-the-clock to develop a prototype for a new tool or feature that will add functionality or solve a problem. People from throughout the company, and around the world, take part. At the end, each team presents its work, competing for a small cash prize. More importantly, the winning idea gets built and becomes part of the company's offerings. "It's a badge of honor for employees when they see customers using something they came up with and worked on," Cusma said.

"Hackathons are crazy and incredible," said Nieberding. "People get very into it—even people you wouldn't expect. It's exciting what people come up with."

Winning concepts have included a mobile application that allows hotel executives to make pricing decisions and change rates on their phones; a price analysis tool that shows

hotels which competitive-set rank is most profitable; and a self-service onboarding portal that configures new hotels on GameChanger.

CONTINUING THE CYCLE

Benvenuti maintains strong ties with the Hotel School, serving as an entrepreneur-in-residence and on the CHRS advisory board. Last fall, he appeared as a speaker in the Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series.

Nieberding, Cusma, and Green now recruit each year at the school's Career Day and often spend the week on campus, lecturing in SHA classes and getting to know students. "When I lecture, I try to frame my experience in a way that makes technology seem a little less intimidating and shows that it's not necessary to have a coding background to get into a technology company and be successful there," said Nieberding. "At the same time, I'm excited to see hospitality technology become a growing interest at the Hotel School. It's amazing to see Hotelies who already know so much about technology and who are focused on going into that sector."

While turnover in the hospitality industry is high, the retention rate for SHA graduates at Duetto is 100 percent. "The Hotelies we hire have strong critical thinking and analytical skills, combined with a gregarious personality," said Benvenuti. "They come with good skills that fit us well, and then we train them on the rest. Their path to being successful is much quicker than when we hire from other schools."

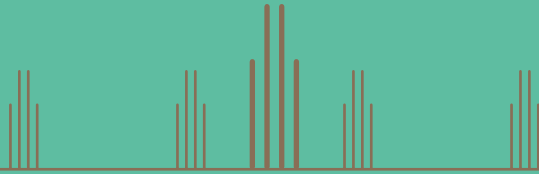
"A career in technology is not something I considered when I was at Cornell, but it's one I would highly recommend," said Nieberding. "Companies like Duetto allow Hotelies to marry their passions for hospitality, service, innovation, and technology in a way that no other portion of the industry does." ■



SANDI MULCONRY is a freelance writer and editor and owner of Group M Communications, a PR consultancy in Skaneateles, New York that serves institutions of higher education and the travel/tourism sector.

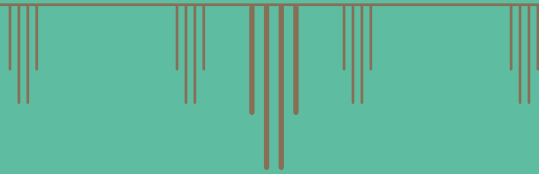


Keith Menin '01, Russell Galbut '74, and Marisa Galbut, MMH '13. Photo by Cristina Sullivan



THE GALBUT FAMILY

MIAMI BEACH'S COMMUNITY BUILDERS



BY SANDI MULCONRY

When asked what he wants to be when he grows up, five-year-old Aidan Galbut waves away the question as so much child's play. "I'm already grown up," he asserts. "I build buildings!" Just another adorable case of a preschooler conflating fantasy and reality? Not exactly. Aidan, you see, has his own hardhat and wears it when he visits construction sites with his mother, Marisa Galbut, MMH '13. Aidan does not have a title yet, but his mom is the retail development manager for Crescent Heights, one of the nation's leading real estate brands and the Galbut family business in Miami Beach.

Aidan is the latest in a five-generation line of Galbuts who have played integral roles in the growth and development of Miami Beach. His great-great-grandparents, Abraham and Bessie Galbut, put down roots there in 1929. By 1934, their corner store, Al's (as Abraham was known) had become the town's central gathering place. Part lunch counter, part newsstand, part hardware store, and part drugstore, Al's also sold fishing licenses, driver's licenses, and auto tags and had a public stenographer and notary public who performed wedding ceremonies. "We made food for the prisoners (the jail was a few blocks away); we had slot machines; we had pinball machines," recalled Marisa Galbut's grandmother (also named Bessie) in a video produced by the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce as a tribute to the family. "And then... if anybody needed a pauper's grave, they came to Al

and he arranged for the funeral. Whatever you wanted—you name it, we had

BELOW
Al's, a center of community life back in the day



ABOVE
Russell Galbut's father and grandfather, Hyman and Abraham Galbut (in the center of the photo), catch up on the news with some of the locals in February 1936.

it." On top of all that, they were open all night. Al earned the sobriquet "the mayor of South Beach" and welcomed all comers, including Clark Gable, Tyrone Power, and Victor Mature.

Al and Bessie had a daughter and two sons. Son Hyman, who became a U.S. Navy captain, attorney, and city councilman, and his wife, Bessie, had four sons, including Russell Galbut '74, now the managing principal of Crescent Heights and Marisa's father. "He was a man totally dedicated to his children, and dedicated to the thought that nothing substitutes for the best education," said Galbut. "My father had an expression, 'second to none,' meaning you should always do your best." From his mother, Russell Galbut learned the power of persistence, that "you should never, ever give up."

Hymie's sons were close in age, and all attended college at the same time. While his brothers pursued medicine and law, Russell, who had witnessed in Miami Beach how "the economic engine of the hotel industry brings about wealth and economic prosperity," developed an interest in business and the hotel industry that led him to the Hotel School.

In addition to Galbut's daughter Marisa,

two other members of the next generation followed him to Cornell: his daughter Jenna, a 2014 Arts and Sciences graduate, and Keith Menin '01, his first

cousin once removed. In partnership with his cousin Jared Galbut, Menin is a principal of Menin Hospitality, a very successful developer of boutique hotels and food and beverage outlets in Miami Beach and Chicago.

THE INNOVATOR

Russell Galbut, who always loved to create things, studied accounting and architecture while at Cornell. "It was my Cornell education that gave me the desire to create magical spaces—spaces defined by their physicality and personality," he said. "It's at Cornell that I learned there is no substitute for excellence."

During his senior year, Galbut worked on an airline study with the school's dean, Robert Beck '42, whom he described as "a giant among men" and "one of the most remarkable individuals I've known." The

study, devoted to improving the airline's food service, took Galbut and a classmate to airports across the country. They scheduled those visits strategically: "We made sure that our interviews at the New Orleans airport were during Mardi Gras and that our work at the New York airports was over New Year's," he recalled with a chuckle. "It was quite an experience." The project helped him land a consulting position with the accounting firm of Laventhol and Horwath in Miami.

By 1976, Galbut had begun his first of many condominium construction projects in South Beach. At night, he attended the University of Miami School of Law, earning

a JD in 1980 to accompany the CPA certification he had received while at Laventhol. "I became a CPA, a lawyer, and a builder almost simultaneously," he said. In 1981, he started a family nursing home and adult congregant-care business, growing it into one of the largest networks of homes for the elderly in South Florida. Two years later, he bought his first hotel, the Shelborne, and converted it into condominiums.

Today, Galbut is a senior principal and senior partner of Crescent Heights, a privately held development company that he formed in 1989 in partnership with his cousin Bruce Menin and friend Sonny Kahn. In its early days, the company's focus

was on condominium conversions. "We were the condo kings in America in the late eighties and early nineties," Galbut said. In 1989, the company pioneered the condo-hotel concept with the Alexander, in Miami Beach; a few years later, it created the largest condo hotel in the world when it bought and converted the 29-story Ala Moana in Honolulu. In 1994, Crescent Heights completed its first office-to-residential conversion with 25 Broad Street, in New York City, a project that "pioneered the renaissance of the Financial District as a residential neighborhood and gave us the opportunity and wherewithal to expand across the nation," he said.

In 1995, the company also started to build from the ground up. Its first such project was the Remington, in the Wilshire corridor of Los Angeles, "still considered one of the best condominium buildings in America," Galbut said. "We learned from the Remington that the future of Crescent Heights would be defined by sticking to projects in strong urban communities and striving for the highest degree of excellence." With the Mayfair, the first major mid-rise building in downtown Atlanta, Crescent Heights sparked the rebirth of the city's Buckhead neighborhood; its developments also helped revitalize San Francisco's SOMA and Mid-Market districts. To date, the company has converted or built more than 50,000 residential and hotel units in fifteen major urban markets. Its five-billion-dollar portfolio consists of residential multi-family housing, offices, commercial properties, land entitlement, and new construction from coast to coast.

Regardless of where they are located, Crescent Heights buildings "create magical spaces for people to enjoy—whether in their apartment or outside their apartment," Galbut said. "We over-amenitize to provide the ultimate in leisure and luxury." Upon request, the concierge will deliver any kind of food, buy and wrap a gift (and even write out the gift card), pick up and deliver dry cleaning, or



LEFT
The Shelborne





deliver coffee each morning. When residents move in, they download an app. “Your phone then tells us where you are in the building—if you’re on the pathway to the valet, for example, we’re already getting your car,” he said. “If you’re going to be late getting home to meet a friend, you can allow them to get on the elevator and into your apartment with the use of their phone—and you can limit the window to, say, 20 minutes.” Even though he now builds multi-family residential buildings, he said, “I believe I’m still in the hotel industry, because our buildings provide more services to tenants than some five-star hotels.”

Crescent Heights has about 350 employees on the corporate level, summer interns, and thousands more who work at its dozens of properties. Over the years, many have been SHA alumni and students. To name a few, Eva Simitch Warke ’13 is an acquisitions analyst; Jordan Heller ’12 is a former summer analyst and financial acquisitions associate; Adam Kahn ’17 (no relation to Sonny Kahn) was a summer analyst this past year; Amanda Baldor ’19, another fifth-generation descendant of Al and Bessie Galbut, is a former intern. “One of the great strengths of students coming out of the Hotel School is their desire to succeed,” Galbut said. “We’re very proud of our connection to Cornell.”

THE GO-GETTER

Keith Menin was orphaned at fifteen, and Russell Galbut became his guardian and surrogate father. Menin’s hospitality career began that year as he manned the front desk at the Shelborne.

Despite his family background, Menin said, he was “a young kid who didn’t know much about the business” when he transferred to SHA. By the time he graduated, he had the entrepreneurial skills “to jump right in and do my first hotel.”

He and Jared Galbut partnered to acquire the Sanctuary (a small percentage of which he had inherited from his family)

The Bakehouse, an upscale, Parisian-inspired cafe. Photo © Legacy Media Group, LLC

and turned the nursing home into a 30-suite hotel, which he later developed into the condo hotel Sanctuary South Beach. Next, the cousins acquired the Raffaello Chicago. Shortly thereafter, Menin worked on the resurgence of the Mondrian South Beach, which opened to critical acclaim in 2007 following a 50-million-dollar renovation. Menin Hospitality now manages the Mondrian as well as the Shelborne.

Since being founded by Menin and Jared Galbut in 2005, Menin Hospitality has grown to encompass seventeen hotels, restaurants, and nightlife venues, with several more in the pipeline. Although Menin Hospitality is independent of Crescent Heights, the two companies often work side-by-side. “If they

own retail space, I’ll become a tenant,” Menin explained. “We’ll manage hotels owned by any of the principals of

Crescent Heights. We invest in deals together.” In 2012, Menin Hospitality joined forces with Crescent Heights to restore the classic Gale South Beach, a property once owned by the Galbut family. Much of the decor—including vintage postcards, photos, and other Miami Beach memorabilia—pays tribute to the family. When Menin reopened the Gale, he invited LDV Hospitality, a company founded by his close friend John Meadow ’02, to do the food and beverage concepts. The resulting restaurant, Dolce Italian, was named “Best New Restaurant” last year in the Bravo TV competition’s first season. A second Gale, a hotel and condo development, is scheduled to open in Fort Lauderdale Beach in 2018.

Service at Menin Hospitality properties, as at Crescent Heights properties, is second to none. “At the Gale, we offer complimentary Prosecco and Champagne to our guests every day at five p.m.,” said Menin. “We have a brand-new electric cart that roams

the beach, so if you want to go to dinner somewhere farther away, you call the front desk and we’ll take you there—then we’ll pick you up. At all our hotels, the concierge is there for guests 24/7. With us, there’s never a ‘no.’”

Along with its hotel component, Menin Hospitality has a food and beverage component, featuring such concepts as Pizza Bar (a rock ’n’ roll pizzeria), Bodega Taquería y Tequila (Mexican street food in front, cocktail lounge in back), and Bakehouse (an upscale, Parisian-inspired café) in Miami Beach, and Drumbar (a rooftop cocktail club) in Chicago. “Marisa helps tremendously with our food and beverage concepts, often partnering with us and helping us find retail locations,” said Menin.

Before she attended the Hotel School, Marisa Galbut worked for Menin Hospitality; in 2009, she helped launch Pizza Bar. “When we opened, we found that our 30-inch pie was too big to get out the

BELOW AND AT RIGHT
Bodega Taquería y Tequila features street food in the front and a bar in the back. Photos © Legacy Media Group, LLC





door—we couldn't deliver it, and people couldn't leave with a whole pie," she recalled. "Keith was like, 'No problem—I'm cutting a hole in the window.' I label Keith the go-getter of the family. Nothing stops him."

Today, Russell Galbut is Menin's coach, mentor, and friend. "Keith is an incredibly talented person," Galbut said. "He gets it at all levels. When other people see things in black and white, he sees them in a multitude of colors." Recently, *Haute Living* called Menin "a young, charismatic hotelier" who "will continue to rock us for years to come."

THE GAME CHANGER

For Marisa Galbut, the MMH program took

her career in a new direction: commercial development, which she describes as "the other side of the coin" from what she had done previously at Menin Hospitality. After graduation, she said, she was drawn to Crescent Heights "because I love developing and bettering the community I was raised in." She used her SHA experience to take the company in a new direction, creating Crescent Heights Retail, which manages commercial development for Crescent Heights residential buildings as well as stand-alone commercial projects.

Earlier this year, Crescent Heights Retail broke ground on Miami Beach's first urgent-care center, which will be run by Baptist

Health. "Looking at what the community needs and bringing in something like this is a real value-add," she said. Also in the works is 1212 Lincoln Road, a ground-up retail center that will have 144,000 square feet of retail space, a hotel component, and a 400-car garage. The project features "an amazing food hall—a first for Miami Beach—that will attract a lot of the Miami flavor, along with vendors from out of state," she said. Russell Galbut cites 1212 Lincoln Road as evidence that his daughter, too, favors "magical spaces and magical developments."

Marisa, who received the Fairmont Hotels and Resorts MMH Award in 2013,



Ricky's, a bar and eatery next door to Bodega, features live music in the back.
Photo © Legacy Media Group, LLC





ABOVE
The laid-back eatery at Ricky's. Photo © Legacy Media Group, LLC

said one of the things she appreciates most about SHA is the faculty's willingness to help, even after students have graduated. "You can always rely on them—they're a great support system," she said. "I know that, if I had an issue or a question or wanted help with a case study, they would be there for me."

"Marisa is oriented toward success, and part of her success is her family," said her father. "The fact that she was able to get her master's degree at SHA while taking care of a young child, and doing so well academically, makes me very proud."

FAMILY TIES

The Galbut family works together, plays together, and learns together. "There's a lot of love between us, and I think that's what makes us so strong as a team," said Marisa. "We can shoot straight with each other, and no one gets upset at the end of the day."

One reason for that smooth functioning may be that each team member has his or her own niche. "Russell does the development for Crescent Heights, I do the hospitality end, and Marisa focuses on the retail, but we're all intertwined and we all help

each other," said Menin. "A lot of people say, 'Don't work with family—it's too hard, it's a mistake,' and I always say, 'You must have the wrong family, because if you have a good family and everybody wants the best for everybody else, that equals success.' That's truly what we have together."

For Russell Galbut, being a coach and mentor to his children has been one of the great joys of his life. "Watching my children and their friends grow and do things together is something that's so special, because they, too, understand it's all about excellence," he said. "I consider Keith's and Marisa's and Jenna's success to be more important than my own. I've already been successful—I now work for them, to make sure they're majorly successful."

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

"Because our family is part of the fabric of Miami Beach, we believe it is our obligation to give back to make it a better community," Russell Galbut said. The belief is one that spans generations. "My father was a man full of heart. He believed in creating a community that had all the services necessary to make it great." In the tribute video shown by the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce, Captain Marvin Greenwald, a

family friend of more than 60 years, said, "You don't know where the Galbuts have been—they're just there. It's like electricity: You hit the switch and the lights go on. It's the same with the Galbuts—they're there, and they're going to do something."

Over the decades, Russell Galbut has served on the boards of numerous nonprofit organizations and private companies. A founding director of Prestige Cruises, which was bought out by Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL), he now serves on the NCL board, and on the boards of the Simon Wiesenthal Center and Colel Chabad, among others. Menin, who watched his uncle Bruce Menin and Galbut serve on Miami Beach's planning board and zoning board, respectively, when he was a child, is a former member of the Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority.

The family, Crescent Heights, and Menin Hospitality have received numerous awards for their professional and community accomplishments. In 2015, the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce honored Russell Galbut and family (Crescent Heights/Menin Hospitality) with a Better Beach Citizen Award. In 2015 and 2006, the National Association of Home Builders named Crescent Heights its Multi-family

Development Firm of the Year. In 2014, Galbut received the Chamber's Innovation in Business Award for being the first to bring to Miami Beach a "robotic garage" (a high-speed automated parking structure that parks cars in half the space required in a conventional garage). Keith Menin was recognized by *Haute Living* among its 2015 Haute 100: Miami.

A LIFELONG CONNECTION

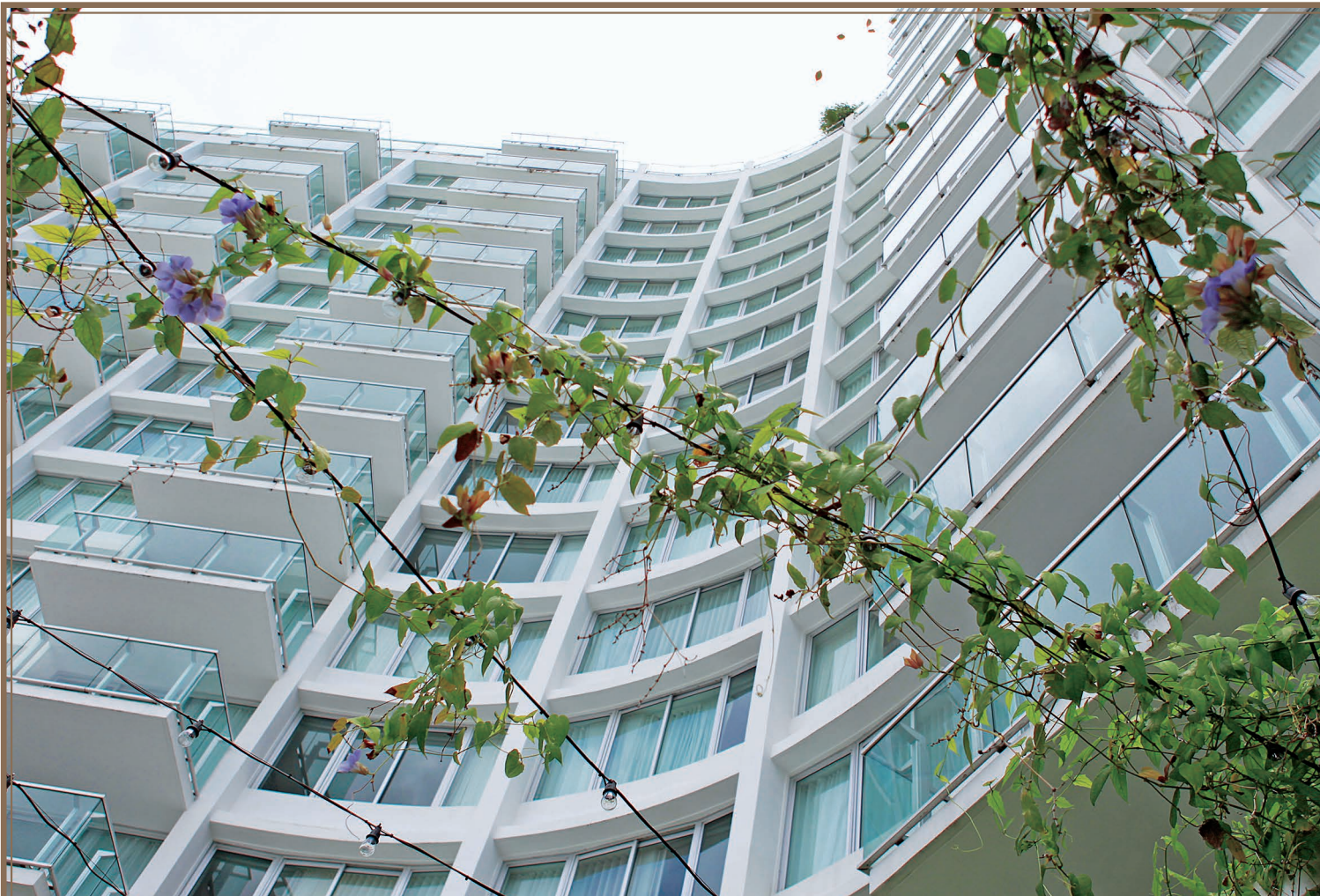
In gratitude for "the simply incredible education" he received from the Hotel School, Russell Galbut remains close to the school and the university, serving on the Dean's Advisory Board, the Center for Real Estate and Finance board, and the Cornell Real Estate Council. He

has lectured on campus, attended Hotel Ezra Cornell, and participated in programs offered by the Cornell Entrepreneur Network. In 2001, he and cousin Bruce Menin established the Galbut-Menin Family Scholarship at SHA, intended for students who are orphans or have lost a parent.

Galbut gets back to Ithaca several times a year to visit his daughter Jenna, a life coach, who still lives there. "Despite having graduated, she refuses to leave," he joked.

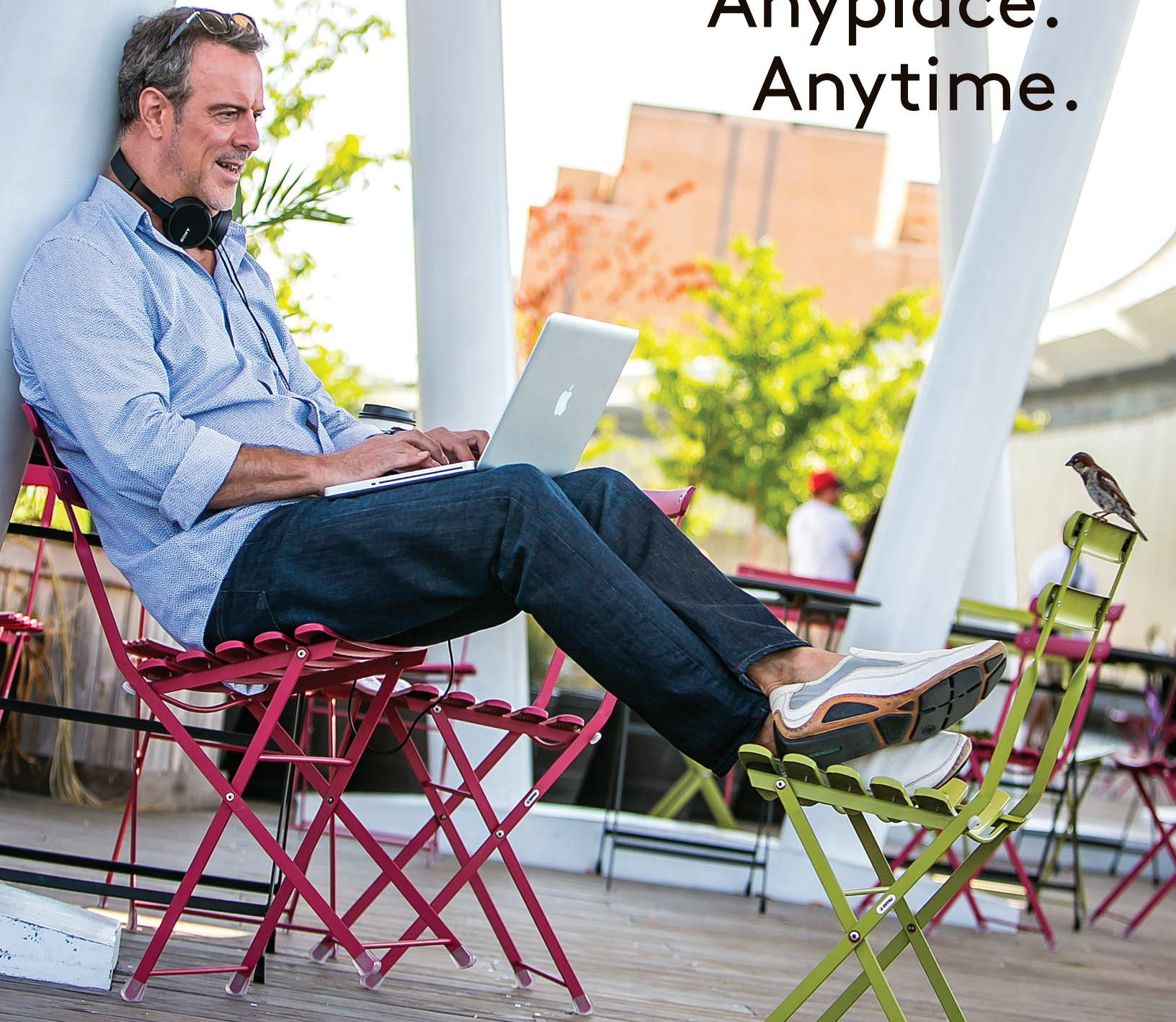
In another decade or so, he may have a new reason to visit. It's likely that Marisa Galbut's son, Aidan, will one day attend SHA, too—at age five, he already knows the words to Cornell's alma mater. "That's his grandfather's training," she said, and then laughed. ♥

BELOW
The Mondrian. Photo
by Cristina Sullivan



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CHS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



PRESERVING OUR HOTELIE HERITAGE

What does it mean to be a Hotelie for Life? Throughout 2016, Hotelies from across the globe shared their inspirational thoughts on this fundamental question, and we featured them on the Cornell Hotel Society's Facebook page. With the Cornell SC Johnson College of Business now established, many Hotelies have expressed concern about how to preserve our school's unique identity as part of a broader group so that future generations can celebrate what it means to be a Hotelie for Life.

In thinking about this, it is our distinguished School of Hotel Administration faculty who are responsible for the curriculum, which is key to making the Hotel School not only unique, but the best in class worldwide. The Cornell Hotel Society believes it is critical for alumni across the globe to interact with our amazing faculty and understand some of the important research they are undertaking, and to provide faculty members with industry perspective.

To this end, CHS has continued to increase funding to support local educational events and faculty road trips. In 2016, CHS helped fund visits from over a dozen faculty members to CHS events around the world.

This would not be possible without the support of our members. Membership dues provide the funds needed to achieve the Society's goals. By funding scholarships, student activities, and faculty travel, we are supporting the next generation of hospitality leaders and lifelong learning. So please pay your dues and take advantage of networking and educational events hosted by local chapters. In 2016, our 53 chapters hosted numerous events across the globe, raising upwards of \$225,000 toward student scholarships.

On campus, CHS is preparing a welcome basket for Cornell's new president, Martha Pollack. Thanks to donations from our alumni, the basket will reflect our Hotelie heritage and contain several hotel loyalty club premium memberships, as well as an assortment of wines and other specialty items.

There are many ways as alumni for you to show your support of the school and maintain the Hotelie heritage.

- You can attend a CHS event and bid on an item at a scholarship auction.
- You can visit SHA, be a guest lecturer in a classroom, and participate in a coffee-chat session with students.
- You can hire a student for a summer internship.
- You can donate money to a dedicated SHA scholarship fund—and take advantage of the matching funds made available via the recently announced \$150 million gift from Fisk Johnson and SC Johnson.

I am privileged to work with a team of passionate Hotelies to help further the goals of CHS globally. Together with first vice president **Bill Minnock '79**, second vice president **Dexter Wood '87**, treasurer **Susan Wood '87**, secretary **Carmel D'Arienzo '88**, past president **Robert Mandelbaum '81**, and our extraordinarily dedicated regional and chapter leaders, I look forward to continuing to strengthen the world's most engaging alumni network, upholding our Hotelie heritage.

Our efforts are supported by the staff of the SHA Office of Development, Alumni Engagement, and Outreach. Assisting us are **Meg Hardie Keilbach '88 (CALS)**, **Julie Pizzuti, MPS '06 (CALS)**, **Nickie Fredenburg**, and **Agata Okulicz-Kozaryn**. We are also fortunate to work with **Cheryl Stanley '00**, who is the liaison with the CHS collegiate chapter, led by **Caroline Shone '18**, and with CHS Foundation chairwoman **Jeanne Sander '66**.

I would also like to express our gratitude to Dean Kate Walsh, who has been focused on building bridges with SHA alumni through frequent, factual, and straightforward communications. We look forward to working closely with Dean Walsh again this year.

2017 is looking to be a robust year with many exciting events. The 92nd Hotel Ezra Cornell, Face the Future, Preserve the Past, took place in March. The Asia-Pacific regional meeting is scheduled for May 18–21 in Macau, and the annual meeting of the Europe, Middle East, and Africa chapters will be held in London June 15–18. For a full calendar of CHS events, please visit <https://sha.cornell.edu/alumni/connect/events>, and continue to do so as you travel throughout the year. Our chapters are always happy to welcome visitors! I encourage you to attend as many CHS events as possible during 2017!

Please stay in touch with us on Facebook and Twitter. We'll be streaming to you live from the CHS general membership meeting during the HX Hotel Experience (formerly known as the New York hotel show) in November. Now more than ever, CHS is where you belong! We are all Hotelies for Life!

Yours in service,

CHERYL BOYER '87

CHAPTER EVENTS



CHS PACIFIC REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The 22nd-annual CHS Pacific Regional Conference was held at Jeju, an island off the coast of South Korea, during the third week of May 2016.

Under the leadership of **Leo Moon '04**, president of the Korea Chapter, the members did a remarkable job organizing this four-day event. The chapter's board members, along with dedicated volunteers from Aiu Hotels and Resorts, prepared many exciting activities. These included offering exceptional local cuisine and visiting some of the most entertaining museums in Korea, such as the O'Sulloc Tea Museum and the Play K-Pop simulation museum, as well as a spectacular fireworks show. The event raised a record-breaking \$65,000 for the CHS Asia Pacific Scholarship Fund.



1 Attendees enjoy a beautiful poolside setting in the Hyatt's Cliff Garden for their Friday evening feast.

2 Violet Jiang '16 and Jee Hye Jang '14 jump on a seesaw at Korea House in a traditional game called *neol tui ghi*.

3 Fireworks over the Hyatt Regency cap a full and fantastic first day in Jeju.





4 A happy crowd of CHS members and friends gathers at Korea House on Friday, May 20 for outdoor games and activities following a morning of meetings and presentations at the Hyatt Regency Jeju.

5 The group prepares to cast off for a Saturday afternoon excursion tour.

6 Participants experience a hologram concert at Play K-Pop, a "digital theme park" at Jeju Jungmun Resort.



7 Dianna Kim '11, Jenny (Ga-In) Lee '13, and Gina (Yoon Jee) Hong '13 serve themselves Korean beef tartare at Friday's Jeju black pork roast and local seafood feast.

8 Assembled at Saturday's gala dinner are, in front, **Stephanie (Sujeong) Choi '10**, **Leo (Yoonwhe) Moon '04** and his daughter, **Sung Ho Paik '15**, and **Richard Lee, MMH '08**, and, in back, **Youngduk Choi, MMH '06**, **Jinny Suh '10**, **Gina (Yoon Jee) Hong '13**, **Jihee Jun '12**, **Shine Sun '02**, **Jee Hye Jang '14**, **William Sanghee Oh, MMH '98**, and **Sang Min Lee '94**.



9 Colton Haney '17, Bill Minnock '79, MBA '83, Susan Wood '87, Meg Keilbach '88 (CALS), Susan Devine '85, Rebecca Lee '02, and Howard Ho '05 w/ing the pathos from Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody."

10 Jenny (Ga-In) Lee '13, Gina (Yoon Jee) Hong '13, and Jiha Jung, MMH '14 kick off Friday's karaoke party with some Korean pop.



ARIZONA

The Arizona Chapter held its annual summer dinner at Café Zuzu in the Hotel Valley Ho in Scottsdale on Aug. 27. Chef Wiley created a terrific menu for the group, and everyone had a wonderful evening.

Geoff Gray '08, general manager of the Royal Palms Resort and Spa in Phoenix, invited the chapter to join him there for their annual holiday brunch in December. The group greatly enjoyed the food, the company, and the al fresco dining.



1 Arizona: Patricia Choquette, **Brent Choquette '98**, and Rob Maysey, JD '99 (standing) and **Kris Kaminski '05**, Laura Tanzer, **Julie Allen, MMH '10**, and **Donnelly Nariss Maysey '97** (seated) enjoy the Arizona Chapter's summer dinner at Café Zuzu.

2 Arizona: Arizona Hotelies and friends **Rex Griswold '75**, **Julie Zagars '94**, Mary Ellen Griswold, **Raj Chandnani '95**, **Mary Brierley-Peterman '78**, **Geoff Gray '08**, **Julie Allen, MMH '10**, **Donnelly Nariss Maysey '97**, **Keith Underwood '79**, **Bruce Sandground '84**, **Rodo Sofranac**, **Diana Love '63 (A&S)**, **Chuck Love '62**, and **Michael Jerome '74** get together at the Royal Palms Resort and Spa in Phoenix.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

"How to Open Your Restaurant" was the subject of CHS NorCal's successful panel discussion on Sept. 1. Forty-five people gathered at the St. Regis in San Francisco for a reception and to hear from panelists **Charles Billilies '06**, founder and CEO of Souvla; **Roberta Economidis**, partner in law at Georgopoulos and Economidis; **Jeff Newman, CIA '09, SHA '10**, senior culinary manager at the Culinary Edge; and **Jen Pelka**, founder and principal of Magnum PR. **Alison Arth '09**, author of *How to Open a Restaurant* and founder of Sale and Roe, moderated the discussion. Proceeds will help fund scholarships for future Hotelies.

The chapter's annual holiday party at the Palace Hotel was fun, filling, and fulfilling, with over \$2,000 raised to support tuition needs of future Bay Area Hotelies. The chapter thanks everyone who donated time and gifts to the evening, including **Jon Kimball '84**, **Neil Patel**, and the rest of the staff at the Palace; **Toni Knorr, MPS '01** at the St. Regis Hotel San Francisco; Master Sommelier **Catherine Fallis '83** at Planet Grape, for donating her time and unforgettable sabering experience; **Matthew Stevens** and the staff at the Bay Club; **Charles Billilies '06** at Souvla, Cuisinett French Comfort Food, and Locanda Positano restaurants; **Louis Kimball '84** at Pluto's Restaurant; **Brendan Finley** at Wente Vineyard; **Chip Pyron** and **Garrett Hintze** at Young's Market; **Stacy Scholiast** at Yiftee; **Ray Manning '07** at Wayfare Tavern; **Lanny James** at J. Hilburn Clothing; **Natalie Paraiso** at Lagunitas Brewing; **John Hardesty '95** at Hundred Acre Wine Group; **Maria Cleveland** at Espresso Supply; **Whitney Cherko '09** at Hall Wines; **Kristie Carlquist** at the Sports Gallery; and **Agata Okulicz-Kozaryn**, **Nickie Fredenburg**, **Giuseppe Pezzotti '84, MMH '96**, and the rest of the group at Cornell University.



3 Northern California: Attendees of the Northern California Chapter's Sept. 1 panel event enjoy good food, drink, and conversation at the St. Regis in San Francisco.

4 Central America: CHS Central America's board met last May at the Hotel Balmoral in San José, Costa Rica to prepare the business plan for the year. From left are **Hans Pfister '95**, **Alexa Quiros '11**, **Juliana Zuñiga '03**, **Giovanni Graziano '11**, and **Jesús Castro '79**.

CHICAGO

On a sunny August afternoon, over 35 SHA students and alumni turned out for burgers, bratwurst, beers, and fun and games at the home of **Steve '90 and Elleke '91 Haggerty**, hosts of the Chicago Chapter's ninth-annual alumni and student barbecue. Area Hotelies celebrated the end of the season and sent their returning students back to Ithaca with pride.



5 Chicago: Alumni, family, and friends gathered by the pool at the home of **Steve '90 and Elleke '91 Haggerty** on August 14 for the Chicago Chapter's ninth-annual barbecue.



DUBAI

The second-annual Dubai Lodging Outlook seminar took place at the Fairmont Palm Resort and Hotel on Sept. 29 with 132 in attendance. Athanasios Tsetsonis, director of regional sector research for Emirates NBD, began the program with a preview of the bank's 2017 economic forecast. STR followed with an overview of the 2016 Dubai hospitality market and a 2017 forecast presented by Philip Wooller, area director; Naureen Ahmed, director of marketing, research, and analysis; and Sarah Duignan, director of client relationships. Event chairman **Tarek Daouk '01** then interviewed Samer Sarraf, founding partner and fund manager of Amwal Capital Partners, in a discussion of the impact of the current and future economic environment on the hospitality industry in Dubai and the region.



FINLAND, RUSSIA, AND THE BALTICS

The Finland, Russia, and the Baltics chapter continues to be very active. The group met on Aug. 30 for a presentation from NYU marketing professor **Jukka Laitamäki, MS '89, PhD '90** on the future of the hotel industry. Satu Oksanen hosted the meeting at the Hotel Haven. The next day, **Norman Rafelson '71** hosted the group aboard the *Silver Whisper* for lunch and an extensive tour. In November, the chapter met at Dennis Pizzeria for an interesting presentation from the owner of that restaurant chain, Sebastian Bjorksten.

1 Finland, Russia, and the Baltics:

The Finland-Russia-Baltics Chapter was hosted by Ville Relander in his packed Helsinki restaurant, Holiday, on June 2, 2016. From left: **Esko Paalasmaa '76**, **Jere Talonen, IMHI '97**, **Martti Palonperä '77, MPS '94**, Ville Relander, **Deiv Saluts kij '71**, **Karl von Ramm, MMH '10**, **Mikael Swanljung, MPS '81**, and **Juha Mähönen, GMP '05**. Missing from the picture is **Veikko Vuoristo '76**.

2 Finland, Russia, and the Baltics:

Norman Rafelson '71 hosted members and guests on his ship, the *Silver Whisper*, for a lunch meeting and a tour on Aug. 31. Shown, from left, are **Martti Palonperä '77, MPS '94**, Sam-Erik Ruthman, **Jukka Räisänen**, **Kaj Takolander**, **Jere Talonen, IMHI '97**, **Kent Nadbornik '69**, **Norman Rafelson**, **Deiv Saluts kij '71**, **Juha Mähönen, GMP '05**, and **Esko Paalasmaa '76**.



SOUTH FLORIDA

The South Florida Chapter hosted a lodging outlook breakfast and panel discussion at the newly opened EAST Miami on Nov. 4. Topics discussed included managing external forces (including the Zika virus), global affairs and currencies, and mergers and acquisitions. HFF sponsored the event.

The panel was moderated by Suzanne Amaducci-Adams, a partner at Bilzin Sumberg. Panelists were Wendy Kallergis, president of the Greater Miami and the Beaches Hotel Association; Michael Rock, vice president of asset management at Host Hotels and Resorts; **Michael Tang '06**, a manager in the hospitality and leisure practice at PwC; **Rogério Basso, MMH '00**, chief investment officer at Key International; and Jeff Lehman, managing director of the Betsy Hotel.

On Dec. 10, **Lee '69** and **Mary Pillsbury** hosted a beautiful holiday party for the chapter in their Fort Lauderdale home. Over 60 alumni and their families attended, as did Meg Keilbach '88 (CALS), SHA associate dean of alumni affairs and development. The event took place during the annual Winterfest Boat Parade, with Pitbull as the grand marshal, and guests had a front-row seat to a parade of over 100 boats festooned with holiday lights and decorations.



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FRANCE

The Cornell Hotel Society and the Cornell Club of France teamed up for a congenial visit with Pamela Moulton, associate professor of finance at the Hotel School, on Dec. 6. **Zied Sanhaji '10**, owner of the Hotel Amastan Paris, hosted the group.

On Jan. 11, the chapter held an intimate get-together around great cocktails and amazing tapas at the Hotel Bristol Paris. General manager Luca Allegri hosted the gathering, which included friends from IMHI and the Cornell Club.



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6 France: Cornell alumni and friends gathered at the Hotel Amastan Paris to meet associate professor Pamela Moulton on Dec. 6. Seated at the bar, from left, are Alexandra Sabatier, Platon Koptilov, MBA '01, Pam Moulton, and **Philippe Gendraud, MPS '76**. Behind them are Erwan Castain, Riikka Moreau, Ariane Rolande Chang '08 (A&S), Curtis Bartosik '89 (A&S), and Lauren Jimerson '07 (A&S). Not shown is **Monika Moser, PDP '16**.

1 Georgia: Dean Soumitra Dutta met with Atlanta Hotelies for breakfast at the Egg Harbor Café in September. Shown from left are Toby Goldsmith '86 (HumEc), Joy Chamandy, **Larry Hall '81**, Rachel Blankenship, Dean Dutta, **Tianhang Deng '16**, **Drew Wallace '12**, **Sally Shan '14**, **Allen Weiss '01**, **Ben Gatchell '11**, and **Robert Mandelbaum '81**. Present but not shown is **Dusty Profumo '73**.

2 Georgia: CHS Georgia members gathered last May at Ponce City Market in Atlanta for a fun event hosted by **David Smith '81**. Shown here are, in front, **Kate Adie '13**, Jacob Darr, and **Liz Longstreet '08** and, in back, John Robertson, **Harryette Kim '12**, Tobias Smith, and **Ben Gatchell '11**.



GEORGIA

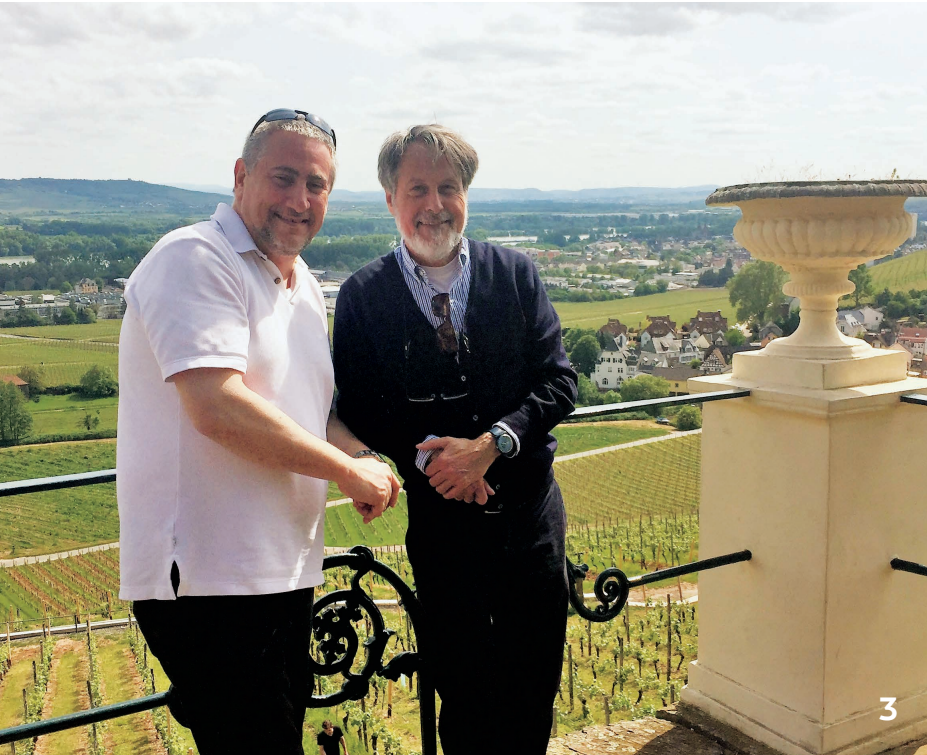
The Georgia Chapter held several social events in the past year, beginning with a gathering at Atlanta's Ponce City Market in May. In August, they held their traditional pizza party at the Mellow Mushroom in Brookhaven to welcome the newest Georgia Hotelie, **Nickolas Cavagnaro '20**, and his parents. Nickolas is the second Hotelie in his family; his sister **Giovanna** is a member of the Class of 2017.

In September, Dean Soumitra Dutta visited Atlanta and got together with area alumni for breakfast at the Egg Harbor Café. And in early November, approximately 35 members and their guests enjoyed a reception and tour of the newly opened AC Hotel in Buckhead, courtesy of hosts **Steven Nicholas '92**, **Adi Bhoopathy '99**, and **Dan Konzelmann '11** of Noble Investment Group.

The major event of the year is the Atlanta Lodging Outlook, which was held for the eighteenth time in September. This year's seminar was held at the InterContinental Hotel in Buckhead with 323 area hotel industry professionals in attendance. **Brian Ettelman '87** hosted the event as the hotel's director of catering. Proceeds from the event help support the chapter's scholarship fund.

The event was moderated by Alex Susskind, SHA associate professor of food and beverage management, who facilitated a discussion of the changing role of food and beverage within hotels. On the panel were **John Meadow '02**, founder and president of LDV Hospitality; **Peter Karpinski '99**, co-founder and COO of Sage Restaurant Group; Jason Racimo, manager of enterprise hotels at Averro; Gretchen Hazel, director of food and beverage programs for InterContinental Hotels Group; and Mark Maynard-Parisi '90 (CALS), co-founder and managing director of Porchlight for Union Square Hospitality.

Following that discussion, Tom Cunningham, SVP and chief economist for the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Mark Vaughan, EVP and chief sales officer for the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau, and **Mark Woodworth '77**, **MPS '78**, senior managing director of CBRE's PKF Hospitality Research, presented their industry outlook for the year.



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GERMANY

Central region members of the Germany Chapter enjoyed an interesting and fun get-together at the Hilton City Frankfurt last June. The guest of honor was Neil Tarallo, SHA senior lecturer in entrepreneurship, who talked about the entrepreneurial mindset. The 21 participants then enjoyed a nice dinner accompanied by Banfi wines and fine conversation. **Mario Kiefer, PDP '74** organized this memorable event.

The Grand Hotel Hessischer Hof in Frankfurt was the setting for the chapter's annual meeting in late October. The weekend began with Friday night dinner and drinks hosted by Puneet Chhatwal, CEO of Steigenberger Hotels, at the Steigenberger Frankfurter Hof. Saturday's program began with a conversation between chapter president **Michael Toedt, PDP '12** and Puneet Chhatwal. This was followed by presentations from **Wilhelm Weber, PDP '16** of Swiss Hospitality Solutions, Alexander Birk of Best Western, and Kay Constanze Strobl of Christie and Company. After an interactive networking lunch, the 24 participants toured the up-and-coming Bahnhofsviertel (train station quarter), a real eye-opener. The meeting concluded with dinner at Holbein's, one of "the" restaurants in Frankfurt.

Chapter members got together again in November in the new lobby of the Hotel Adlon Kempinski. After an informative tour, they enjoyed a wonderful dinner at the hotel's Sra Bua Bar.



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3 Germany: SHA senior lecturer Neil Tarallo and **Mario Kiefer, PDP '74** enjoy a beautiful June day near Frankfurt.

4 Germany: Germany Chapter members and guests **Goetz Martius '77, Therese Christerson, PDP '16, Maja Schneider, Alexander Diecke, and Gabriele Maessen** in the newly renovated lobby of Berlin's Hotel Adlon Kempinski.

5 Hawaii: CHS Hawaii board members **Jennifer Tom '00, Sean Tamon '11, Collin Hoo '12, Melialani James '00, and Mari Kam Aipa '11** got together at the Surfjack Hotel and Swim Club last June to plan their next event.



1 **Korea:** Dean Soumitra Dutta stopped in Seoul on July 19 for a breakfast meeting with members of the Korea Chapter. With him, in front, are **Sooyoung Kim, MPS '94**, **Sun Pai, MPS '95**, and **William Sanghee Oh, MMH '98** and, in back, **Leo Moon '04**, **Michell Lee, Shine Sun '02**, **Sunmee Choi, PhD '01**, **Kristine Roh, MPS '95**, **Jinny Suh '10**, and **Young Choi, MMH '06**.

LAS VEGAS

Twenty-one was the lucky number of members and guests who convened at Buddy V's inside the Venetian on Nov. 6 for a delicious brunch and an excellent wine, beer, and spirits seminar/tasting led by SHA lecturers Douglass Miller and **Cheryl Stanley '00**, who are encouraged to come back anytime. **Elizabeth Blau, MS '14** and **Tim Martin, MMH '11** helped coordinate the event.

2 **Las Vegas:** CHS Las Vegas members at the Venetian. Seated in front is Douglass Miller, one of the seminar's two faculty co-presenters. The other, **Cheryl Stanley '00**, is standing sixth from the right.



3 **Nashville:** The Cornell Hotel Society held a reception for all Hotelies in the Nashville area during the Hotel Data Conference in early September. **Quinn O'Sullivan '96** hosted the group for hors d'oeuvres and craft beer at his Irish pub, Harp and Fiddle. Among those enjoying the well attended party were **Evan Bailey '13**, **Jennifer Yacenda '06**, **Joe Tobin**, **Geraldine Guichardo '10**, and **Jennifer Wong '08**.



NEW ENGLAND

CHS New England hosted its sixth-annual Boston Lodging Pulse event in October. **Rachel Roginsky '79** moderated the lively panel discussion covering hotel transaction, supply-and-demand, investment, and development trends with **Jason Brown '05**, **Jordan Calaguire '06**, and **Dennis Meikleham '77**, active market leaders in the acquisition, brokerage, and financing spaces.

4 New England: The New England chapter's Boston Lodging Pulse provided a great opportunity to hear from industry leaders about the Boston hotel investment landscape.

NEW YORK CITY

The past year has been a busy one for the New York City Chapter, from their May 2016 meeting at the Baccarat Hotel to their October Big Apple Update at the Marriott Marquis. In between, the chapter hosted a Cornell Hospitality Icon and Innovator Awards after party on June 7 at Lavo, an Italian restaurant/nightclub and “the ultimate subterranean playground”; toured the brand-new Arlo Hudson Square Hotel (a comprehensive lifestyle hotel with microscale guest rooms, a full-service restaurant, rooftop bar and terrace, meeting rooms, library, and 24-hour market) in late August; and held a happy hour at the newly renovated Time Hotel on Sept. 22, hosted by **Kanvar Singh, GMP '06**, the hotel's general manager, who oversaw the comprehensive renovation.

This was the eighth year for the Big Apple Update, a very successful event that this year attracted more than 150 people. **Jared Kelso '02**, Cushman and Wakefield's senior managing director of global hospitality capital markets, moderated the panel discussion of key trends in the New York City lodging and tourism industry. Joining him as panelists were Christopher Heywood, senior vice president of global communications at NYC and Company; Steven Horowitz, market revenue leader for New York City Marriott Hotels; **François-Olivier Luigi, IMHI '92**, general manager of the Pierre Hotel; **Sabato Sagaria '97**, chief restaurant officer at Union Square Hospitality Group; and **Saxton Sharad '09**, president of Post Script Hospitality. The event was organized by **Cherie Bagwill, MPS '80**, senior vice president of Schrier Wirth Executive Search; **Nina Kleiman '86**, executive vice president of hotelAVE; and **Liz Schafer '84**, regional sales director for the Dorchester Collection. Schrier Wirth and hotelAVE sponsored the event. The chapter also thanks the team at the New York Marriott Marquis, particularly executive chef Fabian Ludwig, executive sous chef James Dangler, and executive pastry chef Steve Evetts.



5 New York City: Members and friends of CHS New York City toured the Arlo Hudson Square Hotel in August. Identified in this photo are **Bridgette Summers '11**, second from left; **Ian Quan '06**, center; and Elizabeth Weiner, P '11, at right.

6 New York City: Keith Kefgen '84 signs a copy of his book, *The Loneliness of Leadership*, for **Rich Levins '13** at the Baccarat Hotel during the May 2016 meeting of the New York City Chapter. The book, which discusses the challenges faced by today's executives in managing the effects of success, was co-authored by Keith's AETHOS Consulting Group colleague James Houran.



SAN DIEGO

Pacific Standard restaurant was the setting for CHS San Diego's annual holiday party on Dec. 1. The group welcomed **Scott Roby '99** as their new regional vice president and enjoyed the cuisine of executive chef Giselle Wellman, who competed last year on *Top Chef*.



1 San Diego: CHS San Diego kicked off the holiday season at Pacific Standard. Joining the group were (standing, from left) **Scott Roby '99**; **Kelly '09** and **Tyler '09** Mugford; **Nele Breitbart '05**; **Scott Legel '10**; **Siera Beal**; **Adrienne Jubbs, MMH '08**; **Doug Higgins '04**; **Houman Azemati '11 (Eng)**; **Hunter Oliver '02**; Chef **Giselle Wellman**; **Sarah Latimer '05**; **Aurora** and **Brian '06** Nudd; **Tracy** and **Brian, MMH '98** Rodgers; and (kneeling) **Dave Burke '92 (Eng)**, and **Ben Justus '08**.



2 Shanghai: CHS Shanghai president **Zoe Wu '92, MPS '93**, CHS president **Robert Mandelbaum '81**, and board member **Victor Tchou '06** met for breakfast in May 2016.

3 South Texas: South Texas Chapter members mingled with alumni from the University of Houston's Conrad Hilton College on Oct. 12 at the 8th Wonder Brewery in Houston. Shown here are **Amanda Belarmino '00**, **Dennis Reynolds, MPS '92, PhD '00** (dean of Hilton College), and **Morgan Naylor Bellows '08**.



WASHINGTON D.C.-BALTIMORE

A large crowd of alumni turned out on Jan. 8 to welcome more than a dozen SHA faculty and staff members, including Dean **Kate Walsh, MPS '90**, to Washington for their first industry immersion trip. The lively party took place at Radiator, the stylish bar-restaurant in the Kimpton Mason and Rook Hotel, which is owned by **Michael Barnello '87's** LaSalle Hotel Properties.



4 Washington, D.C.-Baltimore: LeRoy Howard II '13, Kelly McDarby '16, and Rachel Towne '14 catch up at the D.C.-Baltimore holiday party.

5 Washington, D.C.-Baltimore: SHA faculty and alumni mingle at the Washington, D.C.-Baltimore Chapter's holiday party, held Jan. 8 at Radiator in the Mason and Rook Hotel.

6 Washington, D.C.-Baltimore: Twenty members of the chapter got together last May to tour New Columbia Distillery, One Eight Distilling, and Union Market, all located in the District. Pictured here are **Talia Bronfin '14**, **Dave Huertas '15**, **Ian Banger '08**, **Matt Carrier '11**, unidentified, **Laura Knapp, MMH '97**, and **Kathleen Ayers '11**.



Remembrance

Theodore B. Hankoff '43
OCTOBER 10, 2016

Arnold Rosenstein '43
MAY 22, 2016

Paul T. Bailey '44
JUNE 3, 2016

Walter J. Hamilton '45
JULY 15, 2016

Jean Gallagher Welch '46
AUGUST 17, 2016

Charles F. De Menna '47
MARCH 8, 2016

Richard B. Carlson '48
MARCH 18, 2016

Wade H. Lowry '48
DECEMBER 10, 2016

Hamilton A. Miller '48
JULY 2, 2016

Charlotte L. Georgeson '49
SEPTEMBER 12, 2016

Fred E. Wayne '49
AUGUST 18, 2016

Frederick E. Shaner '50
JULY 31, 2016

Frank W. Storey '50
NOVEMBER 14, 2016

Ralph M. Gasparello '51
JULY 11, 2016

William H. Ross '53
FEBRUARY 29, 2016

Robert H. Sweeney '53
APRIL 22, 2016

Maurice "Bus" Ryan '54
SEPTEMBER 16, 2016

Johnson "Johns" Winship '54
JUNE 17, 2016

Clyde Davis, III '55
JULY 28, 2016

Richard W. Barger '56
JUNE 1, 2016

James S. Gray '59
FEBRUARY 3, 2016

Peter B. MacRoberts '59
APRIL 22, 2016

George M. Randall '59
DECEMBER 16, 2014

Ezekiel "Ziggy" Hacohen '63
JANUARY 28, 2017

James J. Hill, Jr. '63
OCTOBER 29, 2016

Richard H. Penner '69 (AAP),
MS '72 (AAP)
DECEMBER 11, 2016

Peter Biddle '69
NOVEMBER 17, 2016

Jack E. Stecher '74
NOVEMBER 17, 2015

William A. Malamut '79
SEPTEMBER 19, 2016

Peter W. Cooley '81
MAY 13, 2016

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