



# What's Cooking?

A Culinaire Corporate Communication

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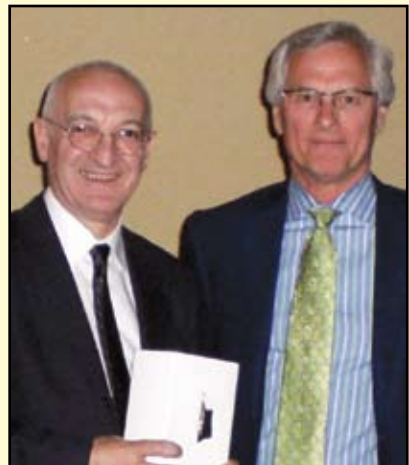
## And the Winner is ... Michel Lamy

**M**ichel Lamy, our food and beverage director for the Sheraton Suites Houston, received the 2007 President's Award for his outstanding results last year.

"Michel proved that driving quality and driving profit are not mutually exclusive," stated Culinaire president Bill Thompson. "Under his leadership, guest satisfaction with food service has remained consistently excellent and helped solidify placement of Sheraton Suites Houston in the highest tier of performers for the brand."

While maintaining high standards and high scores throughout the year, Michel was also able to generate revenue growth of over 11% to

*MICHEL LAMY, continued on 3*



Award winner Michel Lamy and Culinaire President Bill Thompson.



LEFT: The Phenomenal Derrick Spillman. MIDDLE: "Doing Everything With Style" is in Derrick's Sole. RIGHT: Marisa Ritter of Arlington Hall.

## Catey Awards for Awesome Results

**F**or only the second time in history, the prestigious Phenomenon award was given to Derrick Spillman, Director of Catering at Embassy Suites Dallas Market Center, for his extended and sustained success over a period of years. Last year, Derrick achieved 116% of his booking goal and 120% of his annual budget. In 2006, he achieved 142% of his budget and 140% of his booking goal. Since joining us in 2005, Derrick has increased catering revenues by 235%! "Doing Everything with Style" is Derrick's personal motto, and making money is very stylish indeed.

We have two Catey winners for the Catering Director of the Year. Molly Lieberknecht, Embassy Suites Kansas City Pla-

za, achieved an astounding 114% of her annual booking goal. A role model, a mother, a cheerleader, and a gem, Molly exemplifies all the traits required to be a successful catering goddess in our company. Everyone she works with admires her work ethic and her value as a team player.

Marisa Ritter, Arlington Hall, also exceeded her booking goal by 14%, and clobbered her budget by over 10% as well.

*CATEY AWARDS, continued on 3*



Stacy Raith, Molly Lieberknecht, and Scott Thompson.

# Team Award Goes to Embassy Suites Charlotte

The proactive crew at Embassy Suites Charlotte pulled down the Team Award for 2007 for their all around financial prowess, guest satisfaction scores, and well, just because we like them.

Actually, overall revenue was up, prime cost was down (that's a good thing), Omaha SteakHouse flourished, and life was good in the Queen City. At the net income line, they missed budget by a whisker but jammed a fifteen percent increase over prior year. After celebrating, Team Charlotte noticed a steep increase in the price of Tanqueray due to a sudden supply/demand imbalance.



The Revved Up and Maxed Out Charlotte Team.

## Someone's in the Kitchen with Dinner — and it's Chef Phil

Our Culinary Award for 2007 returned for a second time to the much deserving hands of Chef Phillippe Gravel. Chef Phil developed recipes, specifications, and presentations for all items on the new menu. After the initial rollout at Omaha SteakHouse Charlotte, Phil reworked the recipes and presentations using customer feedback to finalize the Omaha menu.

Chef Phil invited all Omaha SteakHouse chefs to Charlotte so they could become familiar with the new look and preparations. He then joined the traveling Omaha team, which hit the road all summer long to convert menus, wine lists, and pagans.

Even with his absence from the property, Chef Phil saved labor costs while watching revenues rise. His relentless focus on cost controls has contributed greatly to making Embassy Suites Charlotte more profitable every year since he joined us.



Noel Murphy and Chef Phillippe Gravel.

## Who's New at Culinaire?

Culinaire welcomes the following new members to our management team and we wish them great success in their new positions.

- Kyle Adams, Director of Catering, Embassy Suites Raleigh
- Frederick Berk, Restaurant Manager, Embassy Suites Nashville Vanderbilt
- Patricia Cannon, Director of Sales and Catering, Nicola's Ristorante Italiano
- Philip Cappell, F&B Controller, Embassy Suites Kingston Plantation
- Elijah Coe, Executive Chef, Belo Mansion
- Michael Cox, Vice President Restaurant Group, Corporate
- Jimmy Cox, Executive Chef, Embassy Suites Phoenix
- Jim Deja, Executive Chef, Embassy Suites Boca Raton
- Carlos Duarte, Food & Beverage Director, Embassy Suites Miami
- Brian Ferrell, Director of Business Development, Corporate
- Dawn Finley, Director of Sales & Catering, Belo Mansion (Promoted)
- Giselle Fuentes, Catering Manager, Embassy Suites San Antonio
- Jennifer Harris, Catering Manager, Embassy Suites Plaza (Prodigal Daughter Returns)
- Kent Hembree, Restaurant Manager, Nicola's Ristorante Italiano
- Ronda Hennessy, Restaurant Manager, Embassy Suites Orlando North
- Damien Hinck, Sous Chef, Embassy Suites Plaza
- Michele Jofre, Director of Catering, Embassy Suites Miami
- Rusty Johnson, Restaurant Manager, Embassy Suites Miami
- Cherretha Joseph, Catering Manager, Embassy Suites DC
- Scott Madrid, Operations Manager, Fort Worth Zoo
- Stephan Mayer, Restaurant Manager, Embassy Suites Charlotte
- Samantha McBride, Catering Manager, Picnic People
- Jason McCauley, F&B Director, Embassy Suites Austin Townlake (Promoted)
- Deramus Meffett, Banquet Manager, Embassy Suites Kingston Plantation
- Peter Morales, Executive Chef, Embassy Suites Miami
- Linda Pilot, Catering Sales Manager, Embassy Suites Miami
- John Plitt, Director of Catering, Embassy Suites San Antonio
- William Regan, Operations Manager, Meyerson Symphony Center
- Brooke Roberson, Executive Chef, Sheraton Suites
- Harold Schreiner, F&B Director, Embassy Suites Jacksonville
- Stephanie Tobben, Catering Manager, Food Glorious Food
- Nova Torres, Catering Manager, Arlington Convention Center
- John Windorfer, Executive Chef, Embassy Suites Nashville Vanderbilt

## Be True to the Red, White, and Blue

America has two new citizens to be proud of and both of them work for Culinaire. Michel Lamy has been the F&B Director at the Sheraton Suites Hotel for several years, and has been working diligently towards achieving his citizenship. His dream finally came true in February. Maksus Patoni, executive sous chef at the Belo Mansion, was also recently inducted as an American citizen. We are so proud of them both!



Newly-minted American Max Patoni.



Michel Lamy Says "Let Them Eat Cake."

### MICHEL LAMY, continued from front page

the year before. He ratcheted down food and payroll costs, and held the line on direct and administrative expenses. Bottom line results were 10 % over budget and a whopping 27% over prior year. And that, my friends, is the way to win a Rolex.

## Boca Raton's Angela Flerilien Earns Employee of the Year Honors

Angela Flerilien, Banquet Captain, was named the "Employee of the Year" at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Boca Raton, Florida.

This prestigious award was presented to Angela by the hotel General Manager, Tony Franzone; Human Resources Director, Laura Aramal; and Culinaire's Director of Catering, Susan Bennett.

Angela is a wonderful example of devotion, loyalty, and reliability to our clients, guests, and fellow associates. She has been with Culinaire for nearly two years and displays a consistent and positive attitude which truly motivates



Hotel GM Tony Franzone, Susan Bennett, Angela Flerilien, and Laura Aramal.

her team. She has an enormous sense of customer care and is always attentive and responsive to everyone's needs.

"She is loved," stated Susan Bennett in her nomination of Angela for this award.

### CATEY AWARDS, continued from front page

Marisa is Miss Dallas Weddings. Her relentless attention to detail, reliable poise, and ravenous hunger for knowing the next hot trend keeps Arlington Hall at the forefront for social events in this city.

John Biamonte, Catering Sales Manager at Embassy Suites Boca Raton, was recognized with the Horizon Award. John booked 119% of his booking goal, which contributed greatly to his team's achievement of 102% of an aggressive annual budget.

The Horizon Award heralds upcoming leaders in our company, and

with John's demonstrated financial results, teamwork, and customer service skills, he is ready to be one of our leaders today, or in 32 months.



John Biamonte and Tom Valentin.

# DiAnni and Dark Are Managers of the Quarter

**L**ee-Ann DiAnni, our F&B Director at Embassy Suites Hotel at Orlando North, was awarded the Manager of the Quarter for the fourth quarter of 2007. She redefines the phrase “exceeds expectations” with every breath she takes.

Besides managing her own business, she is the Area F&B Director for our Embassy Suites Orlando South property. As the Good Witch of the North she led her team through a complete renovation of the Omaha SteakHouse, and then helped with the transformation of Hurricanes into the Fish Eye Grill concept in the South.

Lee-Ann has developed a strong team that exacts excellent controls under her direction. Her financial results are unparalleled and she maintains low employee turnover. This leadership, coupled with her sense of ownership, has enabled her to take part in many company initiatives outside her normal purview.

Sherri Dark, Recruiter Extraordinaire in the corporate office, was announced as the Manager of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2008. Everyone who works with Sherri knows that her energy level and ex-



**ABOVE:** Recruiter Extraordinaire Sherri Dark and Kimberly Larsen. **LEFT:** Good Witch of the North, Lee-Ann DiAnni flanked by Tom Valentin (left) and Eric Chenowith.

uberance match her thousand watt smile. As always in the hospitality industry, management turnover stays consistently high. With the candidate flow ebbing to a trickle, Sherri’s quick thinking and outside-the-box mentality produced several new and creative ideas to recruit qualified candidates.

As other companies have had great difficulty in hiring good, qualified candidates, Culinaire has been very lucky in attracting successful managers to join our team due to Sherri’s aggressive recruiting methods and consistent follow through. And it doesn’t hurt a bit that she’s gorgeous.



**Kermit Cake from Frosted Art Bakery.**

## It Ain't Easy Being Green, Except in Nashville

**T**he Embassy Suites Hotel Nashville Airport was recognized in April as one of nine hotels in the Hilton family of brands to achieve 100% Green status.

Embassy Suites Nashville received the Go For The Green Award for their excellence in Operational Effectiveness, Revenue Maximization, Customer Loyalty and Service, Cleanliness Awareness, and

Cohesive Teamwork which is Hilton Hotel’s award-winning Performance Measurement System, and is one of the most coveted awards a hotel can receive.

The entire hotel took part in the festivities which included sharing a whimsical “Kermit” cake which was designed by Bronwen Weber of Frosted Art Bakery & Studio in Dallas and driven to Nashville by ace cake consultant Heather Williams.



**Hotel Associates Dine On Green Eggs and Ham.**



**Seasoned Professionals Celebrate Salt Scores.**

## Hook Up at the Fisheye Grill

We recently launched our newest restaurant concept, Fisheye Grill, inside the Embassy Suites Hotel Orlando South.

Serving lunch, dinner and in-suite dining, our 'smart casual' restaurant offers a Florida-inspired menu featuring specials from both land and sea.

Fisheye Grill also features a beautiful bar area with outdoor patio that is open until midnight (or later, as needed).

Some of the most popular menu items include the Conch Fritters with Creole Key Lime Sauce, the Blackened Grouper Salad, and the Min "O's"—tiny Hamburger, Crab Cake, and Fried Fish Sliders.



The Newly Launched Fisheye Grill in Orlando.



Salmon Mousse Spoons.

## NACE Makes Nice in Nashville

Embassy Suites Hotel Nashville Airport recently hosted the local NACE (National Association of Catering Executives) chapter. Saskia Markowski, Director of Catering reports: "Tom Lamon made soup shooters, Peach Melon and Gazpacho, and we also had miniature martini glasses filled with Ceviche, Crab, and Shrimp and we had Salmon Mousse spoons.

Tom made everything himself and I was very proud of him! The martini glasses were rimmed with Old Bay and displayed on a beautiful mirror. Everybody was very impressed.

We also had a wine tasting from Arrington Wines, the rep came with three different wines from this local winery which is owned by Kix from Brooks and Dunn, if you know who that is. Additionally, a guest speaker talked about Tennessee's food traditions. This was the first time we hosted NACE in our hotel.

For the tables we borrowed linens and we also borrowed plate chargers which really added a lot of sparkle to the table. The centerpieces are ours. The lunch was a big hit and I think it really put our ballroom and catering on display."



NACE Luncheon Place Setting.



Trendy Soup Shots.

# Crocodile Cafe Opens

Looking for a taste of the wild? Come chomp on a Croc Daddy burrito or a Gator Bowl at the Fort Worth Zoo! With Culinaire's management, the Fort Worth Zoo has opened a brand new food court called the Crocodile Cafe.

The 6,500-square-foot food court features tasty options from eateries such as the Zoo's traditional Burger King Restaurant, the Rio Mexican Grille, and the Ice Cream Shop. The Crocodile Cafe also includes a convenient Grab and Go case for Zoo guests on-the-go that features fresh salads and wraps, fruit, juice and other healthy options.

The Rio Mexican Grille is the Zoo's private Tex-Mex restaurant offering the Croc Daddy burrito—a large steak, chicken, pulled pork or vegetarian burrito wrapped in a tortilla. The Croc Mama burrito offers the same in a smaller size. Other menu options include the Gator Bowl, a Croc Daddy without the tortilla. Guests can order any of these items topped with grilled vegetables and ... what else ... crocamole!



Our wildly enthusiastic Fort Worth Zoo Crew.

## Service, Teamwork, Attitude, and Responsibility Make STARS out of You

Culinaire's STAR program recognizes Associates who display the highest degrees of *Service, Teamwork, Attitude, and Responsibility*. Associates who have completed two full years of service with Culinaire may be nominated by their management team this coming November.



the Executive Committee and announced in the Fall/Winter newsletter.

So each day that you report to work, remember to put on your smile, treat each guest warmly and cheerfully, assist your team in any way possible, and show respect for your co-workers.

The star quality inside you is begging to shine bright for everyone!

The nominations will be reviewed by

## All Smiles Over Breakfast

Rolf Geist, Contributing Editor to the Embassy Suites Hotels Company Managed Newsletter, Salt Shaker II, recently wrote an article praising Phyllis Broxton. Here is an excerpt from the article:

"Phyllis's job is to monitor the food on the buffet at breakfast and interact with each of the customers. And interact she has ... in the six months she has been on the team, the hotel has received 14 individual letters complimenting Phyllis, and the scores for Myrtle Beach's breakfast have gone through the roof. In the last six months, the hotel is exceeding brand average in breakfast by 4% and won the highest comp breakfast score award for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter in the East Coast Region."



Phyllis Broxton

## Driving Down the Risk

Safety on the job at Culinaire is of foremost importance. Last year 93 Associates were paid over \$4,900 in cash for successfully completing their Safety Bingo games due to no general liability or workers' compensation incidents. Associates at the following properties have facilitated a safe work environment for their co-workers as well as our guests by maintaining necessary systems to prevent accidents, incidents, and injuries. Congratulations to Frosted Art, Embassy Suites Austin Central, Embassy Suites St. Louis, and Embassy Suites Nashville Airport for creating a safe and fun working environment!

## Be a Hero and Score a Zero

We have implemented a new food safety program for this year. Cash prizes will be awarded to the F&B Director and the Executive Chef at each property that receives zero critical deficiencies during their Steritech audit. So far this year, big winners have included Embassy Suites Orlando South and Frosted Art Bakery & Studio.



This is the employee newsletter of Culinaire. If you would like to submit an idea for an article or photographs of newsworthy events, please contact Editor Kimberly Larsen at (214) 754-1894.

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