

Learning from Leaders: Cornell Hotel School launches fall semester with Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series

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For the 45th consecutive year, prominent hospitality leaders will share their wisdom and experience with students in the Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series at the Cornell Hotel School this fall. Each Friday entrepreneurs and executives will talk about their careers, giving students direct insight into what it takes to thrive in the hospitality industry.

'Our speaker series is a great way for students to see how the theory they learn in the classroom can be put to successful use in the field,' says Michael Johnson, dean of the Cornell Hotel School. 'Many of our students have even been inspired to make career choices based on what they have heard from one of our speakers.'

Lectures take place at 1:25 p.m. in the Alice Statler Auditorium in the school's Beck Center. Open seating is available in the balcony of the auditorium.

This year's speaker roster features leaders across varied segments of the hospitality industry. Here is brief background on each speaker:

Michael D. Johnson, Dean and E.M. Statler Professor, Cornell University School of Hotel Administration (August 24). Dean Johnson, in his second year at the helm, leads the school's commitment to excel in teaching, research and industry service. He joined Cornell after a distinguished 24-year teaching career at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan.

Eric Resnick, Co-Founder and Managing Director, KSL Capital Partners, LLC (August 31). Mr. Resnick heads this private equity fund, which has more than \$1 billion invested in travel and leisure businesses. He has vast experience in the ownership and active management of hotel, resort, and leisure properties.

Robert J. McCarthy, President, North American Lodging Operations & Global Brand Management, Marriott International (September 7). Mr. McCarthy oversees nearly 2,500 hotel properties and 100,000 associates. He started his 30-year career with Marriott as a waiter while attending college.

Pablo Azcarraga '85, COO and Member of the Board, Grupo Posadas (September 14). Mr. Azcarraga leads the largest hotel operator in Mexico and Latin America, with 92 hotels that together serve more than one million guests each year. He has been a leader in the growth and design of new hotels in Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Chile.

Hobart C. Buppert III '95, CEO, BAWLS Guarana/Hobarama LLC, and Christina Staalstrom '95, COO, BAWLS Guarana/Hobarama LLC (September 21). Mr. Buppert conceived Brazilian American Wild Life Society (BAWLS) Guarana drinks in the Hotel School kitchen during his final semester at Cornell. Now bottled in four locations in Mexico and the U.S., this high-caffeine soft drink is sold in supermarkets, convenience stores, COMP USA stores, and gaming venues in more than 30 states.

John P. Rijos '75, Co-President, Brookdale Senior Living, Inc. (September 28) Mr. Rijos has helped to build Brookdale Living Communities, Inc. into one of the nation's leading providers of senior and assisted living services. He has over 30 years of experience in the acquisition, development, and operations of hotels and resorts.

Dayssi Olarte de Kanavos '85, Principal & Director of Marketing, Flag Luxury Properties, and Paul Kanavos, Founding Partner, Chairman & CEO, Flag Luxury Properties (October 12). Founded in 1996 by Mr. Kanavos, Flag Luxury Properties current holdings include The Ritz-Carlton South Beach and the St. Regis Resort, Temenos Anguilla. Ms. Olarte de Kanavos manages marketing and philanthropic efforts, which benefit the Anguilla Children's Fund, the Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, and the Wildlife Conservation Society, among others.

David B. Pollin '90, President, The Buccini/Pollin Group, Inc., and Gregory J. Miller '84- Co-CEO & President, PM Hospitality Strategies, Inc. (October 19). Mr. Pollin leads The Buccini/Pollin Group, a real estate acquisition, development, and management company. Founded in 1993, the company has assets exceeding \$2.2 billion. Mr. Miller heads the hotel management affiliate of The Buccini/Pollin Group, which manages 12 hotels and over 2,000 rooms under the Hilton, Marriott, and Comfort Inn & Suites franchises.

Mel Zuckerman, Founder & Chairman, and Jerry Cohen, Vice Chairman & CEO, Canyon Ranch (October 26). Since 1979, Canyon Ranch has set the standard for health resorts around the world. Mr. Zuckerman was recently named one of America's 25 Most Fascinating Entrepreneurs by Inc Magazine. The company is a 10-time winner of the Condé Nast Traveler Best Destination Spa Award.

Grace Leo '77, President, G.L.A. Hotels (November 2). Founded in 1985, GLA Hotels is a leader in the luxury hotel market with over 33 properties in 10 countries. Properties include Discovery at Marigot Bay in St. Lucia, the Ananda-Himalaya in India, the Lancaster in Paris, and the Evason Phuket in Thailand.

Catalina D. Ganis '85, Executive Vice President & Managing Director, Elliot Executive Source Ltd., and Senior Vice President, Elliot Associates, Inc., Divisions of the Elliot Group, LLC (November 9). Ms. Ganis is a longstanding senior executive for this leading provider of executive research and consulting services to companies in the hospitality, food service, retail, and manufacturing industries.

Chris Canlis, Owner, Mark Canlis '97, Managing Owner, and Brian Canlis '01, Director, Department of Adventure, Canlis Restaurant (November 16). In 1950 Peter Canlis opened a restaurant that soon became one of the preeminent dining establishments in Seattle. Fifty years later the business is run by the next generations of family restaurateurs, and was recently named one of America's Top 50 Restaurants by Gourmet magazine.

Donald W. Strang III '80, President & CEO, Strang Corporation, David E. Strang '82, Member of the Board, Strang Corporation, President & CEO, Chilgo LLC, Peter W. Strang '84, Executive Vice President, Strang Corporation (November 30). The Strang Corporation was founded in 1942 with the opening of a Howard Johnson Restaurant on Lake Erie. Now, with brothers Donald, David, and Peter at the helm, the Cleveland-based company produces over \$50 million in managed sales across hotels and restaurants in six states. The Strang Corporation's sister companies - American Bread Company and JC American - are among the fastest-growing franchisees of Panera Bread and Johnny Carinos.

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