

AH&LA Hosts 2008 Summer Summit in Oklahoma City, June 8-12

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Hospitality Leaders Convene to Develop Industry Initiatives and Recognize Lodging Achievement

The American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA) will host four fast-paced days of business, professional development, and networking at its third annual Summer Summit, June 8-12, 2008. Held at The Skirvin Hilton in Oklahoma City, OK, highlights of this year's comprehensive events program include new and timely presentations on green initiatives, economic analysis and foresight from industry insiders at the Lodging Industry Summit, specialized certification and educational seminars, and AH&LA's annual Stars of the Industry Awards ceremony.

Summer Summit's green panel representatives from leading certification programs Green Seal, Green Key, the U.S. Green Building Council, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR program will address challenges and opportunities for sustainable hotel development and operations, offering implementation strategies for new and existing properties.

Lodging business analysts offer attendees their collective perspectives and forecasts for the U.S. hospitality community during the annual Lodging Industry Summit. Presenters Bjorn Hanson, Ph.D., principal, Pricewaterhouse Coopers LLP, Patrick Ford, president, Lodging Econometrics, Jan Freitag, vice president, global development, Smith Travel Research, and Douglas Shifflet, president & CEO, D.K. Shifflet & Associates Ltd., will analyze current industry performance and provide insight on future developments, offering key sector information to help hoteliers plan their development strategies.

AH&LA's Educational Institute (EI) will offer a convenient one-day Certified Hotel Administrator (CHA) certification program, providing hoteliers the opportunity to review and test for this comprehensive designation. To take advantage of this special one-day program, participants must apply via the EI Website by May 12.

The Stars of the Industry Awards honor outstanding hotel employees, managers, and general managers across the nation. Hotels themselves are also recognized for innovative and successful programs in community service, guest relations, special events, diversity, and eco-friendly practices. In addition, EI honors educators who excel in advancing student interest in the field.

Many of AH&LA's more than 30 specialized committees, comprised of top-level hoteliers, management companies, and other representatives from the diverse lodging industry, host meetings critical in strategically planning industry-wide programs and initiatives. Rounding out the Summit agenda, the conference kicks off at Toby Keith's 'I Love This Bar & Grill,' a series of dinners benefiting the AH&LA Educational Foundation, and a lively Mix-n-Bowl bowling event to benefit the HotelPAC, the industry's political action committee.

'As the hotel industry continues to grow and diversify, staying informed, connected, and prepared is essential, and AH&LA is helping our members do just that,' said the association president/CEO Joseph A. McInerney, CHA. 'The events at this year's Summit allow our members and board of directors to build personal and professional relationships cultivating knowledge and generating business within the community.'

An updated event agenda and registration information is available on the AH&LA Events Calendar. Guestrooms at The Skirvin Hilton are being held with rates beginning at \$179 for bookings made before May 23. Contact Katie Hais in the AH&LA conventions & events department, at (202) 289-3114 or khais@ahla.com with any questions.

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