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Contact: Lorraine Ortiz-Valcárcel, [lortiz@caribbeanhotels.org](mailto:lortiz@caribbeanhotels.org)  
Melissa A. Rivera, [mrivera@caribbeanhotels.org](mailto:mrivera@caribbeanhotels.org)  
Tel 787 725 9139/Fax 787 725 9108

**AMERICAN EXPRESS AND CARIBBEAN HOTEL ASSOCIATION  
PAY TRIBUTE TO EXCELLENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN HOSPITALITY WORKFORCE**  
*Dominican Republic and USVI nab top service awards*

MIAMI, Florida (June 17, 2007) – American Express and the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) recognized two outstanding individuals that embody the best of Caribbean hospitality service and performance. The Opening Ceremony of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Conference (CHTC) presented by CHA and sponsored by American Express, was the stage to honor the winners of the 2007 “Caribbean Employee of the Year” and “Caribbean Supervisor of the Year” awards. Dianelys Rodríguez, VP Destination Business Development, Establishment Services International, American Express, commended the individuality of Cristina Guillén, from the Dominican Republic, the 2007 Caribbean Supervisor of the Year; and Dorcas Alexander, from the United States Virgin Islands, 2007 Caribbean Employee of the Year, both of whom share a passion for quality while channeling their commitment in distinctive ways. “Safety and security emerged as a common thread among many of the nominees, including the two outstanding individuals that ultimately were voted as the 2007 Supervisor and Employee visor of the Year,” said Rodríguez. CHTC 2007 is being held in Miami, Florida through June 19, 2007.

**Cristina Guillén** – Among the group of nominees for the supervisor of the year award, she one stood out as a bit of a renaissance woman, with interests ranging from the environment to human resources management. As Quality Leader for the Sunscape Casa del Mar hotel, in La Romana, Dominican Republic, Cristina was directly responsible for two milestones achieved this past year. First, the Sunscape Casa Del Mar received the CRISTAL certificate attesting the resort’s implementation of standards based on the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) food safety management principles set by the United States Department of Agriculture; the resort received this certification with a superior score of 90. In addition, the hotel has achieved Green Globe Benchmarked status, in recognition of its efforts to deliver continuous environmental improvements and to secure a sustainable future for the business.

On the professional development front, Cristina has just received a scholarship to pursue a degree in Environmental Law.

**Dorcas Alexander** – The winner of the 2007 Caribbean Employee of the Year Award is also concerned with safety. As a member of the Food and Beverage Division of The Westin St. John Resort in the United States Virgin Islands, she shines in one of the most difficult areas of the “heart of the house” in any hotel – and not the most glamorous either – stewarding. As a member of the Safety Committee – not just for her department but for all departments in the Food and Beverage Division – she takes her job as auditor very seriously. To her employer’s pride, she is relentless when it comes to safety and security issues - or potential issues - and is known not to give up until they have been duly addressed. To her co-workers, she is recognized and admired as a doer, whether the task at hand falls or not under her purview.

On a more personal level, Dorcas, a repeat winner of excellence awards at work, most recently donated her cash award of \$1,000 to charities, a selfless act which constitutes just one act of kindness in a lifelong tradition of service, sometimes at her own expense. Dorcas is an example for the entire Caribbean hospitality workforce – a professional through and through with a strong sense of community.

### **Criteria**

The “**Employee of the Year**” award recognizes an outstanding hotel employee who exemplifies above-average technical competence and hospitality skills. To be considered for “Employee of the Year,” an individual must be nominated by the hotel manager of the resort in which the nominee is employed. The hotel manager must complete the application form which includes: a report from the owner/general manager outlining the employee’s unique qualities; a report from the employee’s immediate manager; participation in community service; outside interests; previous recognition awards; three letters of recognition from guests, management or peers; community testimonials and photographs.

The “**Supervisor of the Year**” honors individuals who demonstrate exceptional leadership in their management abilities. Supervisor applications, which judge the worker on technical competence, hospitality and supervisory skills, are submitted by the manager of the property. Other criteria in the selection of “Supervisor of the Year” are: community activities; sporting activities; previous awards; owner/general manager’s report; supervisor’s report; letters of recognition from guests; management or peers; photos; community testimonials and educational qualifications.

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### **Note to the editor :**

Interviews with the winners, an American Express spokesperson and/or a CHA officer can be arranged by request.