



CARIBBEAN
HOTEL & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

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Caribbean hotelier Simón Suárez

SIMON SUAREZ NAMED CARIBBEAN HOTELIER OF THE YEAR

MIAMI (June 2, 2017) - Respected Caribbean hotelier Simón Suárez was named the 2017 Caribbean Hotelier of the Year by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA).

Suárez, Vice President of Institutional Relations and Projects of Grupo Puntacana in the Dominican Republic, received the coveted honor at the opening of the third annual Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF), hosted by CHTA, in Miami on Friday night.

Accepting the region's premier hospitality award, Suárez, a former CHTA president, recognized his colleagues, friends and family, while reminding delegates in attendance to "embrace unity, diversity and ingenuity" in the Caribbean.

"Simón Suárez is a pioneer in Caribbean hospitality. He has played and continues to play a major role in the development and growth of Caribbean tourism, and we are indebted to him for all that he has done

for his native Dominican Republic and the Caribbean," said Frank Comito, Director General and CEO of the CHTA.

Suárez began his professional career in the Dominican Republic tourism industry at the Central Bank of the Dominican Republic in 1974. Since these early beginnings, he has served as the President of Occidental Hotels' local operating company, Occidental Hoteles Dominicana, S. A.; Executive Vice President of Coral Hotels & Resorts; President of the Dominican Republic's Tourism Promotion Council; Chief Development Representative - Central America and Caribbean for Hilton Hotels Corporation; and President of the Dominican Republic's Hotel and Tourism Association (ASONAHORES).

Also in winners' row on Friday was Obrian Forde of Jus' Sail in St. Lucia who was named Caribbean Employee of the Year, while Marcia Rhoden-Morris of The Jamaica Pegasus was recognized as Caribbean Supervisor of the Year.

Lisa Hamilton of the United States Virgin Islands Hotel and Tourism Association captured the Caribbean Association Executive of the Year Award, while Edward "Eddie" Weitz was named Allied Member of the Year.

CHIEF also presented awards in the areas of Operations, Sales and Marketing, Social Responsibility and Environmental Sustainability.

In Operations, the St. Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association was the winner with special mention going to Elegant Hotels in Barbados.

For the best practice in Sales and Marketing, the winner was the Aruba Tourism Authority with The Crane and Elegant Hotels in Barbados placing second and third respectively.

The recipient of the CHIEF Award for Social Responsibility was Hyatt Regency Trinidad. Second place went to the St. Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association, while the third place winner was Bucuti & Tara Resorts in Aruba.

Bucuti & Tara Resorts in Aruba captured the CHIEF Award for Environmental Sustainability. Runners-up honors were jointly shared by Ocean Terrace Inn in St. Kitts and Elegant Hotels in Barbados. Third place went to CuisinArt Golf Resort and Spa in Anguilla.

About CHIEF

Produced by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA), the Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF) is the premier educational forum for Caribbean hospitality and tourism professionals. CHIEF is where the hospitality industry assembles to connect, learn best practices, share ideas, brainstorm creative solutions to current challenges and build relationships. With three educational tracks covering a multitude of relevant topics, from the sharing economy to sustainability, and interactive roundtable and speed networking sessions, this event addresses issues affecting all businesses. The forum attracts hoteliers, vendors, government officials and industry experts focused on a stronger, profitable and more sustainable industry.

CHIEF is supported by host sponsors Interval International and JetBlue Vacations; platinum sponsors Cable and Wireless, CaribbeanWE, Mastercard and STR; and gold sponsors Adara, BCV Social, Choice Hotels, Delta Air Lines, Figment Design, HeBSDigital, La Bottega, Marketplace Excellence, Miles Partnership, OBMI, Oracle Hospitality, Rainmaker, Standard Textile, Société de l'Eau Aérienne Suisse (SEAS), SteadyVU, travAlliancemedial, TravelClick, Tropical Shipping, TSA Solutions, and Virgin Atlantic.

Media partners include Caribbean Journal and Travel2Latam, while beverage sponsors are Fiji Water, JUSTIN Winery, Landmark Vineyards and Red Stripe.

For additional information about CHIEF, visit www.chtachief.com or call +1 305 443-3040.

About the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is the Caribbean's leading association representing tourism interests for national hotel and tourism associations. For more than 50 years, CHTA has been the backbone of the Caribbean hospitality industry. Working together with 1,000 hotel and allied members and 32 National Hotel Associations, CHTA is shaping the Caribbean's future and helping members to grow their businesses. Whether navigating new worlds like social media, sustainability, legislative issues, emerging technologies, data and intelligence or looking for avenues and ideas to better market and manage businesses, CHTA is helping members on matters that matter most.

For further information, visit www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com.