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## **AAHOA Announces 2019 Award Winners**

ATLANTA, Ga., Aug. 13 – AAHOA honored excellence and achievement in hospitality on the final day of the 2020 Virtual Convention & Trade Show. The awards recognize AAHOA members for their achievements and contributions to the hospitality industry in 2019. The winners are:

The **Outstanding Woman Hotelier of the Year Award** recognized Komal Tina Patel, of Eugene, Ore., for her strong leadership, commitment to lodging excellence, and her significant contributions to the industry and to her community.

The **Outstanding Young Professional of the Year Award** is awarded to a young professional under the age of thirty. This year, both Nauman Panjwani, of Mooresville, NC, and Dhruvi Patel, of Eugene, Ore., were recognized for how they exemplify the spirit, dedication, and achievement of a professional hotelier

The **Outreach Award for Philanthropy** recognized Prakash Saraf, of Ellicott City, Md. for helping humanity through philanthropic and charitable activities, domestically or overseas.

The **Political Forum Award for Advocacy** recognized Vinay Patel, of Charlotte, NC, for his extensive involvement in helping advance AAHOA's mission and the interests of its members by participating in the legislative process through political involvement and government affairs.

AAHOA's women hoteliers recognized Female Director Eastern Division Lina Patel and Female Director Western Division Nimisha Patel with the **Award for Excellence in Leadership** for their leadership and efforts to pave the path for the next generation of women hoteliers. They also honored 2019-2020 AAHOA Chairwoman Jagruti Panwala with an award for her years of service to the association and for her visionary leadership and commitment to advance women in the hospitality industry.

The association recognized the following Regional Directors for their achievements on behalf of AAHOA members:

**Top Overall Performing Regions:**

Florida Region, Bharat Patel, CHO  
Central Midwest Region, Hitesh Patel  
South Pacific Region, Mike Riverside

**Top Overall Membership Growth for 2019:**

North Central Region, Bhavesh N. Patel

**Most AAHOA Human Trafficking Awareness Trainings in 2019:**

Georgia Region, Kapil Patel

**Top PAC Fundraising Regions for 2019:**

Florida Region, Bharat Patel, CHO

Central Midwest Region, Hitesh Patel

“Excellence is the hospitality industry’s foundation. The hoteliers recognized today made significant contributions to our industry and to their communities and are a prime example of what it means to go above and beyond in service to others,” said AAHOA Chairman Biran Patel.

“Congratulations to all of our award winners. Every year, we honor those in our association who set a high bar for distinction as hoteliers. I am confident that the example they set will serve as an inspiration to our entire industry,” said AAHOA President & CEO Cecil P. Staton.

AAHOA also recognized Brandon Jackson with the Team Member of the Year Award, an honor given to the AAHOA employee who goes above and beyond in service to the association and its members.

**About AAHOA:**

*AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world. The over 19,500 AAHOA members own almost one in every two hotels in the United States. With billions of dollars in property assets and hundreds of thousands of employees, AAHOA members are core economic contributors in virtually every community. AAHOA is a proud defender of free enterprise and the foremost current-day example of realizing the American dream.*

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