

Stars of the Industry Awards

Honoring Past Winners

Restaurateur of the Year

This award honors a restaurant owner or company that is highly regarded by fellow operators, employees, and the community. Nominees must be restaurant members in good standing with NCRLA and demonstrate excellence in business operations and community involvement. This award also considers the nominee's contributions to the industry's image and commitment to promoting and protecting the foodservice industry.

2024	Keith Rhodes <i>Catch</i>	2009	Mickey Ewell <i>Chapel Hill Restaurant Group</i>	1992	Michael W. Kelly <i>Kelly's Restaurant</i>
2023	Scott Crawford <i>Crawford Hospitality</i>	2008	Billy Sewell <i>Platinum Corral</i>	1991	Scott H. Richarson
2022	Giorgios Bakatsias <i>Giorgios Hospitality Group</i>	2007	Ken Conrad <i>Libby Hill Seafood</i>	1990	L. Dent Miller
2021	Charles Winston, Jr. <i>Winston's Grille</i>	2006	Tommy & Donna Haddock <i>Tri-Arc Bojangles</i>	1989	Earl B. Taylor Sr.
2020	Jeff Mickel <i>Whiskey Kitchen</i>	2005	Charles Ervin <i>Ham's</i>	1988	Charles F. Connor Jr.
2019	Lance Trenary <i>Golden Corral Corporation</i>	2004	Dennis & Nancy Quaintance <i>Quaintance Weaver</i>	1987	Thomas D. Mincher
2018	Clark Barlowe <i>Heirloom Restaurant</i>	2003	Dave Gronewoller <i>GC Partners</i>	1986	Karl Lack
2017	Gaurav Patel <i>Eschelon Experiences</i>	2002	Thomas Ruff <i>Biltmore Estate</i>	1985	James Maynard <i>Golden Corral</i>
2016	Marty Kotis <i>Kick Ass Concepts</i>	2001	Ted Fowler <i>Golden Corral</i>	1984	Charles Winston <i>Winston's Grille</i>
2015	Chris Foote <i>Longhorn Steakhouse</i>	2000	Nick & Mayo Boddie <i>Boddie-Noell</i>	1983	J.W. "Slug" Claiborne <i>Claiborne's BBQ</i>
2014	Lou & Joy Moshakos <i>LM Restaurants</i>	1999	Michael Olander <i>Apple Gold</i>	1982	John Dombalis <i>The Mecca</i>
2013	Greg Hatem <i>Empire Properties</i>	1998	Van Eure <i>The Angus Barn</i>	1981	Jack Laughery
2012	Steve Frabitore <i>Tupelo Honey</i>	1997	Frank Freeman	1980	Marshall Digh
2011	Dean Ogan <i>Rocky Top Hospitality</i>	1996	Cameron McRae <i>Bojangles</i>	1979	Ray Lackey
2010	Sara Foster <i>Foster's Market</i>	1995	R. Boys Morris	1978	B.C. Hedgpeth
		1994	Wayne M. Bunting	1977	Edward C. Thompson
		1993	Wayne F. Abele	1976	Keith J. Dunn



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Honoring Past Winners

Restaurant Manager of the Year

This award celebrates a management-level restaurant employee who exhibits outstanding service, commitment to excellence, and leadership in hospitality. Nominees must have worked at a member restaurant for at least one year. Multiple nominations are welcome.

2024	Troy Stauffer <i>Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club</i>	2014	Jane Wong <i>The Umstead Hotel & Spa</i>
2024	Jill Highsmith <i>Angus Barn</i>	2013	Roy Durham <i>Rocky Top Hospitality</i>
2023	Igor Gacina <i>Giorgios Hospitality Group</i>	2012	Chris Moutos <i>LM Restaurants</i>
2023	Ashley Greene <i>LM Restaurants</i>	2011	Kim Almond <i>Apple Gold</i>
2022	James Holcomb <i>Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club</i>		
2022	Jim McGovern <i>Angus Barn</i>		
2021	Terriann Biagi <i>The Raleigh Times</i>		
2020	Roger Carter <i>Winston's Grille</i>		
2019	Megan Bailey <i>Carolina Ale House</i>		
2019	Vinnie Delillo <i>Mama Ricotta's</i>		
2018	Robert Montanari <i>Taverna Agora Greek Kitchen</i>		
2017	Brenda Johnson <i>Carolina Ale House</i>		
2017	Guy Murphy <i>Top of the Hill</i>		
2016	William Castenada <i>Golden Corral Corporation</i>		
2015	Brian Rhue <i>Bluewater Waterfront Grill</i>		



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Honoring Past Winners

Restaurant Employee of the Year

This award recognizes a line-level restaurant employee who displays exceptional service and dedication to hospitality. Nominees should carry themselves with professionalism, exemplify leadership, and have been employed at an NCRLA member restaurant for at least one year. Multiple nominations are welcome.

- 2024** **Kathy Baize**
Biscuitville
- 2024** **Alexander Collazo**
Vidrio
- 2023** **Tiffany Oates**
Biscuitville
- 2023** **Matthew Barry**
Midwood Smokehouse
- 2022** **Sarah Cooper**
Burke Manor Inn & Pavilion
- 2022** **Seth Wilson**
Heirloom Restaurant
- 2022** **Glaziela Mendonca**
Hérons at The Umstead Hotel & Spa
- 2022** **Bonnie Davis**
Biscuitville
- 2021** **Mai Nguyen**
Sitti
- 2020** **Jeffrey Bryant**
Golden Corral
- 2019** **Philip Gomes**
Winston's Grille
- 2018** **Myles Scaglione**
Heirloom Restaurant
- 2017** **Sheri Costa**
Golden Corral
- 2016** **Mitzi Moreno**
Homewood Suites Charlotte-Ayrsley
- 2015** **Johnnie Blango**
42nd Street Oyster Bar, Big Ed's City Market



Stars of the Industry Awards

Honoring Past Winners

Lodging Operator of the Year

This award acknowledges a hotel owner or company admired by fellow operators, employees, and the community. Nominees must be lodging members in good standing with NCRLA and demonstrate operational excellence and community involvement. Nominees should also contribute to the lodging industry's image and show commitment to the hospitality sector. Eligible nominees include general managers, management company executives, and property owners.

2024	Russ Jones <i>LODEN Hospitality</i>	2010	Michael Martino <i>Sheraton Imperial Hotel</i>
2023	Gary Chabra <i>CMC Hotels</i>	2009	Russ Smith <i>Embassy Suites Raleigh Durham RTP</i>
2022	Ian Sauer <i>Summit Hospitality</i>	2008	Vinay Patel <i>SREE Hotels, LLC.</i>
2021	Tiffany Tucker <i>Canopy by Hilton Southpark</i>		
2020	Robert Dedman, Jr. <i>Pinehurst Resort</i>		
2019	Anthony Carey <i>The Siena Hotel</i>		
2018	John Beatty <i>The Dunhill Hotel</i>		
2017	Peter Grills <i>The Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge</i>		
2016	Jeremy Miller <i>Hilton Garden Inn Kitty Hawk Pier</i>		
2015	Randy Kolls <i>Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club</i>		
2014	Joel Griffin <i>Griffin-Stafford Hospitality</i>		
2014	Doug Stafford <i>Griffin-Stafford Hospitality</i>		
2013	Ron Morin <i>Omni Grove Park Inn</i>		
2012	Doyle Parrish <i>Summit Hospitality</i>		
2011	Jim Beley <i>The Umstead Hotel & Spa</i>		



Stars of the Industry Awards

Honoring Past Winners

Lodging Manager of the Year

This award recognizes a management-level hotel employee for exemplary service, leadership, and commitment to hospitality. Nominees must have been employed at a member hotel for at least one year. Multiple nominations are welcome.

2024	Diane Tighe <i>Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club</i>	2013	Megan Quesenberry <i>Ballantyne Hotel and Lodge</i>
2024	Xiomara Toldeo <i>Hampton Inn & Suites</i>	2012	Theresa Thorb <i>Sheraton Imperial Hotel & Convention Center</i>
2023	Jason Whitaker <i>Extended Stay America</i>	2011	Amy Petro <i>Summit Hospitality</i>
2023	Mike Masri <i>Embassy Suites by Hilton Charlotte Uptown</i>		
2022	Lee Stell <i>The Umstead Hotel & Spa</i>		
2022	Nicole Ebersole <i>Parks Hospitality Group</i>		
2021	Christina McCall <i>Pinehurst Resort</i>		
2020	Melissa Bach <i>Raleigh Marriott City Center</i>		
2019	Robert Foster <i>Biltmore Farms Hotels</i>		
2018	Kevin D'Amico <i>Renaissance Raleigh North Hills Hotel</i>		
2017	Dan McLaughlin <i>Hilton Durham</i>		
2017	David Press <i>Hyatt House Raleigh North Hills</i>		
2016	Michael Rayfield <i>Ballantyne Hotel and Lodge</i>		
2015	Kathryn Leonard <i>Hilton Garden Inn Charlotte/Ayrsley</i>		
2014	James McDermott <i>Summit Hospitality</i>		



Stars of the Industry Awards

Honoring Past Winners

Lodging Employee of the Year

This award recognizes a management-level hotel employee for exemplary service, leadership, and commitment to hospitality. Nominees must have been employed at a member hotel for at least one year. Multiple nominations are welcome.

- 2024 Porcha Overbey**
Pinehurst Resort
- 2024 Debra Thompson**
TownePlace Suites Wilmington
- 2023 Charles Prince**
TownePlace Suites
- 2023 Regina Triche**
Hampton Inn & Suites
- 2023 Faustina Tagoe**
The Umstead Hotel & Spa
- 2022 Zhongwhen Sui**
The Umstead Hotel & Spa
- 2022 Vera Cobbs**
Charlotte Marriott Southpark
- 2022 Carl Stuck**
DoubleTree by Hilton Downtown Asheville
- 2021 Marie Mosoti**
Omni Charlotte Hotel
- 2020 Kevin Cottet**
Beacon IMG
- 2019 Solida Richmond**
Burke Manor Inn & Pavilion
- 2018 Patrick Hawthorne**
The Umstead Hotel & Spa
- 2017 Tommy Turrentine**
Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club
- 2016 Alberta Travis**
Pinehurst Resort
- 2015 Carla Elliott**
Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club



Stars of the Industry Awards

Honoring Past Winners

Hospitality Supplier of the Year

This award is given to an individual or company in good standing with NCRLA who represents an allied member of the hospitality industry. Nominees should be highly respected by fellow operators, employees, and the community. They should demonstrate strong business ethics and contribute positively to the industry's image.

2024	Josh Cooke <i>Raise the Grade</i>	2011	Greg Weathford <i>Sysco Raleigh</i>	1988	Kimberly Wordsworth
2024	SpotOn <i>Aimee Guthinger</i>	2010	Mac Sullivan <i>Pate Dawson</i>	1987	William (Marty) Kotis
2023	Steve Troxler <i>NC Department of Agriculture</i>	2009	Randy Laster <i>Pepsi Bottling Ventures</i>		
2022	Andy Clark <i>US Foods</i>	2008	Judy Jarmon		
2021	Kevin Osterman <i>Employers</i>	2007	Lisa Haines		
2021	Wayne Hilston <i>Employers</i>	2006	Dan Harris <i>US Foods</i>		
2020	Stephanie Gaston Poley <i>Cranfill, Sumner, Hartzog, LLP.</i>	2006	Smokey Norris <i>US Foods</i>		
2019	Scott Meltzer <i>Ecolab</i>	2005	James L. Nicholas, Jr.		
2018	Angie Packer <i>Tryon Distributing</i>	2004	Charles H. Wright		
2017	Christina Clark <i>Shelton Vineyards</i>	2003	Gregory Patterson		
2016	Danny Dorsett <i>AlSCO</i>	2002	James Bean		
2015	Stephanie Shear <i>Pepsi Bottling Ventures</i>	2001	Tom Stroozas		
2014	Jeff Grun <i>Electrolux</i>	2000	Bartlett Winkler		
2013	Alan Hilton <i>S&D Coffe</i>	1999	G. Steve Nivens		
2012	Lee Wodham <i>Freshpoint</i>	1998	Robert J. Davis		
		1997	William G. Therien		
		1996	J. Michael Hill		
		1995	A. Norman Watson		
		1994	William Hyatt		
		1993	Richard Strickland		
		1992	Samuel Kennedy		
		1991	Robert Hinson		
		1990	Ann C. Marco		
		1989	David A. Stansfield <i>Pate Dawson</i>		



Stars of the Industry Awards

Honoring Past Winners

Griff & June Glover Award

This award celebrates an NCRLA member who has shown exceptional dedication to supporting NCRLA's mission. This award is named in honor of Griff and June Glover, longtime NCRLA members known for their commitment to service.

2024	Lou & Joy Moshakos	1994	T. Jerry Williams
2023	Dave Gronwoller	1993	Cameron W. McRae
2022	Vinay Patel	1992	Edward C. Thompson
2021	Steve Thanhauser	1991	Earl B. Taylor, Sr.
2020	Jim Beley	1990	Marshall Digh
2019	Michael Martino	1989	Mickey Ewell
2018	Scott Maitland	1988	Michael W. Kelly
2017	Lance Trenary	1987	Charles Winston
2016	Ed Tubel	1986	Frank Freeman
2015	R. Frank Gray	1985	Charles F. Connor, Jr.
2014	Robert Poitras	1984	W.W. Bill Laws
2013	Christina Larson		
2012	Jimmy Sizemore		
2011	Billy Sewell		
2010	Brad Hurley		
2009	G. Samuel Hobgood		
2008	Thomas Stroozas		
2007	Peter Cotter		
2006	Ted Rhodes		
2005	Tommy Haddock		
2004	Steve Yoxsimer		
2003	Tom Allen		
2002	John McLellan		
2001	Michael D. Olander		
2000	Ted Fowler		
1999	Ken Conrad		
1998	Wayne F. Abele		
1997	William L. Rogers		
1996	David Huskins		
1995	Van Eure		



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Honoring Past Winners

Ken Conrad Award for Service to the Community

This award is in honor of Ken Conrad and recognizes NCRLA members who have made a meaningful charitable impact in their communities.

- 2024** **Sera Cuni**
Root Cellar Cafe
- 2024** **Leonardo Williams**
Zweli's Ekhaya
- 2023** **Steve Thanhauser & Van Eure**
Angus Barn
- 2022** **Tim Goss**
Firehouse Subs
- 2021** **Fred & Doris Huebner**
F&D Huebner McDonald's
- 2020** **Jim Noble**
Noble Food & Pursuits
- 2019** **Buddy Bengel**
Bengel Hospitality
- 2019** **Dean Ogan**
Rocky Top Catering
- 2018** **Jason Smith**
18 Restaurant Group
- 2017** **Doris Huebner**
F&D Huebner McDonald's



Stars of the Industry Awards

Honoring Past Winners

NCRLA Lifetime Achievement Award

This award is bestowed upon a member who has achieved extraordinary success in the North Carolina hospitality industry, awarded as appropriate.

- 2024** **Jim Beley**
The Umstead Hotel & Spa
- 2024** **Cecilia Saleh**
Neomonde, Sassool
- 2024** **Fred & Doris Huebner**
F&D Huebner McDonald's
- 2023** **Lance Trenary**
Golden Corral
- 2022** **RB Fitch**
Ferrington House Inn & Restaurant
- 2020** **Maurice Jennings**
Biscuitville
- 2020** **Sam Saleh**
Neomonde
- 2018** **Barry Doyle**
Barry's Cafe
- 2017** **Christina Larson**
Darden Restaurants
- 2016** **Ken Conrad**
Libby Hill Seafood



Stars of the Industry Awards

Honoring Past Winners

Hospitality Champion Award

This award honors a state legislator who has made the most significant legislative progress for North Carolina's hospitality industry in the preceding legislative session.

2024	Sen. Bill Rabon
2024	Rep. Robert Reives
2023	Rep. John Bradford
2023	Sen. Phil Berger
2022	Speaker Tim Moore
2022	Rep. Jason Saine
2022	Sen. Paul Newton
2022	Sen. Kirk deViere
2021	Rep. Julia Howard
2021	Sen. Chuck Edwards
2020	Rep. Becky Carney
2020	Sen. Jerry Tillman
2019	Sen. Dan Blue
2019	Rep. Chuck McGrady
2018	Sen. Rick Gunn
2018	Rep. David Lewis
2017	Sen. Rick Gunn
2016	Rep. Jason Saine
2015	Sen. Harry Brown
2014	Sen. Tom Apodaca