



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Robert Agrusa
President/CEO
Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association
(407) 907-8082
Robert.Agrusa@CFHLA.org

**FORMER GOAA EXECUTIVE CAROLYN FENNEL TO RECEIVE
CFHLA'S HIGHEST HONOR**

Orlando, Fla (December 14, 2023) – The Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association (CFHLA) will be recognizing Carolyn Fennell, the former Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and Community Relations at the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA) for the past four decades, as the association's 2023 Charles Andrews Memorial Hospitality Award recipient.

The award will be presented at the CFHLA Hospitality Gala on Saturday, December 16th at the Renaissance Orlando at SeaWorld. Ms. Fennell will be the first woman to receive this recognition from CFHLA.

This award is named after the first CFHLA Board of Directors Chairperson, Charles Andrews, and it is presented annually. It is the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by CFHLA, and it recognizes their achievements and contributions to Central Florida's Hospitality Industry, as well as the community at large.

Ms. Fennell, who began her tenure at GOAA in 1980, retired on August 4, 2023. Back in 1980, the airport had only 13 airlines and welcomed just over 6 million passengers. Additionally, Miami was the only destination in Florida on the major airlines map. Ms. Fennell was integral in persuading the airlines to add Orlando to their maps and fast forward to June of 2023, the airport is now an international travel giant and has seen more than 54 million passengers traveling on 38 airlines.

Additionally, Ms. Fennell has also been present through several other milestones and growth periods, such as coordinating the synchronized landing of two Concorde jets in 1982 — a never-done-before feat — and the opening of the brand-new, \$2.8 billion south Terminal C in 2022. She has also worked tirelessly with the tourism community to help support and navigate the many challenges our community has faced including the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, multiple recessions, and the Covid-19 pandemic, which shut down most air travel temporarily in 2020.

As a passionate champion for the tourism and hospitality industry, Ms. Fennell understood the importance of creating a positive first impression and a memorable experience at the airport. Ms. Fennell also played a crucial role in creating a people-focused and culturally rich environment at the airport. Her efforts to showcase the local arts community and infuse the region's culture into the airport, not only contributed to the positive and unique traveler experience, but it also aligned with the broader goal of positioning Central Florida as a premier tourist destination in the country.

Moreover, Ms. Fennell has volunteered on several leadership and community boards throughout her professional career, including CFHLA's Board of Directors, Visit Orlando, the Orlando Museum of Art, the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, Valencia College Foundation and more.

Lastly, Ms. Fennell has been the recipient of numerous community and industry awards for her outstanding professional work including the Airport Council of North America's Ted Bushelman Legacy Award for Creativity and Excellence, the Florida Commission on the Status of Women Award for Outstanding Contributions and Services to the Community, the Florida Public Relations Association Public Relations Professional of the Year, the Orlando Business Journal's Businesswoman of the Year and inducted into the Central Florida Hospitality Hall of Fame from the Rosen College of Hospitality Management at the University of Central Florida.

On behalf of the Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association, we are honored to present Carolyn Fennel with the 2023 Charles Andrews Memorial Hospitality Award. We sincerely thank her for all of her efforts as the airport's voice for more than 43 years.

The Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association's mission is to represent the Central Florida Hospitality Industry, by setting the standard of excellence through advocacy, collaboration, education, recognition, and service. As the largest regional lodging association in the United States, CFHLA represents approximately 80 percent of the more than 129,500 hotel rooms in Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties, and more than 500 "supplier" organizations that do business with the hospitality and tourism industries.

For more information on the Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association, please visit www.cfhla.org.

#