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VRLTA Announces Winners of 2022 Ordinary Awards, Celebrating the Best of the Hospitality and Tourism Industry

RICHMOND, VA – The Virginia Restaurant Lodging and Travel Association (VRLTA) celebrated the best of the hospitality and tourism industry during the 2022 Ordinary Awards presentation and dinner at the Hilton Richmond Short Pump on Monday, October 3. Winners for the seventh annual event were announced to an audience of 320 industry peers and leaders from across the state.

Awards are given each year in recognition of Virginia’s restaurants, hotels, lodging establishments, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs), attractions and more. Nominations are open to members of the Association and non-members, and nominees are judged by a group of VRLTA members and industry professionals. The Lifetime Achievement and Legislator Awards are determined by the VRLTA staff and Board.

The following 23 individuals and businesses were selected as winners from nearly 200 nominees:

Charlie Buser Award Travel Attraction Employee of the Year

Candy Banks - Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Jim Ricketts Award DMO/CVB Employee of the Year

Brande Rumpf - Virginia Beach CVB

Travel Attraction of the Year

The Museum of Isle of Wight

Hotelier of the Year

Lars Friedriszik - Richmond Marriott Downtown

Hotel Employee of the Year

Caroline Mann - Norfolk Waterside Marriott

Hotel of the Year

Massanutten Resort

Jim Wordsworth Award Restaurateur of the Year

Tom McCormack - Saucy's BBQ Hopewell

Restaurant Employee of the Year

Vicente Mosquera - Isle of Capri

Restaurant of the Year

Wren at The Watermark Hotel

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Bartender of the Year

Austin Robbins - Berry Hill Resort & Conference Center

Brewery of the Year

James River Brewery

Chef of the Year

Dane Sewlall - Metropolitan Hospitality Group

Distillery of the Year

George Washington's Distillery

Winery of the Year

Keswick Vineyards

Rising Pineapple Award Outstanding Hospitality and Tourism Student

Andrew Barr - James Madison University

Supplier of the Year

Béné Tipping

Golden Pineapple Lifetime Achievement Award

Jack Berry, Richmond Region Tourism

Legislator of the Year

Delegate Kathy J. Byron - Member of the Virginia House of Delegates

President's Award

Chuck Sass, Gold Key PHR

Hospitality Hero - Business or Organization

Hilton Richmond Downtown - HRI Properties

Hospitality Hero - Individual

Dianna Starkey - Virginia Arts Festival

Hotel Manager of the Year

Peter Saless - Stay Over Suites, Hopewell

Restaurant Manager of the Year

Amber Kostka - The Stockpot Virginia Beach

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“On behalf of the Association, staff, and board, we applaud the efforts of our 2022 nominees, finalists, and winners for the exemplary work they have done and will continue to do,” said Eric Terry, President of VRLTA.

The event was sponsored by Visit Fairfax, Performance Food Service, Healthy Hospitality, US Foods, Sysco, E. & J. Gallo Winery, Virginia Lottery, Keany Produce and Classic Party Rentals of Virginia.

For more information on the Ordinary Awards, visit www.ordinaryawards.com.

*Why would the awards be called...**Ordinary**? Chinn’s Ordinary, considered “the oldest original inn in America” (Baltimore Sun), was built around 1728 in Chinn’s Crossroads, now Middleburg, Virginia. The building was uniquely situated to serve as an inn and tavern catering to travelers. Since 1937, it has operated as the Red Fox Inn & Tavern. This history of Chinn’s Ordinary speaks to all facets of VRLTA’s membership—restaurants, lodging, and travel, while the term “ordinary” is just the opposite of the hospitality and travel industry. The true goal of these awards is to honor those in an extraordinary industry, individuals and companies, that are truly **Extraordinary**.*

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Awards event photos available upon request. Contact Brittany Wojdyla, VP of Membership & Business Development, at brittany@vrlta.org or 804-288-3065.