

MEDIA RELEASE

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TOURISM INDUSTRY STARS RECOGNISED AT ACCOMMODATION AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

They are the backbone of any great hotel and last night the best staff at some of the top accommodation venues in NSW were acknowledged at the 2017 Tourism Accommodation Australia NSW Awards for Excellence.

A crowd of almost 700 political, industry and business leaders – including NSW Tourism and Major Events Minister Adam Marshall – were on hand at the Hyatt Regency Sydney to see the accommodation industry’s hard-working stars recognised.

The “people categories” form a vital part of the annual awards, which this year saw more than 300 nominations received from 80 NSW hotels across 34 categories.

One of the most hotly contested was *Hotel Industry Rising Star*, which had almost 30 nominees. The joint rising stars for 2017 were **Matthew Scarf** of the **Holiday Inn Potts Point Sydney** and **Owen Roberts Love** from **Sheraton on the Park** (**Fintan Tuttle** of **Four Seasons** was highly commended).

Another major award of the night - *Chef of the Year* - also had two joint winners; **Anna Polyviou** of the **Shangri-La Sydney** and **Dany Karam** of **The Star Sydney**, while the prestigious title of *Concierge of the Year* went to **Peter Brown** of the **Hyatt Regency Sydney** (**James Nobleza** of the **PARKROYAL Darling Harbour Sydney** was highly commended).

It was also a good night for the **Hilton Sydney** with **Jonathan Bowmaker** winning *Food and Beverage Employee of the Year* and **Dylan Schiffers** a joint winner with **Maverick Loh** of the **Primus Hotel Sydney** for *Employee Excellence in Service*. **Libby Jaeger** of the **Intercontinental Sydney** was highly commended in the *Food and Beverage Employee of the Year* category.

NSW Minister for Tourism and Major Events Adam Marshall said the award-winning staff and businesses were the strength of the tourism industry.

“The NSW Government is committed to growing the State’s visitor economy and as a world-class tourist destination, we must offer visitors the highest standard of products and services,” Mr Marshall said.

“I am pleased that our accommodation sector continues to strive for the highest standards of excellence.”

TAA NSW chair Peter Tudehope praised all nominees and winners on the work they do daily to ensure their guests have an experience to remember – no matter the size or location of the venue.

“It is the quality of staff which makes a real difference to the quality of visitor stays,” he said.

“I would like to congratulate all nominees and winners on the work you do each and every day to provide a premium experience to all guests in our hotels – you really do make a difference.”

Other TAA (NSW) Award winners in the “people” category include:

- *Marketing Employee of the Year*: Marie-Cecile Heritage **Sofitel Sydney Darling Harbour**.
(Bradley Curtain **Meriton Suites** highly commended).
- *Sales Employee of the Year*: Sian Armour **Holiday Inn Sydney Airport**.
(Marianne Lunoe **Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel Sydney** highly commended).
- *Conference and Events Employee of the Year*: Erin Mules **PARKROYAL Parramatta**.
(Megan Parker **Intercontinental Double Bay** highly commended).
- *Finance Manager of the Year*: Janny Zhang, **The Westin Sydney**
- *Engineer of the Year*: Andy Goonesekera **Intercontinental Sydney** & Anura Yapa (**Shangri-La Hotel, Sydney**) (joint winners).
(Wayne Adamson of **Rydges Campbelltown** highly commended).
- *Housekeeper of the Year*: Yulli Kennedy **Ovolo Woolloomooloo**.
(Connie Faelnar of **Meriton Suites Church Street Parramatta** highly commended).
- *IT Manager of the Year*: Oscar Aung, **Park Hyatt Sydney**
- *Revenue/Yield Manager of the Year*: Anne-Marie Chapple **Holiday Inn Sydney Airport**.
(Hajni Andras **Four Seasons Hotel** highly commended).
- *Human Resources Employee of the Year*: Laurence Luxford **Meriton Suites**.
(Riley Mackenzie **PARKROYAL Darling Harbour Sydney** – highly commended).
- *Rooms Division Employee of the Year*: Ben Li **Sheraton on the Park**.
(Johanna Siemer **Sydney Harbour Marriott at Circular Quay** highly commended).

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