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December 2020 | todayshotelier.com

Publication of AAHOA

THE TRIPLE THREAT
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Mili Shah has dedicated her life to serving others – especially hoteliers



Q&A with
ANTHONY MELCHIORRI

We talk COVID-19 and the best advice he's heard across the industry

THE PROS SPEAK UP

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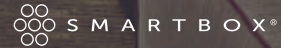
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5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT AAHOA THIS MONTH

1

Our 2020 Regionals Series Is Nearly a Wrap! We have our final two events taking place this month on Wednesday, December 2, and Thursday, December 3. It's your last chance to attend one of these can't-miss events. Register for free at AAHOA.com.

2

Invest in Yourself This Holiday Season. While it may be the season of giving, AAHOA is encouraging you to invest in YOU! Take time this month to renew your membership, earn a certificate, watch and share from our library of 190+ webcasts, and register for AAHOACON21. You can find everything on AAHOA.com.

3

January is National Human Trafficking Awareness Month. Prepare for 2021 by making a pledge for you and your staff to complete Human Trafficking Awareness Training (HTAT) in 2020. Just 30 minutes of online training can help you and your staff identify the signs of human trafficking – helping to save lives and protect your business. Pledge to complete this training before the year is over. Learn more at AAHOA.com/HTAT.

4

'Tis the Season of Giving. There's no better time to contribute to Kennesaw State University's Michael Leven and Lee Dushoff AAHOA Scholarship for Compassionate Leadership. The scholarship provides financial assistance to exceptional students in the hospitality program. Your donation is fully tax deductible, so please consider giving today. To learn more, visit community.kennesaw.edu/AAHOA.

5

We're Ready for 2021. After an unprecedented year, we're now in the last month of what has been one of the most challenging times in our industry's history. We're grateful for our members, Industry Partners, and countless others who have helped AAHOA Members in 2020. Stay tuned for all the highlights and things we accomplished together this year.

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BIRAN PATEL
AAHOA CHAIRMAN (2020-2021)

Taking on tomorrow's challenges together

“AAHOA has evolved to address this fickle reality and shall continue to advocate and protect the businesses, employees, and local communities of our members. With changing conditions and new politicians, our pursuits do not waiver. We have always been, and always will be, a resource, advocate, and community for every hotel owner.”

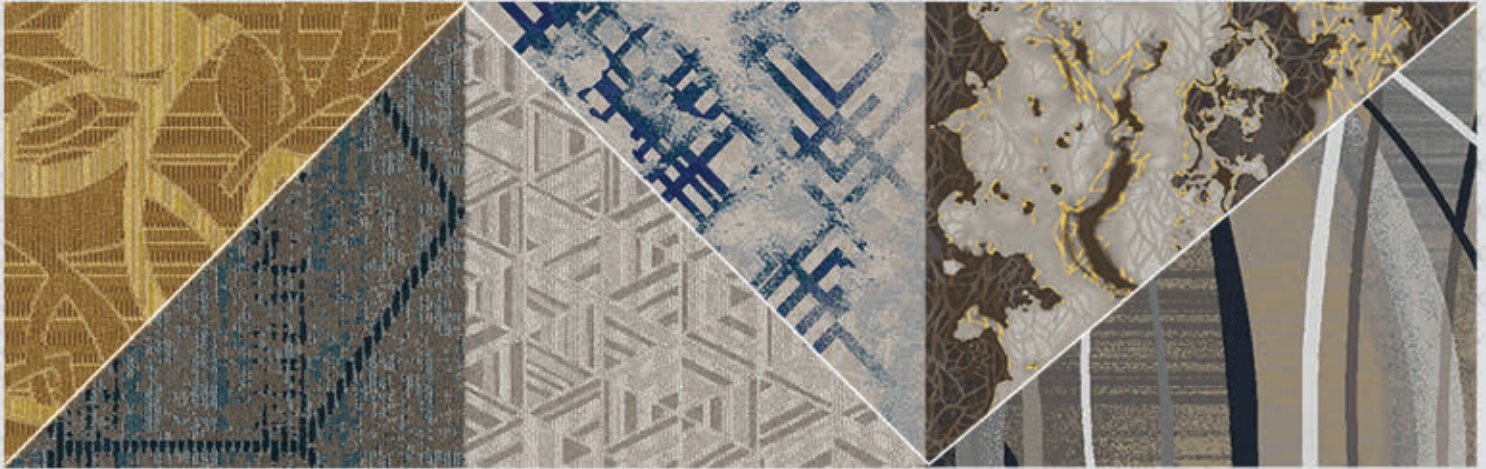
AAHOA MEMBERS MAY SOMETIMES DISAGREE IN THEIR POLITICS, BUT WE DO SO mindful of our association's core values of mutual respect, industry leadership, and entrepreneurial excellence. The work we do now to support and uplift one another – our fellow hoteliers, industry partners, staff, families, friends, and neighbors – is as important as it ever has been. With this in mind, AAHOA can continue to forge a path toward recovery for our members and our industry. We must stay united, looking to the coming months with renewed optimism and engagement in our advocacy, education, and industry standing.

There are challenges ahead, but we have done incredible work up to this point. The AAHOA Officers, Board of Directors, Ambassadors, Regional Directors, Committee members, and staff dedicated a tremendous amount of effort into making our services flexible and adaptable. We transitioned the 2020 AAHOA Convention & Trade Show to an online platform without compromising the content and event value. The 2020 Regional Conferences & Trade Shows, concluding early this month, will have offered direct access to AAHOA leadership, other local hoteliers, and vendor partners from the comfort of home. And our educational programming continues to provide relevant updates, topical information, and industry best practices when we need it most as hoteliers. This adaptability and incredible member engagement are the reasons we have been able to keep our AAHOA community safe, informed, and connected.

It is my hope that we will be able to travel again soon and convene in person. Unfortunately, the pandemic shows little promise of relenting this winter. We must remain vigilant, staying attuned to the health and safety of our guests, staff, and families. Our experience as hoteliers has shown us that the pandemic presents its own set of challenges that are adverse as they are varied. AAHOA has evolved to address this fickle reality and shall continue to advocate and protect the businesses, employees, and local communities of our members. With changing conditions and new politicians, our pursuits do not waiver. We have always been, and always will be, a resource, advocate, and community for every hotel owner.

The AAHOA community has a 31-year strong tradition of engaging in the issues hoteliers face while cultivating cooperation to better ourselves and our industry. As the voice of America's hotel owners, let us continue to support and uplift one another, whatever our views on this election's outcomes, with renewed optimism and confidence in our pursuit for legislative action and excellence in the hospitality industry. Together we can move forward #AAHOASTRONG. ■

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CECIL P. STATON
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“

The health of our nation rests upon swift action, and we will continue to advance our advocacy efforts through the final weeks of the 116th Congress and the Trump administration. The health, stability, and longevity of American communities should not be subjected to wait any longer.”

Advocacy through December and beyond

ON JAN. 3, 2021, THE NEWLY ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE 117TH CONGRESS, WITH the notable exception of Georgia’s two Senator seats, will be sworn in. Unique circumstances and local election rules have brought AAHOA’s home state to a runoff election, which will determine control of the Senate. The Democrats will maintain their majority in the House of Representatives while welcoming President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris to their four-year term in the White House. This election season has been highly contested following months of political infighting among the two parties over the next round of economic stimulus. Despite the lingering tensions of the election season, AAHOA is primed and ready to promote our priorities and rejuvenate the hospitality industry through the lame-duck session and beyond.

From the onset of the pandemic, we have engaged the policymakers in Washington, D.C. to push for economic stimulus and regulatory changes that make it easier for hoteliers to gain the vital relief they need to deal with a serious liquidity crisis. These efforts will not relent until the pandemic has passed and the federal government has come together to get our economy and our industry back on track. Hotels, like many small businesses, are economic keystones in towns and cities across the country. Every day that passes without Congressional action results in jobs lost, businesses shuttered, and livelihoods upended. The health of our nation rests upon swift action, and we will continue to advance our advocacy efforts through the final weeks of the 116th Congress and the Trump administration and into the new year. The health, stability, and longevity of American communities should not be subjected to the whims of politics any longer.

The legislative priorities hoteliers need to keep their doors open, from expanding the Main Street Lending Program to asset-based businesses, to a solution to the CMBS mortgage crisis, to a second round of the Paycheck Protection Program, will remain the centerpieces of AAHOA’s advocacy pursuits. While economic relief is the top priority for America’s hotel owners, we also must prepare for the next juncture on the road to recovery. Our advocacy strategy will focus on passing COVID-19 relief promptly while reinforcing a legislative framework that will get Americans traveling again. AAHOA Members and our Government Affairs team are working to coordinate meetings, inform lawmakers, and expand our network.

Next month, AAHOA will welcome the new members of Congress and the Biden administration to Washington, D.C. and we look forward to making new connections and strengthening the ones our association and our members have worked tirelessly to cultivate. In the weeks ahead, we call upon Congress to take unified action to deliver the economic relief and remove unscrupulous regulatory barriers that prevent deserving businesses from accessing vital programs. Now is the time for national unity, swift negotiations, and cessation of partisan politics that have embroiled our nation throughout the pandemic. ■

A 2020

election recap... so far

President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris projected to win the White House



IDEAPIXEL/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL election has been a centerpiece of public discourse since media outlets called the election in favor of President-elect Biden. However, the Trump administration has been reluctant to address these projected outcomes. Rather than conceding, President Trump and the administration are likely to continue filing lawsuits in contested states in which the sitting President did not receive the majority vote, citing unfounded allegations of voter fraud.

AAHOA has recognized President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris as the leaders of the incoming administration, barring any substantial rulings that could alter the probable electoral outcomes or validity of the 2020 electoral process.

REPUBLICANS WHITTLE DOWN DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY IN THE HOUSE

Democratic leadership expected to expand upon their majority in the House of Representatives, yet Republican candidates managed to obtain victories in several contested elections. House Democrats will officially retain at least 218 seats, securing their majority in the 117th Congress. However, the tighter majority could present challenges in coordinating and implementing a partisan agenda among Democrats in the House.

SENATE MAJORITY HINGES ON TWO CRITICAL RUNOFF RACES

Thirty-five seats in the Senate were up for election this year. Republicans have enjoyed a 53-47 majority in the upper chamber – a status that Democrats have hoped to upend in this highly contested election. One week after the election, Democratic challenger Cal Cunningham conceded to incumbent Republican Thom Tillis in the North Carolina Senate race. This critical win means the Republicans will be leading with 50 to the Democrat's 48 seats prior to the two runoff elections scheduled in Georgia on Jan. 5, 2021.

Georgia is a unique battleground state this election cycle following President-elect Joe Biden's flip of the traditionally red leaning state and the rare occurrence of two concurrent Senate races. Republican Sen. David Perdue was facing a normal re-election race for the seat he won in 2014. Following the early retirement of Sen. Johnny Isakson this time last year, Sen. Kelly Loeffler, another Republican appointed by Gov. Brian Kemp, ran in a special election with 20 candidates on the ballot. Neither Perdue nor Loeffler were able to capture 50 percent of the vote, sending both elections into a runoff.

Jon Ossoff, the Democratic nominee running against Sen. Perdue, received 48 percent of the vote to Perdue's 49.7 percent. In the special election, Democratic nominee Raphael Warnock received 32.9 percent of the vote compared to Loeffler's 25.9, who

split the Republican vote with Rep. Doug Collins (GA-09).

REPUBLICANS TAKE MONTANA GOVERNOR SEAT

Eleven states held gubernatorial elections this year, with nine governors running for re-election. Former Democratic Gov. Steve Bullock of Montana was unable to run due to a state cap on term limits. In his run for the Montana Senate seat, Bullock lost to his Republican opponent Steve Daines who captured more than 55 percent of the vote.

Incumbent Democratic governors held their seats in Washington, North Carolina, and Delaware as Republicans maintained governorships in Utah, North Dakota, Missouri, Indianapolis, West Virginia, Vermont, and New Hampshire.

PROSPECTS OF THE 116TH CONGRESS'S LAME-DUCK SESSION

At the time this article was written, progress toward a next round of federal stimulus remains in the air during the final weeks of the 116th Congress. To avoid partial government shutdowns, Congress will need to address legislation related to federal funding, which is set to expire on Dec. 11, 2020. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi have signaled cooperation on this matter. AAHOA remains committed to pushing for COVID-19 relief now and will be providing timely updates to our members as Congress convenes in the lame-duck session. ■

HOTEL
VACANCY



Anthony Melchiorri is known to the public as host to “Hotel Impossible.” With more than 24 years in the hotel industry, he has become an industry staple.

Anthony Melchiorri: Marathon mindset

For the hotel industry to survive, stamina will be required

by GENEVA TODDY

BETWEEN HOSTING HIS TV SHOW “Hotel Impossible,” co-hosting the podcast “Checking In with Anthony & Glenn,” and founding Hospitality Success, Anthony Melchiorri made the time to chat with *Today’s Hotelier* about what hoteliers can do to manage COVID-19 recovery. And the keyword for recovery is stamina.

“I need to get into my marathon mentality,” Melchiorri said, establishing the kind of mindset it’s going to take to get through this pandemic. “Everybody has to have stamina.”

TAKE THE LEAD

Leadership is another hot topic. Melchiorri believes the leaders in this industry need to take a look at exactly why they’ve made it to that leadership position and be ready to have the tough conversations. Amid layoffs, hotel closings, and a large gap in revenue, leaders need to show up for their employees.

“People can deal with the truth and people can deal with reality if you give it to them in a way they can understand,” he said.

HOW DO WE TACKLE RECOVERY?



“Start fresh. Look at your business as if it’s Day 1,” Melchiorri said about handling the recovery process. He laid out a few steps hoteliers – and the industry as a whole – can take:

- 01 **Ask yourself:** What do you want your business to be? Back when you started your business, what was your goal? Has that goal changed? What do you want now? Who do you want to be now?
- 02 **Ask your guests:** Think about what your guests want. Expectations have changed because of COVID-19. Understand those expectations and implement them.
- 03 **Budget and forecast:** But do so with modules that make sense. The COVID-19 pandemic is often likened to 9/11 or the 2008 financial crisis, but COVID-19 has affected hotels a bit differently. Short-term budgets and forecasts make more sense because COVID-19 can change things quickly.
- 04 **Be prepared:** You’ll have to use bigger spaces for fewer people.
- 05 **Trust your gut:** “If you’re in a position of leadership, you obviously did something right,” Melchiorri said. You know what will or won’t work for your property and your staff. If you’re an effective leader, people will listen.

COVID-19 KEEPERS



A big question is how will the industry be forever changed by COVID-19? “People forget why we do what we do,” Melchiorri said about establishing new habits in the wake of COVID-19. “Humans are creatures of habit. Guests won’t tolerate too many inconveniences.” So, changes must be implemented seamlessly and in a natural way.

- 01 **Housekeeping:** Melchiorri expects daily housekeeping services will be a thing of the past, except in certain markets like luxury. That also means hoteliers must be ready to cater to those guests. For example, limited housekeeping with only one towel in the bathroom won’t suffice.
- 02 **Internet speeds:** “Internet speed is like hot water in a hotel – if you don’t have it, you don’t have a hotel,” Melchiorri said.
- 03 **Breakfast:** The breakfast buffet wasn’t a huge hit in the first place. Guests need breakfast and a buffet was a reliable way to serve food efficiently to many people. But COVID-19 poses more health and safety concerns that require a new kind of breakfast. “Breakfast will come back, but buffets won’t,” Melchiorri said.

LET’S TALK FINANCES



There’s no sugar coating the financial situation for hotels across the U.S. There are steps hoteliers can take now to manage damaged finances:

- 01 **Get real:** “Be realistic about your situation,” Melchiorri said. Don’t be too optimistic or too pessimistic, and don’t forecast too far ahead.
- 02 **Change mindset:** This is a revenue-driven business. “Make sensible decisions based on what guests expect,” Melchiorri said. Think about your expenses smartly and be present. “Wake up in the morning, do the best you can for today, and think about tomorrow,” he said.
- 03 **Show up:** “Mental vacations are off,” Melchiorri said. “There’s no putting off answering the phone because you’re going on vacation tomorrow.” You must show up every single day, mentally prepared to get through this. And you will.
- 04 **Set expectations:** Make it clear to guests what they can expect when they come into your hotel. Be prepared with lots of signage and safety information. Understand that business travel will be slow to return, but always be proactive. “If I were a GM, I would live in the lobby,” Melchiorri said. “I would ask people why they’re here, if they know anyone else who may be visiting, and get on the phone to personally book them.”

THE HOST WITH THE MOST

As a host on “Checking In with Anthony & Glenn,” Melchiorri has talked to dozens of hoteliers and industry leaders. His favorite interview to date? Horst Schultze. “Horst Schultze understands you can build the most beautiful building and market the most beautiful building, but if you don’t treat your employees right, you have nothing,” Melchiorri said.

“You have to treat your employees like newborns and take care of them,” he said. “Then, as they grow in their

career, hold them accountable.” Like newborns, when people are raised right, they become good humans, Melchiorri explained. When you take care of your employees, they take care of your guests.

“They matter. I don’t matter,” Melchiorri said. “Meaning, the hotel doesn’t stop running if I don’t show up to work. Your housekeeping, front desk, etc., run the hotel.”

Further, when employees are taken care of, they are then empowered. “Empowerment is something grown, not given,” Melchiorri said. “By the way

you act and treat others – the way you speak to them. That is how you grow empowerment.”

SIGNING OFF

“The industry is powerful,” Melchiorri said. The hotel industry will grow again. People are burning out at home, so they are looking forward to getting out of their homes. But it will be slow. We need to manage those expectations. The pandemic has hit us hard, but there is growth ahead. ■

Unanimous cooperation expanded electronic voting security ahead of the 2020 election

Common Ground profiles members of opposing parties who are working together to advance issues important to hoteliers.

by SEAN GROSSNICKLE



MADE360/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

THE ISSUE

During the 2016 elections, several foreign governments actively engaged in efforts to hack the federal electoral systems, according to a 2018 report by the U.S. Attorney General's Cyber Digital Task Force. This report noted deficiencies in the federal protections against cyberattacks. At the time of the investigation, the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA) was the principal law used to prosecute computer hacking crimes. However, the CFAA upheld a narrow definition for what constituted as federally prosecutable hacks on computers as it was limited to devices that were connected to the internet, among other narrow protection criteria. In many common situations, the CFAA did not expressly prohibit the hacking of a voting machine. This report spurred action in Congress, leading a group of bipartisan Senators to

bolster the legal protections and safeguard the nation's most essential democratic process.

COMMON GROUND

In May 2019, Sens. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) introduced S.1321, the Defending the Integrity of Voting Systems Act. The Senate unanimously passed the bill just two months after it was introduced, sending it to the House of Representatives. In late September 2020, the House followed suit and unanimously approved the companion bill. President Trump then signed the bill into law on Oct. 20, 2020.

Although the bill stalled in the House, it garnered resounding support from both Democrats and Republicans in advance of the 2020 elections. The Defending the Integrity of Voting Systems Act expanded upon the CFAA, making it a federal crime to hack any voting system used in a U.S. federal election. The timely passage of this legislation in a period of Congress embroiled in partisan negotiations over COVID-19 economic relief reaffirms the bipartisan commitment to free, fair, and secure elections. ■

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Sponsor of the Defending the Integrity of Voting Systems Act

"Our election systems need strong safeguards against enemy hackers seeking to subvert our democracy. Voting machines are a prime penetrable target and laws remain woefully outdated. This bipartisan bill provides the Department of Justice with powerful tools to vigorously prosecute and stop malicious hackers. Its unanimous passage tells the world that securing our nation's elections and cyber infrastructure is a bipartisan cause."

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Cosponsor of the Defending the Integrity of Voting Systems Act

"Russian interference in the 2016 election exposed just a small piece of our adversaries' cyber capabilities," said Graham. "Seeking to undermine American democracy and our standing on the world stage, hostile nations like Russia, Iran, China, and North Korea work every day to develop new cyber weapons to deploy against the United States. We should be particularly vigilant of our voting systems. This legislation provides the Department of Justice the ability to investigate and prosecute those who seek to manipulate elections systems equipment."

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The • triple threat

by GENEVA TODDY with contributions
from MILI SHAH



▲ Mili Shah spoke at the AAHOA Women's Conference.

Mili Shah balances hospitality, law, and banking and brings all three together to advocate for hoteliers.

Mili Shah learning how to swim with her father at the Days Inn in Milledgeville, GA.



“HOW CAN I HELP YOU?” IS A FAMILIAR PHRASE IN THE HOTEL industry. It’s a typical greeting on a call with a customer, at the front desk, and in the life of Mili Shah.

Shah’s drive to help others manifests in the way she pursues her multiple careers as a hotelier, lawyer, and banker. Her success is a product of the rich experiences she’s cultivated throughout her life. She grew up operating hotels, practiced corporate and commercial real estate law, and served as a Small Business Administration (SBA) lending director.

But no matter the hat she wears on a particular day, she lives by this motto: “How can I help others?” Shah has committed herself to helping others – especially hoteliers.

MEET MILI

Shah was born and raised in the hotel industry. Her father, Nitin Shah, co-founded AAHOA and served as its chairman in 1993. Shah attended her first AAHOA convention at age 6.

Shah spent her childhood living in a three-story Days Inn in Milledgeville, GA. “That parking lot was my bike path. That swimming pool was where I learned how to swim,” Shah said while sitting next to her father on the Generational Success panel at AAHOACON in 2016. “I would watch my dad at night, fascinated by his use of the typewriter, which he used to write letters to franchisors and draft the AAHOA bylaws.”

Shah’s affinity for the hotel business began there and grew in parallel with her father’s business. Eventually, she transitioned from watching her father pursue deals to making her own.

EDUCATION ABOVE ALL

Shah’s path to three different careers began with education. “Mom and Dad always said education is No. 1 because no one can take that away from you,” Shah also said during the panel. She grew up in Atlanta, pursued her undergraduate degree at New York University, and then went on to the University of Tennessee to earn her JD and MBA.



◀ The Shah family (left to right): Sister Simi Shah, husband Nirav Shah, Mili Shah, father Nitin Shah, and mother Pravina Shah.

Mili Shah volunteers to teach students at Rodriguez Elementary School in Harlingen, TX, about saving money and investing in themselves for their future.



By age 25, Shah had jumpstarted her career at Atlanta law firm Kitchens Kelley Gaynes, PC. She largely represented banks closing SBA loans for borrowers, the majority of whom were hoteliers. This experience married her hotelier beginnings and legal education and set the stage for her next move: banking.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

In 2007, Shah's father formed Embassy National Bank. "His greatest passion is helping others and he was able to do so through banking," Shah said. As in many of her professional endeavors, the apple didn't fall far from the tree. Shah took that inspiration with her in 2015 when she joined Vantage Bank Texas. Shah built the SBA department from scratch. Borrowers flocked to her because she was uniquely positioned to serve them. She was a rare breed: a banker who thought like a businesswoman. In four short years, she grew the department to \$200 million in SBA loans.

"As the only South Asian banker in the community, people began coming to me. Friends became borrowers and borrowers became friends. I would visit their homes (aka, the hotel lobby) and sit with them over a cup of chai to understand their profit-and-loss statements and tax returns, and how I could help them obtain a loan for their purchase, refinance, or renovation. This opportunity helped me pay my experience forward," Shah said.

WORKING WITH AAHOA

Shah always remained connected to her hotel roots. She currently serves on AAHOA's Franchise and Industry Relations Committee and has served on the Young Professionals, Women's, and Education committees. She also has served as AAHOA Ambassador for the Georgia and South Texas regions.

"Recently, small businesses have come under attack by unscrupulous attorneys and professional plaintiffs seeking to make a quick buck. These bad actors manipulate one of the most important civil rights laws in our country, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)," Shah testified before Congress on behalf of AAHOA.



Mili Shah and her father, Nitin Shah, spoke on the Generational Success panel at AAHOACON, among other former AAHOA chairmen.

Shah continued her family tradition of helping others – protecting fellow hoteliers and upholding the integrity of the ADA. As an attorney herself, her words carried particular weight with members of Congress.

SBA AND COVID-19

Shah's willingness to help hoteliers through her added skill sets as a lawyer and banker have extended through COVID-19. Due to Shah's extensive SBA knowledge, the SBA tapped her shoulder in April 2020 when COVID-19 began taking its toll on small business owners. Shah was asked to lead the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program, ensuring loans would be underwritten properly and funds would be distributed quickly and fairly. Shah jumped at the opportunity, seeing another avenue through which she could help small business owners across the country.

As COVID-19 continues to wreak havoc, Shah has led efforts to help impacted hotel owners through educational webinars and podcasts. For six months, she's convened groups of 100+ hoteliers, addressing issues related to bank negotiations, insurance claims, labor and employment issues, safety and health concerns, the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), and SBA loans.

"It was incumbent upon me to answer as many calls, respond to as many emails, and relay as much information as I could," Shah said. The number of calls she's received in recent months compelled her to launch a dedicated newsletter related to hotel financing, alongside her father, available at www.milishahesq.com.

If you've been helped by PPP, EIDL, or SBA loans, it could be because of Shah's hustle. Her next project: protecting hoteliers from losing their assets over the next several months. She continues to work with bankers, regulators, government officials, and franchisors to fight for hoteliers.

Mili Shah is a rising star in the industry, a result of her multifaceted mindset. She's a hotelier by blood, a lawyer by education, and a banker by profession – all of which enable her to think globally. And her desire to help others makes her a compelling leader, one hoteliers want by their side. The words, "How can I help you?" have never been in better hands.

Learn more at www.milishahesq.com. ■

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PART 4

THE PROS SPEAK UP



Alkesh Patel, AAHOA Past Chair (2012-2013), Chairman, CEO, and Founder of Evergreen Hospitality.

AAHOA Past Chairman Alkesh Patel gives his insight on how you can be flexible and weather COVID-19

by PETER BERK

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CONTINUES TO PRESENT challenges for the hospitality industry as hoteliers continue to manage ever-changing federal, state, and local regulations along with brand-mandated cleaning initiatives. We are pleased to continue the series of in-depth interviews with former AAHOA chairmen. Their wisdom and guidance can be instructive to us all in our professional and personal lives to get through these trying times. For this month's edition, we sat down for an exclusive interview with Alkesh Patel, AAHOA Past Chair (2012-2013), and current Chairman, CEO, and Founder of Evergreen Hospitality, a development group based in Vancouver, WA, focused on building hotels. Patel also served as a board member of the AHLA Council of Inns and Suites. His leadership has earned him recognition and awards from FIA, FHRAI, NABHOOD, IACC, and AAHOA.

**WHAT YEAR DID YOU GET INTO THE BUSINESS?
WHAT WAS THE FIRST HOTEL YOU OWNED,
AND WHERE WAS IT?**

1988. A 50-room independent lodge named The Palms Motor Hotel in Portland, OR.

HOW MANY HOTELS DOES YOUR FIRM OWN TODAY, AND WHAT BRANDS?

The Evergreen portfolio has 12 hospitality projects, all of which fall within the Hilton, Marriott, Hyatt, and IHG portfolio of brands.

WHAT IS SOMETHING INTERESTING THAT PEOPLE PROBABLY DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I love flying kites! Especially fighter kites from India. During my youth in India, my friends and I were kite runners and collected many to fly every January 14 (the day we celebrate kite flying in India). My friends and family know that every January 14, I'll make a trip to my hometown/village in India to fly kites. Many industry partners and friends have made these trips to India with me. It is always a memorable and enjoyable tradition.

I KNOW OPENING YOUR FIRST HOTEL YOU WERE FACED WITH MANY CHALLENGES. DESCRIBE A CHALLENGE THAT WAS COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED AND SOMETHING YOU COULD HAVE NEVER FORESEEN?

A hotel that we purchased was distressed, and the city wanted to shut the hotel down. We negotiated with city officials and agreed to refurbish the hotel and change the business model by flagging the asset and generally cleaning up the property. The city gave us a one-year grace period to comply with all the requirements and remedy the violations. Running the hotel and operations was not challenging, but dealing with city and authorities was extraordinarily challenging. Each time we finished items on their wish list, they would add more! It felt inevitable that we would be shut down. Also, every time they added new items, our projected costs increased, which added more burden to the overall endeavor.

HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THAT CHALLENGE?

We discovered the hotel sign was one of the few neon-based iconic signs within Portland during the remodeling and rebranding process. We were planning to remove the sign because of the costs associated with fixing it. Instead, we decided to add more money in our budget to repair the sign. We also reached out to local media. We strategically reached out to the same journalists who had previously written a negative story on our hotel (when it was associated with a different owner). Local media responded favorably and decided to do a story on all historic neon signs in Portland. Our property was featured in that article. As a result, our hotel received positive publicity, and we were able to get more time

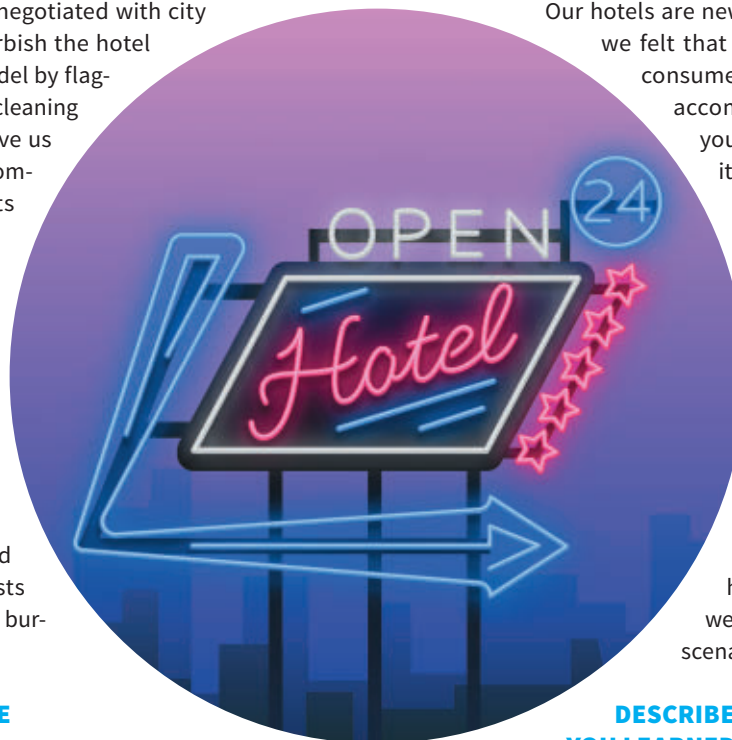
from city officials to complete our remodel. We ultimately decided against any brand affiliation and kept the property's unique flair true to its Portland roots. The Inn is still owned and operated by our family, and the same iconic neon signage stands 50 feet high.

WHAT WERE THE FIRST FEW THINGS YOU DID AT YOUR FIRM WHEN YOU REALIZED THE COVID-19 CRISIS WOULD BE A SERIOUS THREAT?

We started to look at options on safety measures that we can follow to keep the guests and teams safe at our hotels. We also started to analyze our liquidity and prepared for best-, middle-, and worst-case scenarios. Further, we made strategic updates to our labor model in a sustainable manner to essentially "do the right thing" by our shareholders and team members. We took measures to remain GOP-profitable in addition to revising our budgets and forecasts. Finally, we were proactive in working with our lenders by providing them periodic updates, so they were not left in the dark about our performance metrics vs. the market.

HOW DID YOU MAKE THE DECISION TO KEEP YOUR HOTELS OPEN OR CLOSE THEM?

Our hotels are newer and premium-branded, so we felt that we were a natural choice for consumers seeking clean and modern accommodations. Fortunately, our young portfolio is a blend of limited-service and extended-stay hotels, which have performed better during the COVID-19 era vs. the full-service segment. It's never an easy decision to reduce staffing levels, but we made our operational models leaner and more efficient due to the notable decline in demand. Internally, we set a preliminary benchmark that triggered discussions about the possibility of temporary hotel closures. Fortunately, we were blessed, and the worst-case scenario did not come to fruition.

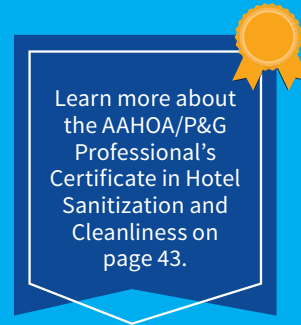


DESCRIBE HOW THE EXPERIENCE YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR FIRST UNEXPECTED CRISIS OPENING YOUR FIRST HOTEL HELPED YOUR DECISION PROCESS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC?

We understand that our industry is prone to recession and is heavily cyclical. From our previous experience during the downturn, we were able to get funding on the assets that had attractive brand affiliation and institutional investor appeal. We did not observe this beneficial trend with hotels or motels that had economy branding or no branding, regardless of their leverage ratios. We learned from the last downturn that newer, premium branded hotels that are not over-leveraged and have



Will there always be a need for in-person encounters in the business environment? Absolutely. Will business travel cease to exist? It's unlikely. However, companies that embrace technology will begin making strategic decisions that allow for virtual meetings depending on the business's situation and specific needs because they have now been able to test the waters."



enough reserves could weather the storm and attract joint venture equity, if needed.

LET'S DISCUSS FINANCE FOR A MOMENT. HOW HAVE YOUR LENDERS HANDLED YOUR EXISTING LOANS? HAVE YOU GOTTEN RELIEF/FORBEARANCE?

Lenders have provided us with options, and our team is working on putting a long-term plan in place. We feel that the effect of COVID-19 is going to need an 18-to-24-month plan and not a three-to-six-month plan.

WHAT STEPS ARE YOU TAKING AT YOUR HOTELS TO MAKE TRAVELERS COMFORTABLE THAT IT IS SAFE TO STAY AT YOUR HOTELS?

We are fortunate to be aligned with excellent leadership at Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, and IHG. Each major franchisor has developed a comprehensive plan to ensure consumer safety. When travelers are ready to hit the road (or sky) again, we owe them a safe and pleasant return, and we plan to work with our brand partners to accomplish that.

For example, Hilton has introduced the CleanStay program in which cleaning standards have been greatly enhanced. They also have partnered with reputable companies such as Lysol to ensure the thorough elimination of various bacteria in guestrooms. Marriott has introduced the Commitment to Clean initiative, which outlines innovative and aggressive cleaning protocols and strictly enforces CDC guidelines. IHG's Clean Promise program is thoughtful, comprehensive, and proactive in its quest to regain consumer confidence. They have risen to the challenge, which in turn has allowed us to do the same.

The similarities between all the major brands as it relates to strict cleaning guidelines are significant. Overall, this is a win for the consumer, and it only makes our operations team better. We invest where our brands ask us to and are applying more rigorous cleaning standards across the board.

Concrete examples include ample and free supply of hospital-grade disinfectants and hand sanitizer, installing sneeze guards in public areas such as the front desk,

following social-distancing guidelines, decluttering, reducing, and recleaning "high-touch" areas, utilizing technologies such as electrostatic sprayers, and more.

DO YOU EXPECT SOME HOTELS IN YOUR MARKETS TO NEVER OPEN AGAIN? WHICH TYPE OF HOTELS WILL SURVIVE?

Many smaller properties in our market have been leased by the city to address the current COVID-19 crisis. I believe they will not re-open as hotels and I think some of the older assets may be converted to multifamily or an alternative use. I also believe not all the downtown Portland hotels will survive what we have gone through with the pandemic. To make matters worse, the destruction of public and private property due to rioting makes a recovery for downtown Portland bleaker.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE CURRENT ZOOM MEETING CONCEPT? DO YOU THINK THAT WILL IMPACT THE BUSINESS TRAVELER DEMAND IN THE FUTURE?

Technology will continue to change the world as it always has. Many occupations will become remotely based, perhaps permanently. Large, multinational organizations have learned they have not lost productivity despite having a large percentage of their employees working from home. If I were leading one of these large organizations, I also would ponder the following question: "Why are we paying for office space or business travel when we are organized and nimble enough to support remote professionals and conduct HD-quality video meetings?" Internet speeds are increasing and will only get faster over time.

Will there always be a need for in-person encounters in the business environment? Absolutely. Will business travel cease to exist? It's unlikely. However, companies that embrace technology will begin making strategic decisions that allow for virtual meetings depending on the business's situation and specific needs because they have now been able to test the waters. I continue to believe that most effective team-building exercises, company



MARIDAV/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

retreats, meaningful negotiations, and trust-building meetings will always require face-to-face encounters.

WHO WILL THE WINNERS AND LOSERS BE AT THE END OF THIS PANDEMIC?

Most of us will experience a decline in our aspirations and pocket-books. I personally believe we have lost five years of progress. The winners include the tech industry, Amazon, Walmart, grocery store chains, health care companies, streaming-based gaming and entertainment organizations, and social media companies, to name a few.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER HOTEL OWNERS TO GET THROUGH THIS CURRENT CRISIS?

I do not consider myself an expert, as we also are routinely seeking advice and various informed perspectives, which ultimately leads to my answer to your question. My advice would be to keep an open mind, challenge your assumptions, and seek wisdom from all reputable sources – both professional and spiritual. As a country, we have weathered the storm of 9/11, the Great Recession, and I am confident we will overcome the devastation of COVID-19. “This, too, shall pass.”

THE BIG CRYSTAL BALL QUESTION: WHEN DO YOU EXPECT REVPAR TO GET BACK TO 2019 LEVELS?

2024.



Peter Berk is President of PMZ Realty Capital LLC – Hotel Finance Group. He has more than 26 years of experience in the real estate industry and is a frequent lecturer at industry events, including AAHOA webinars and meetings. He has arranged more than \$6 billion of debt and equity transactions for hotel owners, representing more than 50,000 hotel rooms. As an industry leader, he has worked with AAHOA Members for more than 20 years on their financing needs. Berk attended George Washington University as an undergraduate and holds a graduate degree from Columbia University. He can be reached at berk@pmzcapital.com or 212-277-8265.



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Is hotel lending on its way back?



by RUSHI SHAH





The takeaway for the Wall Street lending market is that if an asset has demand drivers that are not entirely dependent on discretionary travel, that hotel can work as a going concern and the market can allow for optimal leverage on the property.”

THE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 pandemic have reverberated throughout almost every aspect of our personal and professional lives. Navigating this new normal is likely to continue well into 2021, sparking permanent and fundamental structural changes that have changed consumer behavior, personal and business travel, and forced businesses to react in new ways. Always resilient, capital markets have quickly adapted to this new environment. Although they never completely shut down, the markets overreacted and temporarily paused all hospitality transactions. While we don't expect to see a “healthy” capital market for hospitality in the next few quarters, there will be allowance for new deal flow.

CMBS IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

The Commercial Mortgage Backed Securities market (CMBS) saw its first “post COVID-19” nonrecourse, permanent hotel loan closed in late summer: WoodSpring Suites, a midscale extended-stay flag under the Choice International franchise located in an oil-dependent Texas market. While it may seem counterintuitive, the loan got done because the hotel demonstrated strong cash flow before and during the pandemic. The investors saw the hotel as “COVID-19-proof” because the oil drilling that surrounded this particular hotel and the demand never stopped. The CMBS loan closed with an in-place debt yield of 14 percent on a trailing 12-month basis during the global shutdown. The takeaway for the Wall Street lending market is that if an asset has demand drivers that are not entirely dependent on discretionary travel, that hotel can work as a going concern and the market can allow for optimal leverage on the property. This

transaction cracked open the door for additional hospitality securitization transactions across the country, but it isn't wide open yet. Borrowers can expect that each deal will be heavily scrutinized for all COVID-19-related impacts and the hard questions will be asked. However, the strength in the CMBS market has always been a good signaling indicator for establishing confidence in hospitality as an active food group of commercial real estate.

BRIDGE FINANCING

Led by premier debt funds, nonrecourse bridge loan lenders have started to opportunistically lend on hotel transactions. Many debt funds view this act of providing capital to an asset class at a time when most of the market is shying away as a contrarian play. As we watch the market react to the pandemic, we note several emerging patterns in hotel financing:

- 1** Extended-stay properties have proven able to withstand a deep demand trough because of the presence of kitchenette and bigger spaces for families and guests who can't or won't dine out at a restaurant.
- 2** Economy properties have also fared better because they don't rely on group bookings for conferences or events.
- 3** Properties in certain secondary or tertiary markets have been able to take advantage of an increasing propensity for driving vacations and domestic travel. Most bridge lenders use 2019 cash flows to benchmark how the future stabilized hotel will perform three years down the road and underwrite an exit on their loan amount.

RESCUE CAPITAL

Rescue capital also is surfacing in the market, but sources such as preferred equity and mezzanine financing remain expensive choices for capital seekers. Creative structures around ground lease capital with a predetermined buy-back option, however, may be an opportunity for certain hotel owners to access cheap cost of capital in relation to other available capital. This unique capital type involves investors buying and leasing back the ground under any hotel regardless of current cash flow. They are willing to take this risk because they are basing the ground purchase price on future value of these hotels four-to-five years from the date of purchase.

The uncertainty of the pandemic seems likely to continue, but hotel lending options are starting to show some life. Now more than ever, it is critical to consult with a subject-matter expert before capitalizing an asset. Borrowers can improve their results by leveraging the firsthand experience of an intermediary or investment banker who has been active in the market through both thick and thin of the economic cycles. ■



Rushi Shah is principal and CEO of the commercial mortgage and real estate investment banking firm and AAHOA Club Blue Member Mag Mile Capital. As a leader in hospitality financing, Shah specializes in structuring and placing high-leverage, non-recourse bridge and permanent debt with cash out for full – and limited-service hotels nationwide. Since joining the firm's predecessor, Aries Capital, in 2015, Shah has structured and closed hundreds of millions in financing for all property types. Shah has held previous positions at Northern Trust and has an MBA from the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business.

**Support small
business this
holiday season**

by ALFREDO ORTIZ



Over the past six months, our customers have been shopping differently, and we expect that will continue into the most important shopping season of the year – the holidays.”

—Scott McCall, Executive Vice President and Chief Merchandising Officer of Walmart U.S.

THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS HERE once again. Time to deck the halls, bake cookies, and shop for gifts for friends and family. As with almost every other aspect of 2020, this year’s shopping will look different than those in the past. One thing remains the same: support small business while making holiday purchases.

COVID-19 AND E-COMMERCE

As retailers prepare for one of the busiest times of the year, many are adapting to fit the current times by moving sales online, one of the many “new normals” retailers have had to face this year. In fact, according to data from the National Retail Foundation (NRF), 96 percent of retailers are expecting more online-only sales this holiday season, with e-commerce sales projected to see an increase of 25-to-35 percent, according to data gathered by Deloitte.

Even with less foot traffic this winter, the NRF anticipates 67 percent of brick-and-mortar stores will be open in December, after having to shutter their doors due to restrictions. For in-person shopping, a Deloitte study anticipates sales to increase by 1-to-1.5 percent compared to 4.1 percent in 2019.

The NRF anticipates Americans will have more funds to put toward holiday purchases because of nixed travel plans. Daniel Bachman, Deloitte’s U.S. economic forecaster, agreed and said, “Reduced spending on pandemic-sensitive services such as restaurants and travel may help bolster retail holiday sales somewhat.”

The result? 2020 might be the year of online sales. According to a report by personalization vendor Qubit, two-thirds of consumers have increased their online shopping due to COVID-19, a trend that is expected to continue to grow during this season.

AID FOR THE SHIFT

Due to the shift in shopping trends and fewer visitors to Main Street stores, larger platforms are helping small businesses make the shift to sell online.

Google for Small Business, which provides resources, tools, training, and guidance to help businesses grow, has launched a Holiday Hub platform. The new feature specifically focuses on connecting mom-and-pop shops

with consumers, increasing online sales during the holiday season.

Likewise, Shopify has launched a site called Mainstreet Expo, assisting small businesses in e-commerce and encouraging patrons to support local businesses online. The concept was developed to assist Main Street during the COVID-19 crisis and help them thrive after the pandemic has ended.

Sites like these are a welcomed tool for small and medium-sized businesses. According to an economic tracker from Opportunity Insights, the total number of small businesses open in the U.S. as of September decreased by more than 24 percent compared to January 2020.

MORE THAN MAIN STREET WILL BE AFFECTED

Even large retail stores are adjusting this holiday season. For example, Scott McCall, Executive Vice President and Chief Merchandising Officer of Walmart U.S., predicted in the fall, “Over the past six months, our customers have been shopping differently, and we expect that will continue into the most important shopping season of the year – the holidays.”

Malls and Main Street might be decorated for the holiday season, but the number of visitors who see the sights will be less than years past. It makes supporting small businesses via alternative ways all that more important this year. ■

Alfredo Ortiz is the president and CEO of the Job Creators Network.



How to fulfill your personal vision

Growing a successful business starts with asking yourself one question every day.

by DEEPAK CHOPRA™, MD



“Life is well lived only if you have a vision.”

– DEEPAK CHOPRA™, MD

This article is based on topics discussed in a Chase Chats webcast with Deepak Chopra, *Measuring the Well-Being of Your Business*.

IN EVERY AGE THERE HAS

been a dominant world-view that people tried to conform to.

In an age of faith, everyone asked how they could better serve God. This was their daily concern. In the Industrial Age the question shifted to economics and improving one's lot in life. In an age dominated by science the question shifted again – people asked every day how they could keep up with progress and add to it. As times change, so do people's vision of what is important, and usually they thought they had a better vision than the one which preceded them.

Yet, if you back away to see the bigger picture, each age had one thing in common, and it wasn't God, economics, or progress. It was the fundamental idea that life is well lived only if you have a vision. Without one, purpose and meaning are limited.

It turns out that the one question you should ask every day is this: How can I fulfill my vision today? Whether they put it exactly in these words, this is the secret behind the greatest success stories. Someone dedicated his or her life to a plan, project, or set of values larger than any individual. A worthy vision, I think, needs to fulfill certain criteria.

1. YOUR VISION SHOULD BE SUITED TO WHO YOU REALLY ARE.

It can't be borrowed from someone else, and it can't be chosen out of obligation. Your parents may desperately have wanted you to follow the family business or go to medical school because they weren't able to. Those are laudable motives, but it's risky to adopt a vision that isn't really your own.

2. YOUR VISION SHOULD BE VALUABLE NO MATTER HOW MUCH MONEY YOU EXPECT TO MAKE.

Of course, you can always make it your vision to get rich, but there are two problems with that. First, the day you arrive at a financial goal, it will tend to feel empty. Second, a life totally devoted to money never stops. Making more and more – greed and competition fuel an insatiable desire.

For informational/educational purposes only: The views expressed in this article may differ from other employees and departments of JPMorgan Chase & Co. Views and strategies described may not be appropriate for everyone, and are not intended as specific advice/recommendation for any individual. You should carefully consider your needs and objectives before making any decisions, and consult the appropriate professional(s). Outlooks and past performance are not guarantees of future results.



3. YOU SHOULD COMPARE THE VISIONS THAT SEEM MOST APPEALING, WHICH MEANS DOING RESEARCH AND DIPPING YOUR TOE INTO MORE THAN ONE POOL.

Philosophy, religion, science, business, and scholarship are rich with potential, and you owe it to yourself at least to sample what they are like.

4. YOUR VISION SHOULD BE AMBITIOUS.

The old saying that a man's or a woman's reach should exceed his or her grasp still holds true. Settling isn't visionary. Pick something that will feel like a challenge every day for as long as you can see into the future.

5. DON'T LOSE SIGHT OF TWO WORDS THAT OFTEN ESCAPE NOTICE WHEN SOMEONE HAS BURNING AMBITION AND DRIVE: HAPPINESS AND LOVE.

The more you can increase these two qualities, in your life and the lives of others, the more worthwhile your life will seem as it unfolds. A hugely successful life devoid of happiness and love is what scrooges are made of. ■

Deepak Chopra, MD, FACP, founder of The Chopra Foundation, a non-profit entity for research on well-being and humanitarianism, and Chopra Global, a modern-day health company at the intersection of science and spirituality, is a world-renowned pioneer in integrative medicine and personal transformation. Chopra is a Clinical Professor of Family Medicine and Public Health at the University of California, San Diego and serves as a senior scientist with Gallup Organization. He is the author of over 89 books translated into over 43 languages, including numerous New York Times bestsellers. His 90th book, "Metahuman: Unleashing Your Infinite Potential," unlocks the secrets to moving beyond our present limitations to access a field of infinite possibilities. His newest book, "Total Meditation," was published September 22. TIME magazine has described Dr. Chopra as "one of the top 100 heroes and icons of the century." deepakchopra.com



Evictions

and our civic duty

by SHEETUL RAYEED



LOCAL LANDLORD-TENANT LAWS PROTECT TENANTS from unwarranted, forcible removal from a property. The legal process of eviction governs their expulsion.

The eviction process applies to hoteliers even absent a true “rental agreement.” In most jurisdictions, hotel guests become “tenants” when they’ve resided on the property for a specific period of time.

EVICITION PROCESS

An eviction cannot be completed without a court order authorizing a local peace officer to remove a guest. Hoteliers should never begin an eviction without following the proper legal process, which is often very similar from state to state and detailed below. Doing so may result in losing even more time and money.

- 1 Legal notice:** Eviction begins with legal notice provided to the party you are seeking to remove. Legal notice, given in the form of a signed, written letter, is delivered to the guest informing them that the rental period has terminated. This letter usually includes the following: dates of stay, outstanding balance, number of days within which party must either pay the balance or vacate, and the legal action that will be taken if the notice is ignored.
- 2 Formal filing:** If the guest doesn’t comply, a formal eviction proceeding must be filed with the court in the county of the property’s location. Each court has a legal complaint form plus a small filing fee. The process can take a month or more.
- 3 Guest response:** The guest then has an opportunity to respond to the complaint.
- 4 Local law enforcement:** If the eviction is granted, an order will be issued and sent to a peace officer of the county (a sheriff, police officer, or constable).

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Before considering eviction, remember that we are living in unprecedented times. In a “normal” year, evictions may be a necessary evil. Consider the possibility that, due to the global pandemic, hoteliers may owe a civic duty to their communities to help prevent the spread of this deadly virus. Some jurisdictions have even banned evictions during this pandemic.

By allowing a guest to overstay their welcome, hoteliers may be supporting individuals who have fallen on hard times, are seeking to quarantine, or are seeking shelter from domestic or sexual abuse.

Consider providing a discount. The potentially unrecoverable balance of the stay may not exceed the cost in time, effort, and fees. With the viral nature of social media, consider the impact an image may have on the public’s perception of your property. Finally, connect the guest with a local shelter or aid group. As with all matters, seek legal advice.

- 5 Final steps:** The peace officer will then escort (forcibly, if necessary) the guest from the property.

Understand and comply with your local laws and procedures. Implement a system to track length of stays, train your teams, and avoid relying on illegal tricks like checking in a long-term stay guest, then checking them out only to check them in again to get around a 20-day tenancy rule.

CONCLUSION

As moratoriums on evictions are lifted nationwide, remember that there is a real, human cost to an eviction. Evictions may seem simple, but one should consider alternative actions to minimize the impact on your community and to the guest. After all, we are in the business of hospitality. ■

Sheetul Rayeed is staff attorney for AAHOA. Visit aahoa.com for more resources.



January Is National Slavery & Human Trafficking Prevention Month

AAHOA has long been working to end human trafficking, and we stand strong alongside the hospitality industry that has been working at the forefront of the movement to eradicate it.

AAHOA offers BEST's Inhospitable to Human Trafficking Training, Sponsored by AAHOA, completely digital and free for all AAHOA Members and their employees. Just 30 minutes of online training can help you and your staff identify the signs of human trafficking – helping to save lives and protect your business.

- ▶ Did you know that at least 38 states and the District of Columbia have laws to require some public agencies and/or private businesses to train their staff to recognize, report, and respond to human trafficking crimes and victims?
- ▶ AAHOA has three recent webcasts that can help you better understand the effects of COVID-19 on human trafficking: (1) Boys are Human Trafficking Victims Too; (2) Human Trafficking, Hotels, and COVID-19; and (3) Impacts & Realities of Human Trafficking Prevention. Find them all at AAHOA.com/webcasts.



30 minutes



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Learn more at AAHOA.com/HTAT.

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A completely virtual experience, AAHOA's Regionals Series will bring together attendees, vendors, and AAHOA leadership for a day of region-specific education, networking, and an interactive trade show.

Our 2020 Regionals Series, which features events taking place from late October through early December, will combine two-to-three regions into one event for a total of eight virtual conferences that will look and feel similar to in-person Regionals.

Whether you own a hotel in one region or many, AAHOA encourages you to register for the Regional Conference in every region in which you own properties. Everyone in the industry is invited to attend for learning opportunities, networking, and the latest updates for hoteliers that you won't get anywhere else.

Registration is now open! Visit AAHOA.com/2020Regionals to learn more.

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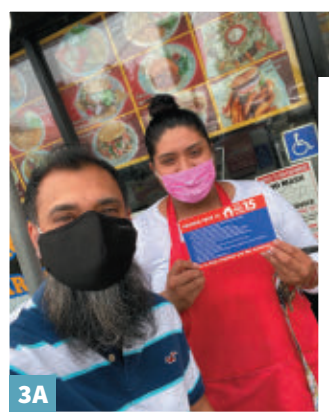
AAHOA MEMBERS IN ACTION



1A, 1B & 1C. AAHOA Gulf Regional Director Nimesh (Nick) Zaver, CHO, Ambassadors Jiten Zaveri, Dhruvin Patel, and Hiren Zaveri, and AAHOA Members distributed food to those in need with BAPS New Orleans, Houston, and Beaumont, TX, and United Way at Iowa High School in Iowa, LA.



2. AAHOA's 2020 Charlotte Charity Golf Tournament raised more than \$67,000 to benefit 11 local and national charities. This event was hosted outdoors August 1-2 at the Golf Club at Ballantyne with appropriate social-distancing measures, masks, and other health and safety protocols in place.



3A & 3B. Greater Los Angeles Area Ambassador Sanjay Patel and his family spent the weekend of October 17 advocating for the defeat of Proposition 15. Prop 15 would amend the California State Constitution to require commercial and industrial properties, except those zoned as commercial agriculture, to be taxed based on their market value rather than their purchase price. The proposition was defeated at the polls.



4. AAHOA congratulates Florida Member and Elevate Inc. Founder Aakash Patel on being named to the Visit Tampa Bay Advisory Board. "It's an honor to join this group, which plays an important role in one of the most significant sectors of our economy," Patel said.

Today's Hotelier Statement of Ownership

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STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

(Act of August 12, 1970: Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code)

1. Title of publication: *Today's Hotelier*
2. Publication no.: 2417-4062
3. Date of filing: October 05, 2020
4. Frequency of issue: Monthly
5. No. of issues published annually: 12
6. Annual subscription price: \$0.00
7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: Asian American Hotel Owners Association, Inc., 1100 Abernathy Road, Suite 725, Atlanta, Georgia 30328
8. Complete mailing address of headquarters or general business offices of the publisher: Naylor LLC, 1430 Spring Hill Road, 6th Floor, McLean, VA 22102
9. Full names and complete mailing address of publisher, editor and managing editor:
 Publisher: Heather Greyling, 1430 Spring Hill Road, 6th Floor, McLean, VA 22102
 Editor: Sarah Sain, 1430 Spring Hill Road, 6th Floor, McLean, VA 22102
 Managing Editor: Geneva Toddy 900 North Point Parkway, Suite 100, Alpharetta, GA, 30005
10. Owner is Asian American Hotel Owners Association, Inc., 1100 Abernathy Road, Suite 1100, Atlanta, Georgia 30328
11. Known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities: None
12. Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
13. Publication title: *Today's Hotelier*
14. Issue date for circulation data below: December
15. Extent and nature of circulation:

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total no. copies (Net press run)	7,883	6,935
b. Paid circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail)		
(1) Mailed Outside County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541		
(2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541	7,033	6,367
(3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS®		
(4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS		
c. Total Paid Distribution	7,033	6,367
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(1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541	0	0
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(3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS	0	0
(4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail	0	0
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	825	552
f. Total Distribution	7,858	6,919
g. Copies Not Distributed	25	16
h. Total	7,883	6,935
i. Percent Paid	100	100
16. Electronic Copy Circulation		
a. Paid Electronic Copies		
b. Total Paid Print Copies (Line 15c) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	7,033	6,367
c. Total Print Distribution (Line 15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (Line 16a)	7,858	6,919
d. Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies (16b divided by 16c x 100)	90	92
17. Publication of Statement of Ownership: November 2017		

I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

Cecil P. Staton, President & CEO, AAHOA



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