



Media Contact:  
Chris Moyer  
Sr. Director of Communications  
248-840-7332  
cmoyer@visitdetroit.com

**For Immediate Release**

**Winners Announced at the 26<sup>th</sup> ROSE Awards  
Metro Detroit Hospitality Community Celebrates the Best in the  
Tourism Industry at the 26<sup>th</sup> ROSE Awards**

DETROIT – Visit Detroit honored 67 members of the metro Detroit hospitality community for their excellent customer service at the 26th Recognition of Service Excellence (ROSE) Awards. The award ceremony celebration took place on Sept. 8, 2022, at the Max M. & Marjorie S. Fisher Music Center.

More than 440,000 professionals in Southeast Michigan work in the hospitality industry, and for more than a quarter century, the ROSE Awards have highlighted their vital role in our community. This year’s awards were particularly poignant after the challenges the industry has faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The metro Detroit hospitality community has shown remarkable resiliency over the past two years and served as impeccable ambassadors to the millions of people who visit the region each year,” said Visit Detroit President & CEO Claude Molinari. “Visit Detroit is honored to host the ROSE Awards as a small token of our appreciation for all the work our partners do to provide exemplary customer service.”

ROSE Award nominations were provided by clients, guests, supervisors and the general public. One winner in each of the six categories was chosen. Additionally, one overall service champion, selected by a panel of expert hospitality professionals was also recognized.

The 2022 category winners were:

- Volunteers — Elena Nuno, Volunteer/ Volunteer Delegate, Detroit Riverfront Conservancy
- Attractions and Casinos – Christos Polymeneas, Technology Engineer, The Henry Ford
- Transportation – James (Jim) Jordan, Chauffeur, Golden Limousine
- Restaurants – Gregory Curtiss, Bartender and Bar Back, Tin Roof
- Behind the Scenes – Darrell Lewis, Building Mechanic, Engineering Department at Huntington Place
- Hotels – Jill Schmittling, Banquet Server, Embassy Suites – Troy Auburn Hills

The 2022 Overall Service Champion was Raymond Braggs, laundry attendant and purchasing receiving clerk at The Henry, Autograph Collection. Colleagues describe Raymond as “a passionate giver with the patience of an angel and the work ethic of Bill Gates.” He goes above and beyond for the team and serves his family and community when he is not at work.

WXYZ’s Glenda Lewis served as mistress of ceremonies for the evening, which included entertainment by Alvin Waddles & Choir, Darian Taschner, SIAS, John E. Lawrence, DJ and Hypeman Steve Coleman and Ballinger Entertainment.



For more information about the ROSE Awards, go to [theroseawards.com](http://theroseawards.com).

\*Photos available upon request.\*

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Visit Detroit is a private, not-for-profit organization with a mission to drive regional tourism and economic impact by connecting the world to our diverse communities, rich history and spirit of innovation. Visit Detroit is the catalyst for bringing business travel, connections, trade shows, events, and leisure travelers to our region.

More than 700 businesses are represented in the Visit Detroit membership. Visit Detroit was founded in 1896 as the world's first convention and visitors bureau, and more than 700 business are represented in the membership. [Visitdetroit.com](http://Visitdetroit.com).

#### **Addendum I: Additional Information on Award Winners**

**Overall Service Champion: Raymond Braggs-** Raymond works as a laundry attendant and purchasing receiving clerk at The Henry, Autograph Collection. More than ten people nominated him for the ROSE awards because of his fantastic work ethic and contribution to enhancing organizational culture. Raymond also helps lead The Henry's work with the Mixer Institute in Lincoln Park, MI, and their School-to-Work program, which helps young adults on the autism spectrum to gain critical skills to enter the workforce. His assistance led to The Henry hiring two Mixer students full-time. Outside of work, Raymond is dedicated to his family and community. He consistently visits his immobile uncle around his house with errands and helps his diabetic mother with tasks around the house. Raymond resides in Detroit, MI.

**Volunteers Category: Elena Nuno-** Elena serves as a volunteer/ volunteer delegate for the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy. She has more than 506 hours of service on the Detroit Riverfront, including 124 this year. Her thoughtful, knowledgeable, and welcoming approach contributes to the culture that has made Detroit's riverfront the number one riverfront in the United States, according to USA Today, for two consecutive years. Elena lives in Detroit, MI.

**Attractions and Casinos Category: Christos Polymeneas-** Christos works as a technology engineer for The Henry Ford at the Ford Rouge Factory Tour. Christos has been a driving force in creating a fantastic experience on the tour for more than 16 years. He is committed to ensuring everyone gets the best experience, exemplified by his work to embed open captions on all the videos during the tour so that deaf and hard of-hearing guests could enjoy the fullest. Christos lives in Redford, MI.

**Transportation Category: James (Jim) Jordan-** Jim is a chauffeur for Golden Limousine. While driving several passengers to Ann Arbor on May 25th, 2022, he saw a man beating a woman on the side of the road. Several bystanders were recording the violence on their phones instead of intervening. Without a second thought, Jim stopped the vehicle, told his passengers to call 911, and confronted the aggressor himself. Through his bravery and quick thinking, he was able to stop the violence and restrain the man until authorities arrived. Jim resides in Canton, MI.

**Restaurants Category: Gregory Curtiss-** Greg is a bartender and bar-back at Tin Roof in Detroit, where he goes above and beyond to be a positive leader and support system for his team members. He is the type of person that checks in on others and makes sure they are doing well, even during the hardest and busiest times of the year. His willingness to care for others makes a significant positive contribution to the work culture of Tin Roof. Greg lives in Detroit, MI.

**Behind the Scenes: Darrell Lewis-** Darrell is the building mechanic in the engineering department at Huntington Place. Darrell was a laborer for 34 years when he took it upon himself to go through more than 250 hours of classroom instruction to gain the certification and knowledge to run all facets of the convention center's building maintenance. Huntington Place is the 16th largest convention center in the United States, and he serves as the only building mechanic, which is a further testament to his work ethic and talent. Darrell lives in Chesterfield, MI.

**Hotels: Jill Schmittling-** Jill is a banquet Server at the Embassy Suites – Troy Auburn Hills. Jill has worked there since 2015, and although the COVID-19 layoffs initially impacted her, she was brought back full-time in July 2020. Since then, she has been instrumental in helping the hotel navigate the challenges of the last two years, going above and beyond while the property has struggled with staffing challenges. Jill lives in Milford, MI.