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For Immediate Release

Winners Announced at the 28th ROSE Awards Metro Detroit Hospitality Community Celebrates the Best in the Hospitality and Travel Industries at the 28th ROSE Awards

DETROIT – Excellence in hospitality and service was honored by Visit Detroit at the 28th Recognition of Service Excellence (ROSE) Awards. Nearly 110,000 people in Southeast Michigan work in an industry connected to hospitality and travel, and 134 of those professionals were honored at the event. More than 500 industry colleagues attended the award ceremony that took place on August 21, 2024, at the Sound Board Theater at the MotorCity Casino Hotel.

"Detroit's momentum as a premier destination is undeniable, with major events like the record-breaking NFL Draft and the reopening of Michigan Central showcasing our city's vitality is being shown on a global stage," said Visit Detroit President & CEO Claude Molinari. "Visitors are returning in droves, contributing billions to our local economy, and this success is a testament to the tireless efforts of our hospitality industry professionals. Our region's success is made possible by the dedication and passion of those we honor at the ROSE Awards."

The 134 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 2024 category winners were:

- Volunteers — **Sandra Stevenson, Volunteer, The Parade Company**
- Attractions and Casinos – **Brittany Grams, Logistics and Administration Specialist, Guest Services, The Henry Ford**
- Transportation – **Connie Solimanto, Customer Service Lead, Delta Airlines**
- Restaurants – **Cheryl Cusumano-Gadson, Lead Server, 200 West Lounge – Detroit Marriott Troy**
Behind the Scenes – Kendrick Ashford, Guest Services/Security, St. Andrew's Hall, The Shelter & Society Room
- Hotels – **Michelle Kelley, Events Specialist, Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center**

The 2024 Overall Service Champion was **Valerie Myaard-Martin, Front Desk Agent, The Henry, Autograph Collection.**

McLaughlin Award for Hospitality

The William F. McLaughlin Award for Service Excellence was awarded to the **House of Pure Vin**. By empowering staff to solve customers' problems, the House of Pure Vin ensures that every customer feels heard and cared for. Prioritizing the customer starts by taking care of their employees, by offering comprehensive training, education, and an integrated rewards system that recognizes exceptional work.



Furthermore, the House of Pure Vin has served as a beacon for uplifting Black-owned businesses throughout the city of Detroit, particularly during the NFL Draft.

WDIV's Priya Mann served as the emcee for the evening, which included entertainment by Angela Davis and E3 Detroit.

For more information about the ROSE Awards, go to theroseawards.com.

Photos available upon request.

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Visit Detroit is the official destination marketing organization for the city of Detroit, dedicated to promoting Detroit as a world-class destination for leisure and business travelers. With a focus on showcasing the city's vibrant culture, rich history, and diverse attractions, Visit Detroit aims to drive tourism, economic growth, and community pride. 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 businesses are represented in the membership. For more information go to visitdetroit.com.

Addendum I: Additional Information on Award Winners

Overall Service Champion: Valerie Myaard-Martin – Valerie is a front desk agent at The Henry, Autograph Collection in Dearborn. Her colleagues describe her as the embodiment of hospitality, consistently going above and beyond for every guest. Valerie's quick thinking and composure were crucial when she performed CPR on a three-year-old boy, saving his life.

Volunteers Category: Sandra Stevenson – Sandra takes immense pride in her volunteer work with The Parade Company. Her unwavering dedication to the organization ensures that major events like the Ford Fireworks and the Thanksgiving Day Parade are executed flawlessly, bringing joy and wonder to countless attendees.

Attractions and Casinos Category: Brittany Grams – Brittany is a Logistics and Administration Specialist in Guest Services at The Henry Ford. She consistently provides world-class service, always anticipating and resolving potential issues before they arise. Brittany's passion for her work is matched by her extensive knowledge, which helps guests have an exceptional experience during their visit.

Transportation Category: Connie Solimanto – Connie is a Customer Service Lead for Delta Airlines. She upholds the highest standards of customer service while maintaining a bright and positive attitude. Connie makes a difference in her work environment every day, creating memorable moments for both customers and colleagues.

Restaurants Category: Cheryl Cusumano-Gadson – Cheryl is a Lead Server at 200 West Lounge in the Detroit Marriott Troy. With 21 years of experience, Cheryl exemplifies customer service excellence. She treats everyone with warmth, care, and respect, which is why many regular patrons specifically request her by name.

Behind the Scenes: Kendrick Ashford – Kendrick works in Guest Services and Security at St. Andrew’s Hall, The Shelter, and Society Room. Known as the perfect team player, Kendrick's work ethic is second to none. His positive attitude and unwavering commitment help create a safe, hospitable, and enjoyable environment for both customers and colleagues.

Hotels: Michelle Kelley – Michelle is an Events Specialist at the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center. She is regarded as the backbone of the event planning team, having implemented initiatives that streamline services and ensure consistent, high-quality experiences for guests. Michelle’s attention to detail extends to her colleagues as well, with her "get-to-know-you" initiative making everyone feel recognized and appreciated.

Addendum II: Prizes for Overall Service Champion and Category Winners

Overall Service Champion prizes

- \$1,500 Cash
- Two Round Trip Tickets for Travel within US/Canada – Mexico/Caribbean provided by Delta Air Lines
- Four Suite Tickets for a Show at the Fox Theatre during the 2024-25 Season plus Lunch or Dinner with Nonalcoholic Beverages on the Loge Level Prior to the Show
- Detroit Tigers Game Tickets (4)
- Crystal Award
- Two Dozen Red Roses
- One Bottle of Champagne

Category Winners

- \$500 Visa Gift Card
- One Complimentary Roundtrip Tickets within US48/Canada provided by Delta Air Lines
- Detroit Tigers Game Tickets (2)
- Crystal Award
- One Dozen Red Roses
- One Bottle of Champagne