

Inaugural HERTels by Choice Development Seminar Empowers the Next Generation of Hospitality Leaders, Advances Choice Hotels' Commitment to Diverse Owner Base

ROCKVILLE, Md., March 23, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Building on its longstanding efforts to increase diversity across the hospitality industry, Choice Hotels International, Inc. (NYSE: CHH), one of the world's leading lodging franchisors, kicked off its inaugural HERTels by Choice Development Seminar with nearly 40 franchise owners, general managers, and hotel associates in attendance as part of a series of events to commemorate Woman's History Month on Monday, March 20.

Inaugural HERTels by Choice Hotels development seminar empowers the next generation of hospitality leaders.

"While industry-wide parity is improving, with more female investors, directors, and leaders in hospitality than ever before, women entrepreneurs still face significant economic and societal barriers when it comes to hotel ownership and development. As an industry, we owe it to the next generation of hoteliers to change this statistic, which is why Choice is proud to be at the forefront of rebalancing the scales of opportunity through HERTels by Choice," said John Lancaster, vice president, emerging markets, franchise development and owner relationships, Choice Hotels. "This initiative and the invaluable resources it provides is a natural extension of our industry-leading emerging markets program and our enduring commitment to helping growth-minded entrepreneurs further their unique ownership journey."

The event, the first-of-its-kind seminar hosted by a major hotel company, addressed the discrepancy in hotel ownership rates for women by empowering female owners with a day of training, education sessions, and networking opportunities. In addition to encouraging women owners to build confidence and leverage best practices in the lending, construction and hotel operations processes, the seminar also aimed to advance the opportunity of hotel ownership to underrepresented entrepreneurs by connecting prospective hoteliers with industry veterans and Choice executives.

"It is truly remarkable to be here today, on the eve of HUNTER, one of the largest lodging conferences. I remember the time when we'd have strategic networking sessions at events—in the ladies' room. I will never take for granted having a room full of powerful, incredible, and intelligent women talking about equity moving forward to hotel ownership," said keynote speaker Dia Simms, CEO, Lobos 1707 Tequila & Mezcal.

For two decades, Choice's emerging markets development program has been dedicated to making small business ownership a reality for underrepresented populations, including women entrepreneurs. Along with tailored training and enhanced financing incentives—including access to designated lending and entitlement experts to help entrepreneurs strengthen their application package—personalized mentorship and networking are key differentiators of HERTels by Choice.

"One of the most significant barriers to hotel ownership is a lack of industry connections, and as a program built for women, by women, HERTels serves as an important link in closing this gap," said third-generation hotelier Jyoti Sarolia, president & CEO, Ellis Hospitality. "Choice Hotels was the first brand that I owned which taught me how to build and grow my portfolio. Choice teaches you operations, revenue management, competitive sales and marketing, HR tips, and more on Choice University. There's so much support allowing you to own any brand you desire and grow as big as you want with brands that are above or alongside your segment."

Since launching the HERTels program in 2021, Choice Hotels has awarded more than 50 contracts specifically to women entrepreneurs. In addition to HERTels by Choice, Choice Hotels continues to foster female hotel ownership through sponsorships and support at women-focused conferences on hotel ownership, including:

- She Has a Deal, an education and investment platform for aspiring women hotel investors and developers

- Fortuna's Table, an online community for diverse potential hotel owners to learn, inspire, network, plan and collaborate on the path to hotel investment and ownership
- Black Girls In Real Estate Conference

"As a premier franchisor, savvy hoteliers recognize working with Choice Hotels means the opportunity to go into business for themselves – not by themselves – and the HERtels by Choice program is no exception," said Anna Scozzafava, vice president and general manager, extended stay brands, Choice Hotels. "Whether their dream of hotel ownership involves a new construction project or a turnkey conversion opportunity, Choice Hotels has the proven brands, technology, and business support owners need to hit the ground running and achieve their hospitality goals."

For more information about HERtels and upcoming events, as well as Choice Hotels development opportunities, visit www.choicehotelsdevelopment.com/diversity.

About Choice Hotels®

Choice Hotels International, Inc. (NYSE: CHH) is one of the largest lodging franchisors in the world. A challenger in the upscale segment and a leader in midscale and extended stay, Choice® has nearly 7,500 hotels, representing almost 630,000 rooms, in 47 countries and territories. A diverse portfolio of 22 brands that run the gamut from full-service, upper upscale properties to midscale, extended stay and economy enables Choice® to meet travelers' needs in more places and for more occasions while driving more value for franchise owners and shareholders. The award-winning Choice Privileges® loyalty program and co-brand credit card options provide members with a fast and easy way to earn reward nights and personalized perks. For more information, visit www.choicehotels.com.


Addendum

This is not an offering. No offer or sale of a franchise will be made except by a Franchise Disclosure Document first filed and registered with applicable state authorities. A copy of the Franchise Disclosure Document can be obtained through contacting Choice Hotels International at 1 Choice Hotels Circle, Suite 400, Rockville, MD 20850, development@choicehotels.com.

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