

Choice VP Honored for Work in Bringing Hotel Ownership Opportunities to Underrepresented Groups

Choice has a long history of creating and bolstering hotel ownership opportunities for underrepresented minority entrepreneurs, and we are extremely proud that the person who has led that effort for the last three years and been involved with it for many more is being honored for his work by an organization that is deeply familiar with it.

John Lancaster, Choice Hotels' Vice President for Emerging Markets, Franchise Development and Owner Relationships, received the "Chairman's Award" from the National Association of Black Hotel Owners, Operators & Developers (NABHOOD), which advocates on behalf of African American hoteliers. The award was presented to John by NABHOOD President and CEO Andy Ingraham at the group's 27th Annual International African American Hotel Ownership and Investment Summit in Miami in recognition of his efforts to promote diversity in hotel ownership, operations and development.

"I'm truly honored and humbled to receive this award," said Lancaster. "I wake up every morning with a commitment to help create generational wealth for underrepresented minorities in our industry. It's more than a job to me - it's a purpose. And I'm proud of Choice's leadership and passion for fueling diversity and equitable opportunity."

Choice was the first hotel company to establish a dedicated team solely focused on extending the opportunity of hotel ownership to underrepresented populations. Our Emerging Markets Program was developed nearly 20 years ago to build relationships within the African American, Hispanic, Native American and veteran communities and provide incentives for new franchisees, such as financial awards and educational opportunities. The program has grown ten-fold since its inception and has now awarded and supported more than 345 diverse franchisee participants.

In 2020, Choice formed the Choice Hotel Owners African American Alliance (CHOAAA), offering African American franchisees a forum to engage with company leadership. In 2021, we launched the HERtels by Choice, which is a program to provide training, education, mentorship and financial assistance to women entrepreneurs and help them thrive as Choice franchisees. Last year, Entrepreneur magazine named us one of "The 50 Franchise Companies Doing the Most to Champion Diversity." We are also proud of the fact that nearly 70 percent of Choice's franchised hotels in the U.S. are owned by Asian Americans, with many first-, second-, and third-generation owners from the same families.

So congratulations to John from everyone here at Choice! We are committed to continuing to champion diversity within the hotel industry, and we are grateful to have him leading that important effort.

Additional assets available online: [Photos \(1\)](#)

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