

Marta Federline

“A leader with the heart of a teacher”

*Sheraton University City Philadelphia
Director of Catering
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2005*



Her birthplace was Brazil but a new life in America rested on her heart. As an elementary school teacher in Brazil she would dream of opportunities. A chance to nanny two children in New Jersey gave her those wings to fly and she found her path to America. Soon she was a retail manager at a bakery in Philadelphia and a certain hotel known as the Sheraton University City bought their cakes from her. The bridge to Meyer Jabara was built and Marta marched across it.

Today Marta rallies a team of empowered individuals. She proudly states, “I believe they could practically run the department themselves!” She is a teacher and a teacher is successful when her students demonstrate their learning through their behaviors. Always teaching, always coaching and celebrating successes. There is a lot to celebrate in the catering department at the Sheraton. They have smashed their goals, rocked on TripAdvisor, GEI surveys and Associate Satisfaction. Her team receives the most positive TripAdvisor comments and guest comments of all departments.

Two words that are often used by team members to describe Marta: honesty and integrity. She is quick however to praise others, giving significant gratitude to Chef Rodney Gonzalez for helping her get to where she is today. She is grateful for feedback and coaching, knowing that is the only way to continuously learn and grow. She is the queen of feedback and forward thinking.

Marta is a passionate volunteer. She is active in rescuing animals - - often finding one or two to bring home. She works with the Delaware County SPCA to find loving homes for these lost friends. She is also very active with Alex's Lemonade Stand and the Fundraising Walk for Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Life in America is fulfilling for this once shy immigrant. Today she is bravely loving, giving and not afraid to share her thoughts. Her three sisters and brother still live in Brazil. She enjoys life here with her partner Derrick and finds special moments in catching movies and quietly appreciating valued relationships.

Joe Kelly

“...It’s not enough to just know The Journey .. We must live it!”

***Sheraton University City Philadelphia
General Manager
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 1998***



Joe Kelly lives The Journey. “This is not just a business culture set of principles and procedures. The Journey is something we live - - at work and at home. It is a way of life.” Joe Kelly speaks these words with conviction. “We have a culture called The Journey and once you understand it and see the results it creates both in the workplace and in your personal life, you wonder why others haven’t created the same kind of culture.” He ends his statement with, “I am a believer. I have seen the difference it can make.”

Joe Kelly came to Meyer Jabara Hotels in January of 1998 as the General Manager of the Stamford Marriott. He had worked previously with the Westin and Lowes. Two years ago he joined the Sheraton University City as General Manager. The Journey culture has taught Joe that it is all about the people and relationships. Daily interactions with guests and associates makes him better prepared to help create success for all stakeholders.

His team credits Joe with a positive, CAN-DO attitude. He strives to empower each individual to engage in active conversations about what is happening, new learning, obstacles and opportunities. “Communication at the hotel has never been more transparent,” states one truly happy associate.

When Joe accepted the position at the Sheraton he delved deeply into the teachings of The Journey culture...first as a renewed student and then as a mentor and teacher. He engages frequently in Journey chats with managers and strives to inspire others to fully engage in this differentiating culture. He even wrote his own 15 year MJ story and shared it with the entire leadership team. The results of the hotel reflect this leadership, posting columns of green and achieving 100% of their goals. And a General Manager satisfaction score of 99.2% is nothing to sneeze at! The TripAdvisor story is one of rags to riches, finishing at 28 when the trek began at the 53rd position.

Joe Kelly continues to expand the hotel’s presence in the local community, strengthening the relationship with both PENN and Drexel Universities. He serves lemonade to raise money for childhood cancers, makes turkey dinners for families in need and stops by the 18th police district to help feed kindergarten children. Joe encourages his entire team to get involved and make a positive difference.

Joe has been married to his life partner Lori for 27 years. They have two sons in their twenties and one high maintenance dog. He enjoys cooking, golf, watching most sports, reading and enjoying the moments life gives.

Joe Kelly - - - forever on a journey.

Charlene May

“...Her laughter and smile are infectious ... in a good way!”

***Residence Inn Amelia Island
Sales Coordinator
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey 2013***

And the day begins with, “How can I help you?” Charlene May is just doing what she believes she was put here to do...help others.

On a busy summer morning in Amelia Island guests find Charlene handing out sharks’ teeth from her own personal collection. She bends down and engages with each and every child. Eyes wide. Stories flowing like warm syrup. She calls this act, “Making Dreams Come True.”

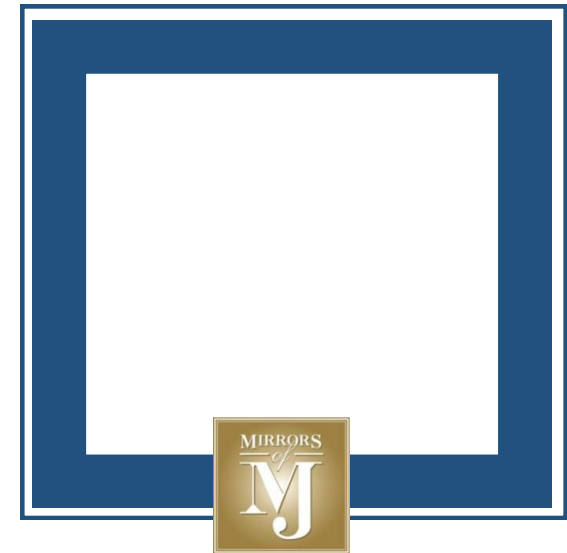
She is also a performer at heart. No matter what the celebration or holiday of the month, Charlene has a costume! With a Mary Poppins style satchel full of tricks she dons everything from pirate costumes for Shrimp Festival to the friendliest of scary Halloween witches. An associate’s 91-year-old mother had her first Halloween costume made by Charlene. And she won second place at her Senior Day Care Halloween Party dressed as Tinker Bell!

Charlene is happiest when she is serving others. She is the hotel’s Relay for Life representative and chairs the Spirit to Serve Committee. She engages the entire team in opportunities to volunteer, raise money, serve those in need and make the world a better place. But she also understands her role as Sales Coordinator, analyzing every sale by the segmentation report, studying the monthly budget and consequently time after time exceeding the Public Room Rental budgeted goal.

Charlene joined Meyer Jabara in Amelia Island as a Front Desk Associate and was promoted in 2015 to Sales Coordinator. She models the true definition of Change Agent...suggesting new set-ups for the Conference Room, new breakfast décor, sales techniques and public space guest engagement. She has become known as the “Go To” person for the team.

Charlene grew up in Alaska with three sisters and four brothers. It was a pack for sure and she learned how to work together to get things done. She can hunt and track wild animals and is an avid fisherwoman. She can fix a car, analyze Nascar, serve food to the homeless, giggle with children and explore the beaches like a pirate on a treasure hunt. To know her is to know “fearless.”

An environment of delivering memorable moments and making that a profitable business is a direct result of Charlene May’s contributions.



Abigail Clarke

“...always...always...whatever is in the best interests of the associates...that’s Gail!”

Home Office

Senior Vice President of Human Resources

Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 1983



When questions arise, “Is what we are offering them really helpful?”; “Are the tools we are giving them really making a positive difference?”; “Is the process easy to understand?”; Does everyone have access?”; “How can we make it better for them?”; “Will they be healthier, safer, and happier?” ...you know the one on the asking end of the question is Gail Clarke.

She is an others-centered leader.

In all organizations COMMUNICATION is both an obstacle and an opportunity. Everyone wants more communication. Gail championed this effort with the formation of the company intranet. Today that tool is enhancing the transparency within Meyer Jabara and has become a daily valuable tool. Ideas are shared, accomplishments are celebrated and conversations are alive. Gail ensures information is available with the click of a mouse.

Thanks to Gail teammates are Stretching and Flexing together. She encourages a healthy lifestyle and models that behavior herself. She is a leader who walks the talk. She is honest, authentic and positive, always doing what is best, what is right and is of service to others.

This heart of a servant is also apparent in Gail’s volunteerism, spearheading the company’s United Way initiatives, serving on the board of “Dream Come True”, volunteering at her church and working to support Danbury Hospital.

Gail has been married to James for twenty years and enjoys watching their daughter, Tamar grow through her adulthood. She graduated from Western Connecticut State University and received her Certificate in HR from Cornell University. She enjoys reading murder mysteries, gardening – even though her vegetable garden might just do her in, and being known in certain circles as “the iron lady.”

Abigail Clarke looks at The Journey as an opportunity, “If an associate decides to learn it and live it, they will learn and grow within the company. Meyer Jabara Hotels is truly a place to grow.”

And Gail has grown...starting over 25 years ago helping out with administration and now leading the Human Resources effort.

Mohammad Khan

“...our culture promotes self-improvement, learning and successful results.”

***Hyatt Place Flushing
Assistant General Manager
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2014***



He loves to play soccer, do volunteer work and watch politics. WOW! What a year he is enjoying watching the politics of this presidential race. But no matter what is happening outside of his home, Mohammad Khan begins his day reminding himself how fortunate he is to have a great life, his health, a loving family, awesome job, great company, free country and a mountain of opportunities before him. He looks at life as a journey and he feels fortunate to be journeying with Meyer Jabara Hotels.

When asked which Journey principle resonates most with him he emphatically replies, “Heart Connections and Partnerships.” This principle guides his life. Twenty-seven years with his wife Sadia has produced a partnership that is raising incredibly successful children...a daughter in medical school, a daughter studying micro-biology engineering and a son accepted into Bronx High School of Science. He is fostering this kind of partnership mentality in the workplace as well, mentoring others to seek understanding of the needs and wishes of each guest and associate. He believes this principle to be at the core of The Journey.

One afternoon his team discovered a guest in the lobby that was having trouble walking. He had lost feeling in his left leg. Mohammad insisted they call an ambulance but the guest refused. Unwilling to just drop it Mohammad summoned the shuttle and he joined the guest and his wife on a trip to the nearest hospital. The shuttle returned later to escort them back to the hotel safe and sound. As the guest checked out he was overcome with emotion and hugged Mohammed sincerely. So he just had to travel with them one more time as they shuttled to the airport on their journey home. Mohammed explains, “Caring for our guests in this manner is a choice we are encouraged to make. I am personally pleased that we were able to connect with him and deliver extraordinary, empathic hospitality.”

In 1980 Mohammad graduated from Dhaka University in Bangladesh with a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Management. Once in America he achieved his Bachelor’s Degree in Hotel Management from City University New York. With those degrees he began creating guest experiences as Room Service Manager for the Waldorf Astoria. Staying in New York he worked his hospitality magic at the Palace Hotel, Jean Georges at Trump International Hotel and Tower, the Marriott Renaissance New York, The Doubletree, Holiday Inn Manhattan View and the Hyatt Place Midtown.

Mohammed manages the Astoria Islamic Foundation, Inc., and is involved in the Mayor’s “Save the World” zero waste challenge. He views a great day as one where associates are happy, guests are satisfied, owners are happy and there is a lot of business to tend to.

Mohammed Kahn is in the business of creating memorable moments for others and himself.

Stacey Pacific

“... “thoughts become things” so I think positive thoughts and create positive things.”

***La Quinta Inn and Suites – Danbury
General Manager
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2008***



Stacey started with the Meyer Jabara Call Center in 2008. She was reliable, guest-centered and eager to learn. So when the opportunity opened at the nearby La Quinta, Stacey was an obvious choice. She has served the hotel as a Front Desk Sales Representative, Sales Coordinator, Sales Manager, Front Office Manager, Operations Manager and recently was promoted to General Manager. She began under The Journey umbrella when she was only 22 years old. Learning and application of that learning is a daily quest for Stacey. “When I look over our arrivals list and see that I know the majority of names and their stories, my heart is full. I know we are doing something right because they keep coming back.”

Being a part of The Journey allows Stacey to realize she is a part of something bigger than herself. “This company is a team and everyone is working toward not only achieving our results but making the world a better place along the way.” Mr. Jabara received a letter recently from a mother-of-a-bride who chose to have their reception at La Quinta. It reads, “There is one employee in particular that I think deserves special recognition. Her name is Stacey Pacific. At all of the hotels, I was taken on tours and told about the rooms, etc. The big difference was that, as I made the rounds with Stacey, she immediately made me feel like this was not just a job to her but that she was truly interested in my daughter, her wedding and me.....When the wedding was over we had several out of town guests to our home for a dinner. I was thrilled to hear how everyone loved your hotel and each commented on how well they were treated by the staff.”

That’s just a day at the office for Stacey Pacific. She conducts stand-ups and uses quotes from The Journey to focus the learning. She raises the Terrible Truths and encourages each to look in the mirror and master their own personal growth. She lives by the principle, “I can’t change you...but I can change me and how I choose to respond or react.” Positivity produces positivity.

Stacey graduated from Western Connecticut State University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Human Resources. She is a self-proclaimed washed-up athlete who enjoys watching and playing all sports. Her heart dances when she volunteers, working with United Way of Western Connecticut, volunteering with Ability Beyond and Regional Hospice and Homecare. She would like her heart to dance over someone significantly special and is eager to have us market this opportunity during the Mirrors event!

Stacey Pacific, striving every day to make the world a better place!

Galen Elliott

“...putting a smile on someone’s face. That’s my job.”

Chapel Hill University Inn

Front Desk Supervisor

Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2010



Family means everything to Galen Elliott. His mother inspired him to enter the hospitality field. She taught him service to others and the art of making guests feel welcome...working in the industry herself for more than twenty years. He thinks of the team in Chapel Hill as his other family. Stacie Williamson is like a sister. Susan Watts is the mom. He likes to do his very best for his work family, supporting them in their endeavors just like he does his real family.

The Journey principle of Empowerment is Galen’s favorite. But he doesn’t just think of it as a principle that encourages him to take action to resolve problems or make budget. He sees it as an opportunity to engage with the guest and create meaningful, memorable moments. For example, one day a guest checked into the hotel to begin her medical treatment at the hospital. She was in stage 4 cancer. She was giving up and felt alone. Galen stepped out from the behind the front desk, took her hand and spent about an hour talking about the power of God’s hands. She returned to the hotel several months later specifically to thank him for helping her get through the toughest day of her life. It is moments like these that Galen realizes the power of the hospitality business to make a difference in the world. He is honored to work for a company that empowers him to make that difference.

“I was greeted warmly by Galen.” “Galen was nice and very helpful.” “Galen’s friendliness exceeded my expectations.” “I would stay here again because of the friendliness of Galen.” These comments on TripAdvisor are not rare; they are the norm. The hotel embraces a motto: “Accept everybody equally and help people.” Galen personifies that motto.

The same care Galen demonstrates for guests and family is placed into his favorite hobby of detailing cars. He likes to take care of things and relationships. He recently became engaged to his partner of two years and they enjoy spoiling Dutch the pit bull.

Galen grew up in Meyer Jabara Hotels right before the eyes of leadership. He is an A Player every day. Now he is the trainer. Now he is a differentiator. Now he is a Mirror. What does Galen Elliott think about the culture of Meyer Jabara Hotels? “This company helps me become a better man.”

And that is what it’s all about.

Leilani Rasmussen

“...her positive outlook on work and life is infectious as well as her smile and attitude!”

*Ocala Hilton
Human Resources Manager
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2008*



Leilani knows everyone by their name and the story of their family. She sings when she really shouldn't and smiles when she should. Leilani puts 110% into everything she touches.

There is one name in the hospitality world that comes to mind when thinking about a good neighbor. It is the Ocala Hilton. But it hasn't always been that way. A few years ago the community outreach at the hotel was non-existent. Enter Leilani Rasmussen. Today the hotel sponsors blood drives, cancer and heart walks, houses are built in Habitat for Humanity, food banks are filled, the Shriner's Hospitals are served...and the list goes on. The hotel is currently working with Goodwill employing two from the program. All because Leilani sees to it.

Keeping The Journey alive in the hotel is a responsibility Leilani embraces with passion. She created the "Daily Down Low" highlighting events at the hotel, daily room rate, birthdays, anniversaries and fun-to-know information. She masters the Journey board in the breakroom and is a facilitator for Living The Journey classes. Monthly and yearly associate recognitions are done showcasing Journey principles and elevating personal accomplishments. She conducts quarterly town hall meetings, the associate summer picnic and the holiday party. Each time she creates an event for the associates she approaches it with the utmost of care and empathy.

Leilani was born in Maui. Her family was in the service and she traveled with them often, living in Maryland and Florida. In 1998 they returned to Hawaii but Leilani stayed stateside. She was newly married and wanted to start her life here. Today she has a 21-year-old daughter studying Marine Biology back in Hawaii near family. She embraces life with her 11-year-old son Ethan who is active in all kinds of sports.

From where does Leilani get her strength? The people. Knowing that each day is going to be different and within that day will be an opportunity to help someone... that excites this special Mirror of MJ.

Ashley Neumann

“...she didn’t find the hospitality world, it found her.”

The Center at Holiday Inn – Allentown, Pennsylvania
Operations Manager
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2009



She started her life journey working in a daycare and then became a nanny. Her education journey began in fashion, switching to Early Childhood Education and then to Sociology. While majoring in Sociology a Professor recommended she enter Criminal Justice. She created a path to attend Georgetown Law School from where her father had graduated. During school she worked at The Hampton Inn and hospitality chose her. Ashley Neumann was hooked.

Her voicemail is nearly full. She likes it that way. She keeps the calls received from guests sharing stories of associates going above and beyond. When she needs a little pick-me-up she just replays them...reminding her of the importance of this business.

“We are not just a place where people sleep and leave,” Ashley explains. “We create moments with people that they will remember for years to come. My father always told me, ‘choose a profession you love and you will never have to work another day in your life.’ I don’t work anymore.” Ashley realizes people choose to spend their big moments in life with those in hospitality...weddings, anniversaries, baby showers, sweet 16 parties, and their vacations. That is a big responsibility. She takes it very seriously. “Creating memorable moments is like placing a footprint on someone’s heart. It is everlasting. What an awesome feeling to know we are able to make that kind of impact.”

A great day for Ashley is when the hotel is slammed and everyone is working hard together to make it all work. She feels a part of the team and that is important to her happiness. Empowerment is a necessary tool in The Journey Toolbox in Ashley’s eyes. In the moments decisions are made about what is required to develop that heart connection.

She looks at The Center as an extension of her family. Four sisters, one brother-in-law and one nephew make up her family tree but each member of The Center team fills out the branches. Ashley is an advocate for women, volunteering at a Safe House for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault victims. The teacher in her loves to share the power of making great decisions and pulling up positive behavior. She finds herself bringing a little Journey in all aspects of her life.

General Manager, Denise Maiatico shares, “Ashley entered The Center with three clear objectives: Rebuild our first interaction experience; Improve our GSS results; and get that front desk team at excellence. As a result, our GSS scored from a low point of 65.75 to our current service score of 83.67!”

“Because people come and go through these doors no two days are ever the same.” She smiles when she shares this fact. “It is impossible to get bored. And we never stop learning. Change Is Good isn’t an idea it is a necessity!”

Joseph DeVita

“...a gentle change agent with the heart of a focused champion.”

***Stamford Marriott Hotel and Spa
Guest Experience Manager
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2013***



He is known as “Jedi Joe” for the way he passionately models and teaches The Journey. Joseph DeVita empowers each member of his team to be themselves and do what they each do best. He believes when an associate can think on his own about what a guest needs, memorable moments are born.

Each morning Joe holds a stand-up meeting and deeply discusses one of the Journey Principles. Members of the Guest Services team share examples of behaviors and choices that were made the day before based on that principle. Joe understands that The Journey only has impact if it is brought to life through behaviors. He celebrates those behaviors and gives his team members a stage on which to shine. Just ask one of his Bell Stand staff to recite the 10 Foundational Principles. Then prepare to be amazed.

“Others First” is his motto - - seriously! Joe was involved in a major accident with one of the hotel vans this year. Everyone was concerned for Joe once they heard about the crash. Then the phone rang. It was Joe from the hospital making sure we had the shuttle ready for the Nestle group that was staying at the hotel that evening.

Joseph and his wife, Claudia, have been married for 32 years. They met while starting their own studios in Greenwich, Connecticut: Allegra Dance Studio and DeVita Karate. Joseph holds his 8th Degree Black Belt in Tang Soo Do Karate, 3rd Degree Black Belt Aikido/Ju-Jitsu, Master Guru Kali/Eskrima/Arnis, Women’s Self Defense Instructor Certificate and Tai Chi Instructor Certificate. With all that talent and skill, he could force his team to follow The Journey, but instead he just casts a compelling vision and points the way. He lives The Journey and encourages others willing to come along for the adventure.

Joseph, Claudia and their three children embrace the moments life affords them. The MJ Mission, “to honor, host and create memorable moments that celebrate life” is very personal to Joe. It marries his family’s mantra. Their own beautiful home bears the name, “Memorable Moments.”

Joe received the Marriott Spirit to Serve Award. He is a certified Living The Journey facilitator and he champions the Guatemala Outreach Mission Project, supporting orphan children in rural Guatemala with medicine and food.

Joseph DeVita is on a lifelong quest to develop relationships one memorable moment at a time.

Rafael Matias

“...it is a good day when everything is shining bright and is readied as it should be.”

Hyatt Place Bethlehem

Houseman

Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2013



He smiles when the translated question is processed. “How does working for Meyer Jabara Hotels make you feel?” His answer is summed up in one word, “Opportunities.” He didn’t have many in his native land of the Dominican Republic. He never thought, at this age in his life, that a company would take a chance on him. That he would be able to learn, to be a part of making decisions and be recognized for his good work.

Rafael immigrated to the United States on August 16, 1992. He is married and is the proud father of three sons and six daughters – ages 8 to 29! He also has six grandchildren. He is a go-giver instead of a go-getter. It seems a lot of what he gets – he gives away, including a chunk of his salary each paycheck to the United Way. He also likes to shop the thrift stores, second-hand shops and flea markets to find broken items he can repair and ship back to the Dominican Republic to be sold and help his family and friends.

While attending college in the Dominican Republic Rafael was studying to become a lawyer. Today those skills come in handy as he presents his case to fellow associates about why The Journey is the right way to lead life. He even designed a communications project tracking board that has helped organize the entire housekeeping staff as well as the engineering team.

A memorable moment for Rafael was when BB King staying at the hotel. BB was in the lobby when he spied Rafael. He singled him out and requested he be his personal assistant for the weekend. So Rafael jumped right in carrying luggage, getting towels and running errands. Even late into the afternoon Rafael still had no clue who the guy was so he looked him up online and bought a couple of tickets to the show. The next day Rafael told BB King he was a pretty good performer. Those words meant the world to BB and he left Rafael with presents for his family, sang him a personal song and gave him a great big tip. The funniest thing of all – Rafael Matias treated BB King with the same compassion and heart as he would any guest of the Hyatt Place Bethlehem.

A fellow teammate shared, “Rafael is a man built like an ox, has the sharp eyes of an eagle, carries himself with the pride of a lion, but scratch just under the surface and you will find the heart of a lamb.”

Donna Jones

“...there is special treatment at the Admiral Fell Inn. It is called “The Mama Donna Way.”

**Admiral Fell Inn
Banquet Server/Bridal Hostess
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2008**



She may take the groom aside and properly adjust his tie. Or maybe she pulls the tissue from her pocket and swipes away a happy tear from a nervous bride. She has been known to pray with John’s Hopkins guests and is always holding a cell phone to snap a picture for couples exploring Fells Point. Donna Jones is actually in more wedding albums than any bridesmaid ever imagined. She is invited to birthday parties, christenings and celebrations of life. She is Mama Donna and the world is filled with opportunities to love.

Donna Jones was exploring learning at Morgan State University when she stumbled across a class in Nutrition and Food Service. It sparked something deep inside and she began to focus her study. Soon she attended the Culinary Arts Institute of Baltimore and then she was hooked. Her first restaurant job was at the famed Yellow Bowl Restaurant, a favorite of Mayor Shaffer. After a few years she paused to turn to home and care for her two wonderful daughters. But it didn’t take long for her to realize she needed to be around people and help create magic in the moments. She joined Meyer Jabara at an AFI banquet server and bridal hostess.

Donna is Queen of the breakfast world. On busy oversold weekends guests who could not find a room at The Inn still come back in the morning just to eat breakfast with Donna. It is nothing to have Donna’s name appear numerous times a week on TripAdvisor. Anniversary couples come back to the hotel for a celebratory toast with Donna.

Donna describes The Journey as “a way of life.” When it is believed it is behaved. “Many times we are assisting a guest or associates and find we are practicing our principles without even knowing it” she explains. “It has become engraved in our habits and a part of everyday life here at the AFI.”

Donna shares her amazing life with her husband Danny Joy. She loves to dance and wrap her arms around the rhythms of wonderfully cool jazz.

Meyer Jabara Hotels is fortunate to have Donna Jones leading the flock in Baltimore.

Susan Lalime-Mort

“...standing in place doesn’t get you very far. Change is good.”

Marriott Providence Downtown

Night Manager

Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 1999

Began Working at the Providence Marriott in 1987

Her journey in hospitality began in room service. After a few years she was needed in night audit and filled in for just a few months. Accounting needed help so she transferred there for two years. Then night audit called for help again. That was twenty-four years ago and she is still helping out.

Sometimes the night shift chooses to work then because it is often quiet and a solo ride. But Susan is not the typical Night Manager. She rallies her night team to embrace the Foundational Principles of The Journey, always having discussions, stand-ups and educational moments. She is a fan of The Three P’s knowing that many times a night associate needs to be able to make decisions and take actions on their own. She not only accepts change – she looks for ways to bring it to life.

She loves people and explains, “It has been a great day when I can make a guest feel a warm welcome upon arriving in a strange place.” Susan’s team prepares special snack bags for the late night arrivals. She brews a pot of coffee every morning even before Starbucks opens so her early departures can have a great start. She has been recognized for her service excellence many times, most notably from Marriott with three Bill Tiefel Awards and one Marriott Spirit to Serve Award. She has carried the title of Associate of the Month and Manager of the Quarter a few times over her three decades of service.

Susan engages each of her team in writing Learning Plans and following the team Performance Agreement. She has one of the lowest turnover rates in the company because she truly cares about people.

That caring is evident as she describes her wonderful family: her husband of 25 years, four children and three grandchildren. And that caring spills out into the community of Providence. In 2004 the hotel voted on adopting a local community organization. The Ronald McDonald House was chosen. Susan quickly became involved. Twelve years later she still volunteers two days a month for front desk coverage. She offers assistance and love to those families traveling through unfathomable illness. The reward for Susan is tremendous. It helps her remain “others’-centered” and aware of all the little things that matter so much in life.



Kristin Alma

*“...we are all in charge of our days and how we approach them.
Positive vibes produce positive results.”*

Cambria Suites, White Plains
Director of Sales
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2016



Kristin Alma is a true Sales Professional. Most people talk about warm, fuzzy moments making their days special. Kristin says a great day is 100% occupancy and an ADR above \$175!

When asked what motivates her she replies, “My team, my clients, and my family. They motivate me and drive me to do the best I can and stay memorable.” But then she smiles and adds, “Oh – of course what motivates me is my budget, my STR report, my Comp Set and Mark McGehee!”

Kristin was on the opening team for the Cambria Suites, joining MJH in November of 2016. She had been working with Interstate Hotels on a task force when a recruiter found her for the start-up team in White Plains. She graduated from Western Connecticut State University with a Bachelor’s in Business and then added an Associates in Hotel Management. Out of college she entered the hotel world primarily with Marriott.

Discovering The Journey culture has been an amazing adventure for Kristin. She has a core need to believe in her company...understanding what it stands for and its mission. The support she feels from being a part of this team is truly inspiring. She knows the only way to be successful in this business is to make a difference with a guest one at a time. It is through their emotional linkage that sales feeds and grows. To Kristen, when a customer is sold, that is only the beginning.

Because of this belief Kristin works hard to connect with her guests. She writes long, handwritten thank you notes to many guests. She keeps a Special Occasion cheat sheet and gives it to the Front Desk team every day. Then Kristin turns around and delivers that same kind of care to the internal customer...sometimes leaving pizza in the break room with a thank you note for a job well done. She bakes goodies and shares successes. Probably the phrase “Thank You” is the one that exits her lips most frequently. One team member summed it up, “Kristin spreads kindness like confetti as Kate Spade would say. She is the positive energy at this hotel and makes the Cambria successful and a better place for all of us to thrive.”

Gratitude produces results. The hotel has surpassed budget and remains a leader within the local market.

Relationships matter greatly for Kristin. She has chosen to journey life with her long-time partner, Anton Silich. Between them they have four children. She loves to volunteer. On Christmas Eve she can be found at a local soup kitchen. She packs food at food banks and sacks up special Thanksgiving dinners. Make-A-Wish, Wounded Warrior, Sandy Hook Promise, and Toys for Tots are just a few with which she passionately engages. The world is a better place with the positive energy of Kristin Alma.

Raymond Hart

*“...He is the real deal. He is not in the hospitality business.
He is in the relationship business.”*

*The Inn at Henderson's Wharf
Assistant General Manager
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2010*



There is a tried and true saying, “Hire what you can’t teach, then teach the rest.” Raymond Hart did not have any significant hospitality experience when he joined the team at Henderson’s Wharf but what he did have was a deep sense of service and abundant compassion.

He began his journey as the Experience Specialist and Front Desk team member. His ability to emotionally connect with the guest and the associate elevated him quickly. He could organize any day and rally the team to do what was necessary to deliver that amazing Henderson’s experience. Five years later he was promoted to Assistant General Manager and now he leads the team to make every day matter.

It is possible that the ability to lead a team and get along with everyone was instilled in Raymond at home, being the middle child of ten! His father was in the service and they traveled extensively always finding new adventures and making new friends. Throughout those travels, music was a constant in Raymond’s life. He loves to sing and entertain. That passion guided him through graduation from Morgan State University with a degree in music. During college he found a job at a hotel and the money helped make ends meet. He liked the idea of working in a business that hosted people and made them feel at home. At Henderson’s Wharf he enjoys the frequent guest who returns time and time again whether it is for a trip back to John’s Hopkins or a relaxing weekend getaway. He looks at them as friends, often getting so attached that he finds himself invited to participate in their own memorable moments.

Raymond Hart is a giver. He volunteers extensively at his church. He is notorious for standing in the gap when the less fortunate need him...leading the charge on food drives or rallying the troops for a cause. But his giving of service is most prevalent when frequent guests are receiving their treatment at the hospital and using Henderson’s Wharf as an oasis for recovery. It is then that the heart of Raymond Hart truly shines.

His family taught him to always give 110% and he brings that goal to his job each day. For Raymond that is easy because of his wonderful team. “In our industry you are always prepared that the day may not go as you had planned. Fortunately, I work with the most pleasant and happy team you can ask for. This is why I come in every day with a smile on my face and leave the same way. They are my family.”

Well this family seems to understand how to work together to make a significant difference in the world. Few hotels can say they own the spot at #1 on Trip Advisor! And leading the team with Rock Star Status via guest comments is Assistant General Manager, Raymond Hart.

Leah Markiewicz

...at first meeting one may be a “client” or a “co-worker”. At second meeting the title is “friend.”

*The Hilton – Wilmington/Christiana
Sales Manager
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2008*



When Leah Markiewicz learned her waterline she didn't look at it as a ceiling but rather as permission to make decisions and take action! Heaven help the bride-to-be who tells Leah she is considering taking her wedding to the competition. Leah looks at that statement as a challenge and the creative gloves come off as she gathers the Hilton team together to WOW and shine. Leah NEVER loses a wedding to the competition because of lack of service, attention, creativity or heart. She is the wedding planner that is soon called “friend.”

Leah grew up in the service business. She is a child of the Capriotti's Sandwich Shop family. A famous local business established in 1976, now expanded into seventeen states across the nation. She graduated from the University of Delaware with a degree in Hotel Restaurant and Institutional Management. Her first employer after college was the renowned DuPont Country Club where she held the title of Banquet Supervisor. After two and a half years her reputation was buzzing around town. So the leadership team at The Hilton just slipped right over there and stole her away.

One of Leah's most amazing strengths is her ability to work well with all the departments in the hotel. She connects with the Front Desk, Housekeeping, Engineering and F&B to ensure there is a seamless experience whether it be for a site tour or to send a bride down the aisle. She is the ultimate cheerleader and coach...setting the vision, studying the learning, sharing the successes and preparing to do it all over again and again. Her eye is always on the prize, not the challenge. Each event is like the big game and she pulls the team together to huddle and focus. There is no rut or routine in the life of Leah Markiewicz.

One co-worker described Leah as “friendly, hip and fun!” She stays in touch with the world and what is happening outside the walls of The Hilton. She loves to travel, hit the beach and try new restaurants. Her boyfriend, Walt, is her exploration partner, always finding new adventures to experience. She is an avid dancer and health aficionado, perpetually working out and taking long hikes. Leah volunteers throughout the community and was recently awarded the Delaware Hotel Lodging Association 2015 Manager of the Year!

A day full of appointments is the perfect day for Leah because it presents an opportunity to fill her day with new potential friends. The world is a kinder and happier place because Leah Markiewicz takes care of the details.

Chin Fu Qin

...there is only one way to do it, and that is “simply perfect.”

***The Hilton – Wilmington/Christiana
AM Executive Lounge/AM Breakfast Buffet Server
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2004***

If it isn't right -- change it. If you didn't do it right -- fix it. If you can't change it -- forget it and go do something positive somewhere else. And if all else fails, tell a joke, watch a comedy, find a friend and get on with it. That is how Chin Fu Qin has made an incredible mark on the team at The Hilton.

She treats the Christiana Hilton like it is her home and therefore everyone who enters is her guest. She is a master at the details and those little touches that create the feeling of comfort and warmth. She remembers the guests' names and they remember hers. Chin knows the preferences of her guests and brings them without even being asked. Deeply creative, Chin loves to make special gifts for her co-workers and her guests. She never misses an opportunity to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, birth of a child or a promotion. Her heart dances when she can give of herself.

Now -- on the other side, the Christiana Team has coined the nickname, “Little Sarg” for this powerhouse worker. Coming in early and making sure everything is set up perfectly without flaw is another one of her trademarks. She covers for other associates who may be late or ill. She even has arrived very early to make breakfast for departing pilots. She guards her equipment like it is her own, tirelessly giving 110%. “It just needs to be perfect all the time,” Ms. Chin honestly responds. “If it isn't perfect, change it.” And that is why “Change is Good” is her favorite Journey principle.

A full-time job at The Hilton isn't enough to keep Ms. Chin moving. She has also worked at the neighboring Red Lobster for twenty-five years and serves as their trainer. The Food Bank of Delaware and Meals on Wheels also hold residency in her heart. And if that isn't enough, she volunteers as a candy striper at the local hospital.

That dedication and commitment has also played a huge role in her successful marriage of 33 years. She has a son and daughter-in-law whom she adores, consistently asking, “When will I have grandchildren?” And when that time comes she will serve wonderful goodies, make crafts, love unconditionally and ensure everything is simply perfect.

The Hilton Christiana is home base to so many partially because Chin Fu Qin is in charge of the welcome mat.



Melissa Y. Puglia

“...she changes the world with 24 hours in a day. Imagine if there were more!”

*The Marriott Downtown Providence
Banquet Chef
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2010*

Most people have 24 hours in their days and fill about half of them producing something. Melissa Puglia must have a time machine that turns one minute into two. Her production and her passion to fill every waking moment with valuable contributions is truly amazing.

This work ethic began to take root at a very young age. Running a paper route and babysitting first filled her days. Then as a very young girl she took a job at a local pizza place in her New Jersey hometown. She was the “counter girl” and it was all made-to-order and fresh. She fell in love with food and the serving of wonderful food. She received early acceptance into Johnson and Wales University while still a Junior in High School. In 1996 she was one of the 250 students out of 1500 that were chosen to work the Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia. It is there she met her husband, also a chef. Her Bachelor’s Degree internship took her to Camelback Inn in Scottsdale, Arizona but her heart always yearned to return to the East Coast. Her first chef position came at Eli’s Restaurant on Block Island. And for nine years she brought joy and unforgettable dining experiences to that incredible environment. But something else incredible happened...she became a mother to the most perfect little boy. And they chose to return to the “mainland” to raise him. Lucky for the Providence Marriott.

Chef Melissa Puglia doesn’t just work to “get the food out.” She understands this work is about relationships. She is a mentor and coach. She manages her budget like a champ. She isn’t hung up on her role as a chef and will step out to help in any way she can. What makes her truly unique is her understanding of the role food plays in creating memorable moments. “If a dish I create brings back a beloved memory from Nana’s house such as a fresh slice of a juicy red tomato, hot crisp bacon fresh out of the pan or a classic slice of thick American cheese on lightly warmed white toast, I have done my job.” Melissa stays in touch with her guests and their hearts so she can make those moments matter.

Once a year Melissa and her husband, Dan, travel to her hometown high school to give back to her chosen profession. They work with the culinary program at the school organizing, mentoring and judging a student competition. She is the Lead Consultant for New Jersey’s Family Career and Community Leaders of America, receiving the “Friend of FCCLA Award” and the “Alumni Achievement Award.”

That perfect son, Isaac, and two very active dogs fill many of the hours in Melissa’s days. But she also adores hiking, biking and swimming. One of her greatest roles is standing on the sidelines supporting her husband and son as they advance in their karate competition.

And then...it is time to rest in order to start that 24+ hour day all over again.



Elizabeth Noga

“...she looks at the big picture and the small one at the same time and nothing falls through the cracks.”

*Pier 5 Hotel – Baltimore, Maryland
Front Office Manager
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2012*



She started as a Front Desk Agent at the Pier 5 in 2012. But she didn't find her home that first time around and after eight months she sampled the hospitality world of Baltimore elsewhere. One year later in April of 2014 she returned as a Guest Service Agent. And this time she found The Journey and her path. She quickly moved to Front Desk Supervisor and now to Front Office Manager.

The magic that clicked that second time around was found within The Journey principle, The Three P's. She wanted to feel autonomy in her guest interaction and when her coach shared the Power, Permission and Protection to make decisions and take action, she flew. Today Elizabeth is sure to model and teach that principle in every behavior.

Elizabeth understands the three customers she serves: guests, associates and ownership. She works hard to keep that big picture focus the topic of conversation at stand-ups and in coaching. But she realizes that successful balance comes by paying attention to the details. In the small picture we find the opportunity to make a difference. It is her goal and the goal of her team to find a way to make a moment magical for every guest. After all, Pier 5 is in the heart of Harbor Magic. She knows they must deliver that promise.

When Elizabeth is asked how she keeps hitting that goal over and over again she simply replies, “High fives, smiles and a positive, upbeat attitude....works every time!”

All of Elizabeth's family lives back in her hometown in New Jersey. Maybe that is why she recently rescued a Red Nose Pitbull and named her Jersey!

Meyer Jabara is fortunate Elizabeth Noga now calls the Pier 5 “home”.

