



**STORIES OF THE MIRRORS OF MJ**

**2007**

# PAUL ADAMS

*“Success is the enemy!” Paul Adams regularly states. “There are too many hotels and sales professionals in this market for me to become complacent.” Thinking about tomorrow’s business while greatly exceeding expectations of today’s customers has made Paul Adams a true Rhode Island hospitality treasure.*



It would be a little scary to walk into Paul’s office and see a road map from 1985 hanging on the wall. One would think he wasn’t accepting of change and growth. But that would be an unfounded fear. He is, instead, a traditionalist who values roots and legacy and believes in old-fashioned attentiveness and dedication....a traditionalist who is so adaptive, he can change quickly with the ever-changing desires and needs of his customers.

Paul Adams has spent more than 22 years at the Providence Marriott and 29 years in the hospitality industry...not just surviving, but thriving! He is an avid learner who constantly asks himself, “What do I need to learn today?”

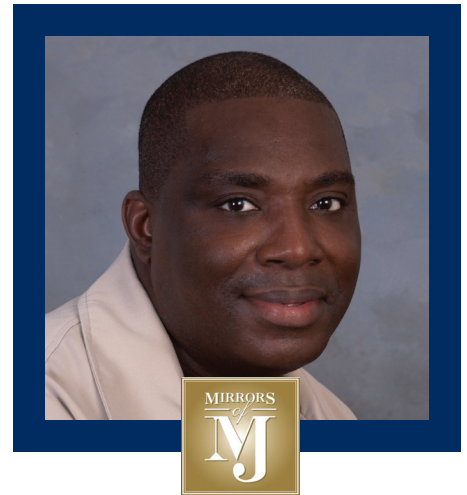
The clients ask for Paul because he does what he says he is going to do. They often write, “Paul Adams is knowledgeable, attentive, efficient and gets the job done.” The associates enjoy working with Paul because he does what he says he is going to do. They often say, “Paul Adams never speaks, ‘It’s not my job’ or ‘I don’t care.’” These words readily come when asked to describe Paul Adams....but before the words emerge, a look sweeps across the admirers’ faces. It is a look of respect and genuine appreciation. Paul Adams is loved. Maybe he receives so much because he gives so much. The only line he consistently crosses with his team is the finish line, and they all go there together.

Paul began his career in the sales office at a Hilton Hotel in Springfield, Illinois in 1979. He gathered learning in the sales offices at the Worcester, Massachusetts Marriott and the Innisbrook Resort in Tarpan Springs, Florida. In 1986 he found his home at the Providence Marriott.

To know Paul is to know a man committed to serving and caring. After the passing of his wife, Germaine, six years ago, Paul found himself serving in the role of single parent to his son Brendan, now 15-years-old. He understands balance and the importance of moments...not missing too many of them simply by being not present. Paul acknowledges our journeys are moments linked together by heart connections.

# BERNADEL BASSETTE

*He left his homeland of Haiti in search of a better opportunity for his family. That opportunity unfolded inside the welcoming arms of the Stamford Marriott. The Journey Principles struck a chord with Bernadel and soon he found himself practicing them, not only at work, but in his personal life.*



They make me a better person, Bernadel describes the part the Journey Principles have played in his life. “This culture has shown me how to be accountable for my actions. I understand that helping others is the key to success. Accepting empowerment has given me the opportunity to stand out and show my strengths to my team and my family.” That genuine smile breaks across his face as he shares his honest testimonial.

Most people wake up and look at the day as just another eight hour block of time. Bernadel sees eight hours of opportunities to make a positive difference in the lives of others. He has the heart of a dedicated server. In 1994 Bernadel joined the Stamford Marriott team as a Houseman. He showed true compassion for others. He embraced The Journey and unwrapped the gift of empowerment. He viewed interacting with the guests as part of his job. This ability to develop relationships easily and honestly was noted by leadership and soon Bernadel was promoted to Supervisor.

There are no brick walls in Bernadel’s way. When an obstacle presents itself, he simply grows taller and climbs over....usually bringing a person or two with him...pausing briefly on top to catch the view and enjoy the moment. He enjoys helping others see what they cannot see for themselves. He has always seen opportunities. That vision is what brought him to America in the first place.

Bernadel Bassette loves the beautiful country of Haiti and his only son that still resides there. But he and his lovely wife of eleven years call America and the Stamford Marriott, “Home.”

# RENE' ACARAPI

*"He's the guy you want in the room when you have a tight turnover. He never panics. He gets the job done. He's also the guy you want to call 'friend.'" Associate after associate mimic these words. "He's the guy."*



**R**ene Acarapi is a native of Bolivia, South America but has called the United States “home” for eighteen years. The last nine years he has graced the halls of the Providence Marriott with his compassion, empathy and quest for truly exceptional service. Each day is an opportunity for Rene’ to make someone feel very important. He has that gift.

When the lazy bones were handed out, Rene’ must have been absent because he does not have one in his entire body. He is a whirlwind of activity...completing his tasks and then jumping in to help someone else complete theirs. Rene’ would never dream of just holding down one job. “I love to work!” he proclaims with pride.

The Journey has become a way of life for Rene’. It has taught him how to organize his work and why certain tasks are better than others...working toward a common goal with his team. “I am on The Journey because I believe in what it teaches,” he shares enthusiastically. “I have seen how it can change people for the better. I take the principles home, teaching my children how to be good people and to respect one another as well as the people around them.” Rene’ and his beautiful wife, Luz are parents to four wonderful children. They practice the tool of identifying learning opportunities and grabbing them. Rene’ has a degree in Accounting. Daughter, Reyna has a degree in Computer Science. His wife is attending school presently, studying English. Daughter, Natalie is studying to be a paralegal. And Laura is in seventh grade and her brother Benjamin is in fifth grade.

Family is important to Rene’ and his definition of family goes beyond his own home. When a fellow houseman recently lost his father, Rene’, without being prompted, reorganized his own schedule to fill in and give the associate some extra time off to take care of matters. Rene’ did this even without putting himself into overtime. He often checked in on his peer...not to see when he was coming back, but to ensure he was doing okay and to offer assistance. After all... he’s the guy.

# MICHELLE GOAD

*To walk with Michelle is to truly embark on a Journey. Sometimes the road is smooth and full of laughter and flowers and sometimes the traveling companion reaches for the Dramamine and hangs on for dear life.*



**H**er career started at the Wyndham near the Hilton. She was eighteen and landed a job cleaning the pool. Throughout her more than 20 years in hospitality she has held jobs in housekeeping, laundry, accounting, banquets, reservations, administrative assistant, Catering Sales, Group Sales, Director of Sales and now Regional Sales Manager. That is a definition of a journeying learner who finds success around every corner.

Michelle is married with three boys ranging in age from twenty years down to three years. She is a five year breast cancer survivor who stands as a beacon of hope for so many. There is never a dull moment or an insincere gesture in the life of Michelle. To know Michelle is to know a friend. She looks at her clients as friends, often being invited over to their homes for holiday celebrations, weddings and birthdays. On a recent occasion, Michelle was searching for a way to thank a new key account for their business. Realizing they did not have a Christmas tree in their business she made arrangements to purchase one. She delivered the tree, set it up and while decorating it, the Director of Sales from a competitor hotel walked in. She thought Michelle had been fired from the Hilton and was now working at this business. At the same time, the buyer from the account entered the lobby and told Michelle it was time to go upstairs to attend one of the travel agent's baby showers. The competitor was speechless and left to spread the word that Michelle had left the Hilton. Of course she didn't leave the Hilton - - she just brings the heart of the Hilton to everyone she serves.

This heart connection approach results in gushing cash, making Michelle and her team among the most successful in the Meyer Jabara family. She also serves as a mentor to so many as one of the leaders in the Sales LOP. She is a unique sales person who markets an experiential promise and then works with her operational teams to make sure it is truly delivered. Journeying with Michelle is definitely worth the ride.

# FELIX ALCALA

*It is not the destination that he finds fascinating...it is the journey. It is that way in his work and in his life. The Journey has opened doors for Felix Alcala that he never imagined. Behind each door is brightness and opportunity.*



**H**e used to think of a job as simply an exchange of time and effort for money. There was no satisfaction in that for Felix Alcala. At the Holiday Inn Airport El Paso, he found a purpose behind his actions and he embarked on a Journey that was no longer about money but rather about contribution.

Felix Alcala is a unique member of the Holiday Inn El Paso team in many ways...the most tangible...he is not an El Paso native. He chooses to live in this beautiful border city, and has for more than 25 years. As the only male child in his family, Felix is depended on to be the sole provider. He is single and takes care of his parents. It took Felix awhile to find his Holiday Inn home. He wandered through different jobs until 2005 when he accepted a job as a Houseman for the Holiday Inn.

Food and Beverage Director, Vicki Castellanos recalls, "As a person who has been here for so many years, I have seen employees come and go. I remember Felix starting in Housekeeping and I was amazed at how serious he took it and how happy he seemed to be able to help his co-workers and guests." She smiles thinking about his career path and his contributions today. "To see him move up and through the ranks so quickly has been pretty special to watch. He's a great role model for our associates and honestly, an inspiration to me."

On one of those rare moments when Felix is sitting a realization occurred for him. He found it quite ironic that once he stopped looking at work as simply a place he went to make money, he began advancing and making more of the money he so desired earlier in his life. Change is good. Dollar bills are better. But making a difference in the lives of the people you serve is the best payment of all!



# GERI ANGSTADT

*She remembers her first words as she walked out of Journey class, "Well that makes sense!" Then she smiled, put on her uniform and served up a smile that hooked another guest for life.*



It is the norm to get a delicious meal and exceptional service at a Meyer Jabara Hotel restaurant but something a mile above normal can be found at the Sheraton Reading Hotel....Ms. Geri. She has decades of food service experience but it is the nearly seventy years of loving people that makes her the master at heart connections.

Geri Angstadt could give up coffee, chocolate, mashed potatoes and apple pie but never could she give up surrounding herself with people. She had filled the role of single mom to her two daughters for several years when she met her wonderful friend and husband, Ray. Twenty-five years of marriage has allowed them to experience many changes and the addition of seven grandsons and one granddaughter.

Family unity is a core value critical to Geri's success and she brings that belief in working and sharing together into her Meyer Jabara role each day.

A moment of quiet time with a dose of "Daily Bread" written affirmations and a dash of prayer start Geri in the right frame of mind each morning. Then she enters the world of the Sheraton Reading with open heart and outstretched arms. Her skill at delivering exceptional service and heartfelt, empathic attention will stand as Geri's legacy. There is even a meeting room named after this hospitality legend.

# VICKIE MIELE

*In life there are but a few people that consistently, actually do what they say they are going to do. And... there are even fewer that do it with grace, professionalism and a dash of humor. One of those rare souls is Vicki Miele.*



If one speaks the words, “enjoy the journey” to a mother of three, including twin sixteen-year-old girls, it usually results in hysterical laughter and a recommendation of a reality check. But for Vicki Miele...she wouldn’t travel any other way. The Journey has become a part of her life. Vicki admits, “The Journey has, without a doubt, contributed to making me a better leader, teacher and mom.” Those who know Vicki know a leader who honors the strengths in others and consistently offers shoulders to stand on for a better view.

“The tools of The Journey open up wonderful conversations about leading instead of following, about focusing on what is right and most impactful. The culture has taught me to communicate openly, honestly, compassionately and fairly with my team and my family. I also expect the same in return,” Vicki Miele proclaims with passion hanging heavily from every word. She is a true believer in The Journey culture. Her first Meyer Jabara experience started in 1991 as a desk clerk at the Holiday Inn in Danbury, Connecticut. Today she leads one of the most dynamic, experientially-focused reservation centers in the country as well serving on the steering committee for The Journey culture initiatives.

Living The Journey culture requires one to accept change, empower others and embrace the concept of understanding emotions of associates and guests; finding a way to link with those emotions to create bonds. As a songwriter, by hobby, she finds herself capturing many of those emotions in lyrics. As a Reservations Center coach she finds herself sharing those emotions in the form of compelling stories that bring The Journey to life and guide her team. To understand how Vicki leads is to understand The Journey.



# ELIZABETH CHESHIRE

*"I am on The Journey to discover what is next" she says with a sincere grin breaking across her face. It's the kind of smile that says there is more to the story.*



As long as I can remember I wanted to study the Hospitality Industry" Liz Cheshire says with dancing eyes. Then the stories begin. They include tales of childhood role plays where she opened "restaurants" and marketed gourmet French toast to her family members. They weave through experiences from numerous travels abroad and enlighten listeners to the art of service in amazing destinations such as Grenada, Thailand, China and Africa. And then....they always come back home, for "home" is where her true journey lives.

"Following the goals that The Journey establishes, lets me find out exactly what I am capable of." She is certainly capable of quite a lot. She began with the Sheraton University City as a Catering Sales Manager and has been in the sales department ever since, wearing many hats...Group Sales Manager, SMERF Market and Tour and Travel Markets Champion as well as Wedding Specialist. She is also a beloved and talented Journey Trainer.

Her teammates use two words to describe Liz, "Can Do." Liz Cheshire's "Can Do" life journey began within the loving excitement of a very large, Italian family in South Jersey... "not to be confused with North Jersey" Liz clarifies. She felt the need for space and found it at the Australian International Hotel School in Canberra, Australia's Capital. And, after graduation, she felt the need for family, so she returned home. Today, she and her husband Jason are homeowners in that beloved "South Jersey" and lovingly parent their 3-year-old Husky, Charlie.

Liz has traveled all over the world but that wonderful anchor of family always brings her back "home". For Liz, the ten principles of The Journey are also like that anchor, "they create a framework for decision making, letting you know if you're veering off track.... and bringing you right back on. It makes it easier to achieve your goals if you are constantly moving in the right direction."

# DEANNA GONZALEZ

*Each day is an opportunity to develop at least one heart connection with someone. "We are all on a journey...life is a journey," she says with an inquisitive look...as if she is going to sincerely ask a probing question to better understand yours.*



The guest with the child in the hospital discovers Deanna's heart as she watches her young daughter open the gift of a teddy bear. So does the repeat guest who visits each month when he reads his handwritten note upon arrival. Likewise, the fellow associate who attends Deanna's facilitated Journey class sees her heart revealed. She has a way to make everyone feel welcome and cared for...as if they truly belong.

"I am on The Journey because I want to better myself professionally and personally," Deanna Gonzalez proclaims. That professional journey began for her right after college at the Sheraton University City as the Conference Services Manager. She acquired more skills as Banquet Manager, then Catering Sales Manager and Guest Services Manager. Her journey has now, in its tenth year, led her to the position of Revenue Manager.

To truly know Deanna is to truly know a passionate mother...one who loves to play, cheer for the Pittsburgh Steelers, read stories of wonderful adventures and dream of a safe and protected environment. Her two sons, 2-year-old, Trevor and 4 month-old,

Kyle bring her enormous joy and their relationship stands at the pinnacle of heart connections. Traveling within over thirty of the country's states has unveiled different ways of life and perspectives for Deanna. "I have learned that each of us is motivated by different things and, as a manager of people, I need to find those motivating factors to help individuals meet their goals and expectations which, in turn, help the team achieve its goals." Each day Deanna opens her mind and welcomes the learning. Then, she pauses and shares her heart. That connection made each day forms a very powerful chain of success for the associates and guests of the Sheraton University City.

# DENNIS MORRIS

*One day he was reading The Journey principle, "I Must Change First." Dennis Morris took it literally and eleven positions later he holds the title of Regional Revenue Manager and The Meyer Jabara Hotels Revenue Manager of the Year! He certainly applies his learning.*



Hotels need leaders, not suits with titles. Dennis Morris is a leader who is often wearing more than one title, simultaneously serving as interim General Manager while he coaches six hotels to maximize their revenue potentials. This man's career path is a perfect reflection of The Journey. He started at the Christiana Hilton in housekeeping as a houseman. "One day I heard someone of authority tell me I could make decisions and take actions and I took them seriously."

It doesn't really state anywhere in a Meyer Jabara job description, "Learn as you go" but that unwritten cultural rule is what allows individuals like Dennis Morris to soar. What truly causes this particular individual to soar to such great heights is his ability and passion to capture that learning and teach others how to soar with him. He loves to lift others up and support them while they learn. Maybe he developed this skill by watching his twelve-year old, all-star champion cheerleading daughter.

Most of his free time is spent with his wife traveling to competitions, clinics and the neighborhood gym. Within the competitive worlds of cheerleading and hospitality, one learns that between second and first place is an enormous chasm. Dennis explains, "A lot of people can actually be happy being #2. First place is so much better!" Dennis enjoys winning. But he knows, in order to win, he has to change his mindset first and make first place his true goal.

A leader must have faith that his or her team can be, and will be, number one. Dennis Morris demonstrates that faith in every conversation and every action.

# IRIS ANN CATHELL

*For ten years she modeled the fashions of the world in New York City. For more than twenty years Iris Ann Cathell has been modeling the true heart of service at the Hilton Estate in Christiana, Delaware.*



**I**s she for real? Could someone really be that nice and effervescent and sincere? What is up with this woman?”  
“Oh...it’s Iris Ann.”

Enough said. Iris Ann is one-of-a-kind and totally real. What you see is what you get. And what you get is empathic kindness and altruistic love. Senator Biden named Iris Ann the “Best Server in Delaware” and then retired the award. It is possible he just couldn’t find another one to match up.

She was raised by a fantastic mother who loved unconditionally. Iris learned well. She continued to learn how to display that love when she entered the Hilton – Brandywine Valley’s Country Estate, and discovered The Journey culture. Within this culture she learned to accept change and speak openly and honestly. Her traits of compassion and a desire to serve flourished in this culture and today she is such a part of The Estate, customers visit just to see Iris Ann. She explains, “I see the world with soft, non-judgmental eyes. Each guest is a chance at discovery for me. I want to learn about them. I approach that discovery with compassion and encouragement in my heart.” When asked why she enjoys working in The Journey culture, her eyes smiled and she stood up straight to answer, “It is the way I live. I love to encourage people. I love to be on a path where I can walk through doorways that lead to one special moment after another.”

A special moment presented itself just the other day. A young woman entered the Estate in search of employment. She said the reason she wanted to work at this hotel was because she had sat next to a lady named Iris Ann on an airplane. She listened to her stories of this wonderful place and had to become a part of it. She had been waiting to apply for three years. She was 15 years old during that plane ride and she had to be 18 to work at the Estate. Iris Ann made an impression that lasted three years! Iris Ann touches people in that way every time she walks through a new doorway.

# THERESA LANGAN

*If it absolutely, positively has to be done right and right now, Theresa is there. In fact, if it is just something that someone would like to have done if it is convenient, Theresa is there. If it is a chance to make a positive difference in any way, Theresa is there. Theresa Langan is there.*



Her co-workers cannot imagine a day without Theresa. She is such an integral part of the success at the Hilton Estate, it wouldn't be the same hotel without her. To so many of her guests, she is The Estate. And to Theresa – the Estate is home. She explains, “This company takes a great amount of time to figure out what many need to learn in order to be fulfilled and accomplished at their jobs. It shows that the company has the confidence in the individuals to perform their jobs.”

What fulfills Theresa Langan is serving others whether that is for the paying guest or the fellow associate or her family, which includes her husband of 15 years and her two young daughters. The Journey principles include the concept of “no silos”... not isolating departments or decisions away from the guests and other stakeholders. Theresa also believes you cannot silo work life away from home life.

She looks at her life in a holistic way, making sure to balance each extremely well. That way she always has plenty to give each. And give she does. The relationships she has with her customers are amazing. People like to do business with Theresa. They can trust her to deliver what she promises and then add on just a little more. That plus one service delivery has made Theresa an extremely successful part of the Hilton Estate and Meyer Jabara Hotels.

# VINCENTE AGUILAR, JR.

*There is one thing in common with the Silverado Country Club and Resort in Napa, the Stouffer Westchester Hotel, the Renaissance Westchester and the Stamford Marriott - within each of them, the heart of Vincente Aguilar has drawn people in, retained customers and made them better places to work because of it.*



**I**t would be surprising to not find the face of Vincente Aguilar next to the explanation of “Workplace Expectations” in the associate manual. He is the poster child for the ideal hard worker, conscientious leader and trusted co-worker. If the world was filled with Vincentes, there would be no need for guest service surveys – just very large tip jars!

Once he found the world of hospitality, there was no stopping Vincente Aguilar. In 1983 he started as a dishwasher at The Silverado, a premiere resort in Napa, California. A three month promotion came. A seven month promotion came. And by 1989 he was the Executive Steward. In 1991 the break came and he began to lead the hearts and minds of many as the Director of Housekeeping at the Renaissance Westchester Hotel.

The rungs on his ladder were very worn as he continued to climb as Front Office Manager for the Renaissance and now Director of Services for the Stamford Marriott Hotel and Spa. But all that climbing was as a result of great personal performance. At the Stamford Marriott Vincente found The Journey culture and he learned how to truly lead others, creating motivational environments by looking through their eyes to find mutual success.

Today he is still an incredibly successful individual, but he also mentors so many others to find their ladders and start climbing.



# LIN MAYO

*“Meyer Jabara needed someone like me,” she says with a confident smile and her head held high. Then she pauses and her look becomes more reverent. She stares straight and speaks true, “And I needed someone like them.”*



She often calls her job at the Meyer Jabara Revenue Center, “her therapy.” The Journey has taught Lin the art of balancing decisions for the good of all stakeholders. Lin’s husband, Danny, has an illness that they fight together every day. Lin has found that The Journey principle of everyone working together to do what they do best and carry the load as one has saved her. “Our family is flying like a flock of geese and I learned that from Meyer Jabara. Sometimes I feel like I should be paying Mr. Jabara for letting me learn so much.”

The paradigm Lin Mayo used to hold near and dear to her heart was, “don’t mess up a good thing when things were going well.” Today she looks at “messing up good things” as part of her job. She lives the principles, Success is the Enemy and Change is Good. She is always looking for a way to learn and apply that learning. “I was once a person who was afraid of change and empowerment. I was not happy with how my life was. Today there is a big difference in me. My family really sees the difference in me.”

The Revenue Center team is a tight crew. Lin is the glue that helps to hold it all together. She epitomizes the heart of the team, knowing the hopes and fears of her co-workers, helping out, lending an ear or a shoulder. She is always there. Committed to doing what she can to create success for the team. She reflects the best of Meyer Jabara and the culture of Meyer Jabara is reflected in Lin Mayo.

# CATHI LACKNEY

*To understand what makes Cathi Lackney tick at work - - just look at a spotlessly clean and immaculate guest room at the Courtyard. To understand what makes her tick outside of work - - hand her a couple of slot machine tokens, the keys to a Harley Davidson, a kiss from her husband of 28 years and a cold Coors Lite. She is as down-to-earth and real and committed to professional excellence as they come.*



It would be hard to accept that a person who joined a hotel at the age of sixteen and is still at that hotel thirty years later truly believed in The Journey principle, Change is Good. But Cathi Lackney has been successful at the Courtyard by Marriott because she has been willing to consistently and affectively change with the guests, owners, brands and associates that have moved in and out of this Canton, Ohio icon.

She was born in Canton, Ohio and one week after her sixteenth birthday she met Mike Lackney. He was her first true love and she knew they would spend the rest of their lives together. That same year, 1978, she found herself in the hospitality industry as a room attendant and she joined the Sheraton in Canton. Little did she know she would stay there for the long haul as well.

Her skills developed and in 1989 she became the Executive Housekeeper. She has held that position ever since. Change has entered in and walked out of that hotel since Cathi joined. Meyer Jabara bought the Sheraton in 1995. Today Cathi embraces the opportunity to deliver exceptional service to the guests of her “home away from home” as they enter the new Courtyard by Marriott.

The Journey culture has allowed Cathi to continue to learn and grow while never leaving home. “The Journey is simply how we do business. The transparent organization and sharing of important information was something we were never allowed to do in our previous environment. Today it is how we run our department. Everyone knows what they must do to create success.”

She is confident and proud as she speaks. “The tools available for personal growth have been my source for nurturing many of my associates.” To listen to Cathi is to listen to a person who speaks passionately about her “family” at the Courtyard by Marriott.

# JULIAN RICO

*He knew The Journey was a part of him before he worked for the Providence Marriott... he just did not call it that. As he was learning the principles he kept thinking, "Hey! I do that!" Maybe that is why Julian Rico is so successful - - he fits. He is truly loved.*



For a handyman like Julian Rico it was always about the task at hand. A sink needed fixing. A wall needed paint. The toilet wouldn't flush or the pane of glass was cracked. The task caused him to work as a loner. He was efficient and thorough but never knew how his contribution affected the whole. "Here I am a part of a larger team...a bigger picture," Julian states with pride. "We are a complex team with many moving parts and we work together to get major tasks done very well on a day-to-day basis."

Just over ten years ago Julian Rico wanted more. He headed to America from the Dominican Republic. His two sisters and one brother came as well and found work in a local factory. Julian found a home at the Providence Marriott. He spoke of a great way of life and the kindness of the people to his wife. Today she has received her permanent resident status and works in housekeeping for the hotel.

Prior to working at the hotel he attended a school for adults with disabilities which specializes in preparing and training for job placement. It is through this organization that he found placement at the hotel. His earlier life involved odd jobs and handy work, so he was thrilled to be granted a position with such a big company. Every day he feels so fortunate to have his job. When his work is done he seeks additional work with his peers to help them finish their tasks at hand.

His enthusiasm is contagious. His pride is evident. His words are spoken only through smiles, open arms, sincere assistance and genuine expressions for Julian is deaf and mute. One teammate summed up the feeling of the whole, "We need people like Julian in our lives."