



STORIES OF THE MIRRORS OF MJ

2016

Marie “Midi” Mathieu

“When I do something good for a guest, it makes me feel happy all day!”

*Stamford Marriott Hotel and Spa
Housekeeping Inspector
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 1990*

One day a guest was flustered because he lost a button on his shirt. Midi to the rescue. With needle and thread in hand she took the shirt and sewed on a new one...talking and smiling and caring all the while. That’s Midi. Whatever the guest needs. Inside of her beats the heart of a loyal friend and helper.

Since she arrived in America from Haiti she has been finding moments to help others. She is grateful for her own opportunities and believes it is her role to help others, whether she is cooking a meal for her wonderful family – three children and Joseph, her husband; or helping other Haitian families assimilate into the United States.

Helping just feels good to Midi. She helps her teammates when they are too busy. She helps the guests with their luggage, their clothes, their troubles. One day she even walked the halls with security to help a guest locate a lost special needs child who had wandered away. Whenever a need arises, Midi raises her hand.

She is also a teacher, helping others see what needs to be done to create memorable moments. She will even come in on her day off or work an extra shift to help a teammate who has trouble understanding an assignment in English.

Midi’s work is top notch...scoring “perfect” 9 out of 10 times on every inspection. She works hard to fix problems before the guest discovers them. But if a guest has an issue, Midi doesn’t wait for the order to come from management, she just fixes it on the spot.

Midi has a very complicated answer to why she does all of this service at such a high level, “Well – it just feels good to help someone.”

For twenty-nine years Midi Mathieu has been helping others and feeling great. And the MJ Family is fortunate to have her.



Robert A. Fratticcioli

“My challenge is to top yesterday’s performance. You are only as good as the last thing you have done.”

Hilton Christiana

Executive Chef

Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2013

There are always internal challenges in any job but Chef Bob tells his team to look through the eyes of the guests and find a way to create an incredible memory no matter what the obstacle. A great day at work is: 1. Making someone’s day; 2. Feeling like you matter; 3. Accomplishing the daily goals. Those three goals drive him to do his very best every day.

Chef Bob’s career had sweet beginnings...receiving his Culinary Degree from The Restaurant School/International Confectionary School for chocolate and sugar. Then his career lit on fire and he began to run, first apprenticing at La Truffle in Philadelphia. He found a home at the Hyatt Princeton, climbing the ladder quickly receiving many accolades including a nomination for Chef of the Year from Hyatt. His entrepreneurial spirit flourished when he opened his own catering business but he missed the sense of team. He found that in 2013 at the Hilton Christiana.

“Working for MJ is like working for family,” Robert shares. “Everyone is welcoming, you can express yourself, be creative and help others.” He shines at a Chef’s Table, during a wedding or while dressing up as Elton John on Valentine’s Day. To Chef, food is a wonderful bridge to developing positive relationships. It breaks down barriers and starts conversations. He also delivers this kind of others’-centered service to the associates, ensuring each has a wonderful Thanksgiving Dinner, celebrating Kitchen Week with surprises and gifts, theming Pride Rallies, and making special Halloween treats. Chef Bob creates with his heart.

This heart causes him to deliver the WOW and that WOW has produced some wonderful accolades: Chef of the Year for the Princeton Chapter of the ACF and top honors for chocolate work at The Saloon and Hotel and Restaurant Show. He gives back through the American Culinary Foundation and even hosted the President’s Dinner in 2016.



Mark Hillegas

“Learning each guest’s story and why we are crossing paths makes every day different and unique.”

*Courtyard by Marriott Bethlehem
Bistro Bartender
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2014*

Nowhere in the job description of a Bistro Bartender does it say you must totally care about the entire stay of each and every guest in the hotel. Nowhere does it say you have to treat the hotel as if you own it and your name is on the sign out front. Nor does it require you to step up and become Journey Champion and Teacher or Head Cheerleader for all things possible. But Mark Hillegas read those requirements somewhere between the lines.

Mark thinks beyond the basic need of the moment, looking through the eyes of the guest to find their true wants. One typical winter night in Pennsylvania a water pipe broke in the hotel sending hundreds of gallons of water rushing down into guest rooms. One guest was in town for her grandmother’s funeral. As the alarms sounded and evacuation began, she stood in the lobby wrapped in a towel and still dripping wet. Mark brought her a blanket and noticed her angst and her tears. He learned of her grandmother’s Bible still in the room and with it was a box of irreplaceable family photographs. Mark to the rescue. He returned to the room, located the Bible and the photos and returned to the lobby with the guest. All was right in her world again.

He first touched the MJ Journey as a server at the Holiday Inn Clinton but he didn’t find his connection there. He returned to the Courtyard in Bethlehem in 2014 and now cannot imagine ever leaving again. He has found a home. Mark has two Saint Bernards, Gracie and Izzy; a Lab, Kiki; and a Chow, Lucy. He is an animal rescuer who can’t say, “no.” He also volunteers with Warren Hospital/St. Luke’s, working with families and patients of trauma injuries. It is a passion for Mark as a result of his brother being injured severely when he was only 9.

And, by the way, Mark is an amazing bartender. He makes a perfect drink, engages with the guest and develops heart connections. He keeps the lobby spotless, helps out at the front desk and does whatever needs to be done to keep the hotel running at excellence.

When Mark learned of his Mirror award, tears quickly came. His smile cracked across his face and his eyes danced with joy. The “family” had said, “Thank you.” And that was the greatest reward of all.



Antonio Aponte

“We will not always have a perfect day, but it’s our job to show that all obstacles can be handled when you believe in yourself and your team.”

*Stamford Marriott Hotel and Spa
Director of Services
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2014*

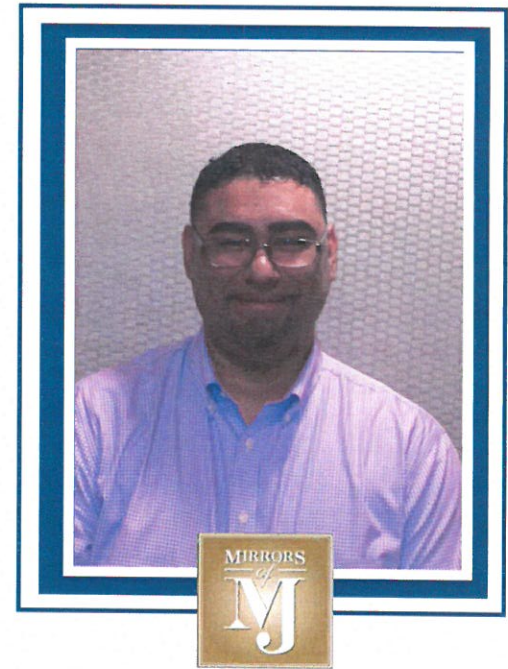
One sentence sums up the heart of Antonio Aponte. He states, “I firmly believe we all have the power to make a difference and affect the guests we service and the hosts we work with. The ability to make that choice is why the culture at MJ is so alive. So go do it!”

“So Go Do It” is the rally cry flowing from the mouth of Antonio. An example... a guest had undergone back surgery and would be on property for a few weeks. He requested access to Netflix but the hotel did not have Netflix. Antonio stepped up and brought his own Roku stick from home and connected it to the guest’s television. He was set up with the WIFI and he settled in for a movie marathon. Being about to give that guest a feeling of home and joy made Antonio’s heart sing.

He also brings that attitude to the team. A great day for Antonio is when he sees smiles on the faces of the hosts. He is a teacher and a learner, often asking the ever-important question, “What do you think?” He embodies The Journey culture and behaves his way into it daily. Someone asked him about working at Meyer Jabara. His reply, “It’s an opportunity to learn from the best in the business. Your only limit is set by the effort you put into it. You will be mentored and fully supported. The doors will open. You just have to walk thru.”

At the end of the day there is a method of success measurement for Antonio. “Being able to watch a guest leave happy and a host leave proud of their work...I know we have made a difference.” Maybe it is this mindset that has allowed Antonio to rise in the culture, starting as a house-keeping manager and enjoying two promotions in a very short time.

Antonio and his wife just celebrated the birth of their first child, Sebastian. They share a wonderful dog, Mr. Bojangles, who happens to be a Beeble – mix between a bulldog and a beagle. He is a graduate of DeVry Institute of Technology and will soon receive Six Sigma certification in operations. In 2016 he was awarded the Manager of the Year at the Marriott.



Cynthia B. Shaw

“I have learned to listen first and react after I have learned. The MJ family has made me a better person.”

*Chapel Hill University Inn
Night Auditor
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2001*

There are some common thread words that weave through every story told about Cynthia B. Shaw: Family. Relationships. Loyalty.

She began in the hotel industry in 1977. Her work ethic and sense of loyalty was instilled in Cynthia from the very beginning of her life. Her parents modeled it daily. Mom was a nurse who retired at 80 and her dad was still working at 72 when he passed. They had no patience for dishonesty, laziness or doing a job half way. Nothing was ever too big or too small and everything deserved your best effort. Family was important. So today, Cynthia is still close to her brothers, her sister, her nephews, her nieces and even the cat!

Many guests of the hotel are visiting family in Chapel Hill. Cynthia admits, “Sometimes you can’t help but get emotionally involved in their lives.” They come in all times of the night, after medical treatments, hospital visits, ballgames or family meetings. Cynthia is a safe place. She lets them talk, enjoy a cup of coffee, rest and unload. She strives to raise them up for just a little while. She gives hugs, joins in prayer, bakes special cakes and keeps the coffee pouring. One guest wrote the hotel to thank Cynthia. Four weeks the guest stayed at the hotel while her husband was dying at the nearby hospital. Every morning at 4 a.m. she would return to the hotel and have coffee with Cynthia. She shared her heart, her fears, her journey. And she confessed she could not have made it through without the kindness of the Night Auditor at Chapel Hill University Inn.

The company mission encourages each to create memorable moments for the guests. But Cynthia admits when she makes a memorable moment for a guest, it becomes a memorable moment for her as well. You can’t create a smile on one face without causing one on another.

She has a background in art history and enjoys work as a freelance artist. One of her passions is restoring old picture frames. Imagine the pictorial stories they have seen and will see again!



Olga Tacuri

“Every day is a great day. I am very lucky. I get to work at my second home.”

*La Quinta Inn & Suites Danbury
Housekeeping Supervisor
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2012*

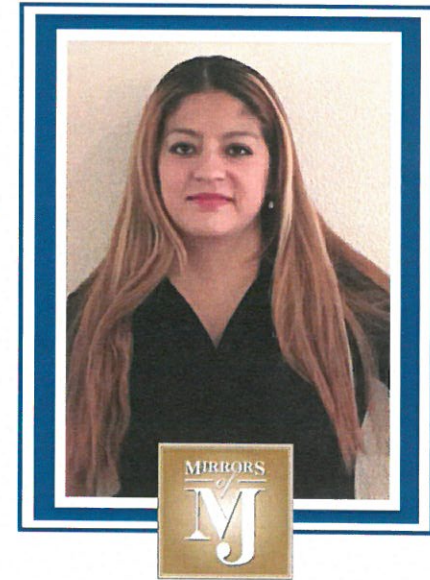
Olga Tacuri knows what a “job well done” looks like. But she also knows what it feels like to do a good job and be recognized for it. She truly wants that feeling for every one on her team.

At her own will, Olga hosts her own housekeeping stand up daily. They discuss our guests in house and our groups. They talk about arrivals and share GSS comments. Each day they discuss the Journey Principle of the week and how it can be brought to life behaviorally. The team brings ideas to the table and looks at every obstacle as an opportunity with a solution to discover. She is now on a quest to get every housekeeping attendant certified as a “Housekeeping Black Belt” which is a La Quinta program.

General Manager, Stacey Pacific smiles as she reflects, “Who else will be sitting at home in the evening and hear their phone buzz with a text message, only to see a photograph of a hotel room perfectly set in a new style or a turndown? That’s Olga sending a picture of something amazing one of her team did to make a memorable stay for a guest.”

A guest was very sick at the hotel and had been at the hotel, cooped up in her room for a couple of days. Olga wanted to freshen the room and do a deep clean to help eliminate any germs so the guest would feel better and start to improve. She sent a few team members to the room and Olga ran errands to pick up her medicine and ginger ale, hot tea and soup. With the love and attention and fresh air and sheets, the guest soon recovered. She was very grateful for the caring and shared the story across the social media channels.

Olga loves the fresh air and playing outside. She understands its draw. She is a soccer mom to her ten-year-old son, Justin. Of course, she shares that soccer parent role with her husband of 14 years, Sebastian. She also loves to garden and explore.



Renee Love Green

“I love to create memorable moments. The guest takes those with them and shares with friends and family.”

*Sheraton University City
Sales and Catering Admin
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2003*

When Meyer Jabara began managing the Sheraton University City, Renee was already fully established. She had been working there already for ten years, having met and married her husband, Cedric, at the hotel. He was, and still is, the Director of Security. They have been together 24 years and have two children. All the while the Sheraton has been a constant fixture in their lives. She loves The Journey because it honors the holistic approach – establishing a work and life balance that is fulfilling.

Meeting Renee is like meeting a long-time friend you haven't seen in a bit. She is warm and welcoming – positive and kind. Peer-to-peer she will often ask, “How is your day?” Or, “How can I help?” She is patient and an amazing listener. The most amazing quality though is her ability to find a way through optimism. She knows and behaves accordingly, “Everything is going to be alright.”

She was engaged in Business Administration classes at Pierce Junior College when she found her job at the Sheraton in the Sales and Catering department. She fell in love with hospitality sales and service. It was an immediate home. She loves to make latch hook rugs in her spare time and work in her flower garden. She supports Good Will and Purple Heart, Alex's Lemonade Stand, Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for the needy and Martin Luther King Day clean up.

The secret to Renee's motivation and positive attitude is found in being a part of a great team. “We take time to laugh and share a story. That picks me up and keeps me going.” She values the Three P's in The Journey culture, often thinking about how she can make a heart connection with a guest or associate, knowing she is empowered to do just that.

One day a guest left a very expensive pair of earrings in the room. She was able to locate them with the help of that guy in Security! She mailed them back and the lady was so moved she baked a dozen special cookies and sent them to Renee. It was just another new friend on Renee's ever-growing list of friends.



Brittney Gallagher

“A great day is knowing all guests entering or exiting the hotel had nothing short of a great experience.”

*Hyatt Place Bethlehem
Gallery Host / Social Media Champion
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2014*

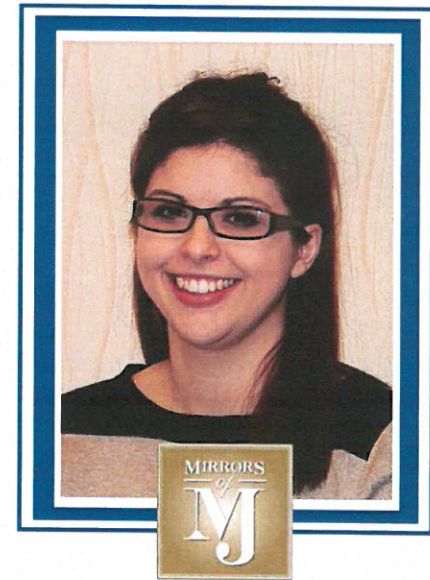
The pilots for Amazon Prime stay at the Hyatt Place. Brittney is in charge of coffee. “They drink about four to five gallons just themselves every morning.” One morning she overheard them joking about needing their own signature mugs. Brittney was on it. She made mugs for each of the ten pilots. One side carried the last name of the pilot. The other side read, “Nothing Flies Without Fuel so let’s start with coffee!” She placed special cookies and some chocolate inside of each mug and surprised them the next morning. The next day the pilots all gathered in the Gallery and presented Brittney with a signed picture. And that is just one story of many.

Brittney is always the first to suggest unique ideas to make the holidays special for guests: sombrero cookies and candied margarita glasses for Cinco de Mayo, setting up a buffet and movie themed treats for National Popcorn Day, pumpkin decorating, treat bags for Thanksgiving and the sock charity campaign for the hotel.

It is believed that Brittney’s hand is always in a raised position. When the Night Auditor resigned, Brittney volunteered to learn the job so she could help and deepen her understanding of how accounting works. She created a training manual for the Audit and taught another associate how to do it. She raised her hand again to take calls for the Sales Department.

“Surprise and Delight” are two words that drive Brittney every day. She is a treasure hunter looking for ways to make heart connections with her guests and associates. Her brain is a computer storing all the personal information, likes and dislikes of guests. Each one is a potential positive relationship and she works diligently to deepen each connection. Brittney looks at package sales as part of her responsibility. In 2016, she was at the table during the Discover Lehigh Valley awards event where the hotel was honored with the 2016 Partnership Award for community promotions and package sales.

Soon Brittney will be the guest of honor in her own adventure, her wedding! She will also add the title of “MOM” to her long list of descriptives: friend, advocate, creative source, champion, host, partner.



Virginia Pena

"Working as a team to achieve positive outcomes - - and loving each other along the way. That is the mission of the one they call 'Mama'."

*Stamford Marriott Hotel and Spa
Banquets
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2000*

Virginia Pena knows what it is like to sacrifice and to serve. She is the daughter of a single mother who loved deeply and worked hard so that her daughter could have a better life. Virginia was able to come to America from the Dominican Republic through her mother's help. Then it was her turn to give back, not only to her mother but to everyone who entered Virginia's life. Very recently her mother passed. It was a life well-lived through love and Virginia carries that love on in all she touches. She is known as "Mama" throughout the Stamford Marriott....and for good reason. She mothers everyone by showing compassion and kindness.

One of Virginia's favorite things is seeing repeat guests come back to the hotel. It is like a friend coming home for a visit. Open arms, hugs, genuine smiles and giggles of happy laughter. Those things make up many of the moments in her days.

It is not uncommon to see Virginia picking up fellow associates in bad weather and transporting them to work. She is often seen translating the English language, helping a peer understand an assignment, calming down upset associates or organizing people around a positive resolution. She is a fixer...a *Mama*. One evening she was working a banquet when she spied a young, pregnant woman leaving the reception, seeking a place to rest and cool down. Virginia was concerned. She followed the young woman and discovered she was overheated and very scared. It was her first pregnancy. So, Virginia knew what to do, called for help and made the guest comfortable. But she also stayed with the guest, held her hand and shared wonderful stories of family. She was her "Mama" when she needed her most.

Virginia treats everyone like family. She cares with her whole heart. When asked what The Journey was to her she simply replied with one word, "Family." And every family needs a strong, loving, caring, non-judgmental "Mama."



Grady Kurfees

“Each day my goal is to set the bar higher and prove myself to the team.”

*Residence Inn By Marriott Amelia Island
Laundry Attendant
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2010*



Grady worked for the Ritz-Carlton for fourteen years before joining Meyer Jabara. In 2006 he was in a terrible car accident and had to leave work. He suffered numerous injuries to his feet and legs and remained in a coma for months. When he was ready to return in 2010, there was an opening for him, not at the Ritz, but at the new Residence Inn. He fell in love with the people and the culture. In 2017 he received the Rose Award - - a coveted award given by the North Florida Hotel Lodging Association for Exemplary Service and Professionalism in the Hotel Industry. The Ritz-Carlton has asked Grady to return, but he chooses MJ. Alice Gray and Bob Hartman get the credit for the reason he stays.

Grady loves to help. He is cross-trained in many areas of the hotel so it is not unusual to see this Laundry Room Attendant and Shuttle Driver jumping in and helping all over the hotel. His smile and enthusiasm is contagious. His attitude is always positive and lifts others up. His injuries still cause him pain and offer challenges but he faces them with positivity and forward-thinking.

He is an advocate for others...serving with the Relay for Life team in honor of his parents who lost their lives to cancer. He raises his hand to serve on the Shrimp Festival Parade committee. He helps in any way he can, always answering with, “I’m on it.” When he is asked to change his schedule during the week or come in for an extra shift he responds with a smile and, “Miss Alice, I don’t mind.”

Grady has a zest for life and a love of people. He has two Godchildren: Gabrielle, recently accepted on scholarship to USC, and Bryan, who actively serves in the Navy.

Maria F. Lopes

“Do your job. Respect your manager and supervisor. Talk with each other. Have fun. Smile. You will never have a problem here.”

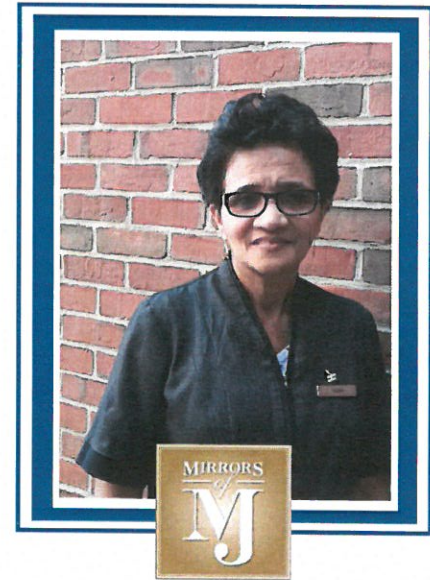
*Providence Marriott Downtown
Housekeeping Attendant
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 1999*

She has only been cleaning rooms and making guests happy for 4,592 work days. She hasn't figured out how to get complacent and set in her ways yet. Maybe when she hits her 10,000 work days milestone she might get a little tired. Maria Lopes is a perfectionist with a positive attitude.

There are two performance goals for the housekeeping team at the Providence Marriott. The first is productivity. Each is given a specific number of minutes to clean their rooms. Maria consistently beats this goal by a whole minute per room. Even though she is fast, she also always hits the second performance goal – cleanliness. She leads the team for highest cleanliness score.

Now it might be easy to think of Maria as a cleaning machine with her head down focused on the tasks at hand. But this is not the case. Her eyes are up and looking around and her heart is hungry to make a connection with a guest or a co-worker. She is always awake to who is in her house. She considers it her second house and she is going to make all who come feel warm and welcome. One day she entered a room where a young lady was staying. The lady was so sad, crying over some family issues. Maria thought she reminded her of her own daughter. Her sadness touched her heart. After cleaning she went to the kitchen and brought back some warm tea, hot soup and fresh tissues. She sat with the young guest for a few minutes and comforted her. It made such an impact, the guest wrote a long thank you note to the hotel after her stay.

Maria came to America in 1994 from Cape Verde Islands because her husband had family in the states. They all found a home at The Marriott. Edweno Lopes was a cook for twenty years alongside Maria. Their two children: Edinalia, who has a Master's Degree in Business Management and Etmi, with a Master's Degree in Psychology, both worked at The Marriott in the restaurant during college. Maria opens her arms to new associates and those new to the country. She is a nurturer and a teacher, so willing to share. She attends Holy Name Church and is active in charity work. Her other's-centered mindset helps her find moments of gratitude in every day.



Alison Hartshorne

“Everyone has a fascinating story to tell. It’s great knowing that guests want to talk to me about their stay and want to return.”

*The Center at Holiday Inn Allentown
Front Desk Manager
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2011*

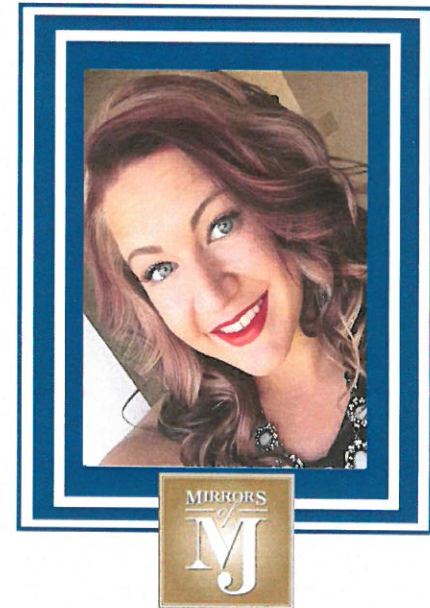
There is no wonder why “Change Is Good” is Alison’s favorite Journey principle. She began in Banquets at The Center in 2011. In 2012 she also accepted a position at the Hotel Bethlehem in Banquets. But when she was offered the Banquet Captain position at The Center she joined the family full time. In a very short time she was promoted to Front Desk Manager.

Alison explains her connection with The Journey culture. “It is a way of living with a sense of family, belonging, growth. It’s receiving guidance from your mentors and having continual opportunities to better yourself. Everyone has a role. Everyone has a voice. We are a flock.”

At the age of 14 Alison started working as a lifeguard at the local pool. She loved the water and saw the power of working together while still performing as an individual as she watched the swim team. At 15 she became a coach of a diving team, serving in that capacity for seven years.

Maybe it is that love of team sports that made her do something extraordinary one day at The Center. A girls’ softball team was staying at the hotel for a championship tournament. One of the mothers approached Alison at the front desk. It was her daughter’s birthday and she was trying to get a very special cake made for this milestone but all the bakeries said ‘no’ on such short notice. She asked Alison for help. And help she did. Alison has a passion for cake decorating and quite a skill. She stayed up all night and made the desired cake. It was a home run. The mother sent a card later to the hotel, “I want to personally thank you again for the gorgeous cake crafted for my daughter. You have given her something far better than any gift. You gave her kindness and genuine goodness. You showed her that people are good and kind, and that, when you least expect it, someone will be there to help you - even a complete stranger. In this crazy world where kids hear about people hating people, it was so special to see the total opposite. You taught 20 girls an invaluable lesson that day. I can’t thank you enough. You are special!”

Alison loves her family outside of work; mom, dad, sister, nephews and a family dog named Max. She graduated from Northampton Community College and Kutztown University. She loves spending time with friends, baking, making crafts and design.



Michael Ferrara

“The Journey is the secret to success. If you truly live The Journey, you will be successful at whatever you do best.”

*Residence Inn By Marriott Bronx
Assistant General Manager
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2015*

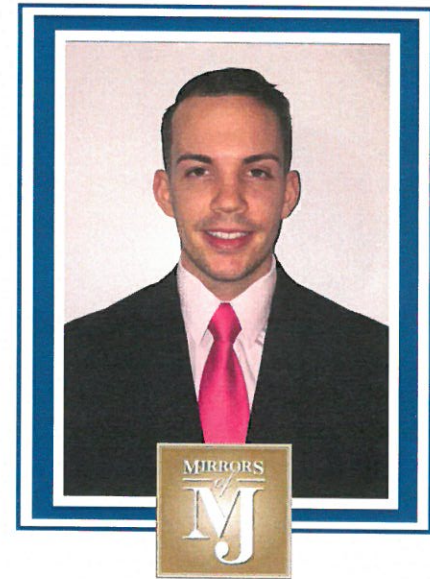
He entered this industry to create memorable moments for guests. He was thrilled when he found a company that had his passion in its mission.

Michael Ferrara started his hotel career in 2013 at the Residence Inn in White Plains. He immediately loved working the front desk. He loved the guests and the engagement. He soon realized he was gifted at guest service. It came easy for him and he was very good at it. Within six months he was transferred to the Courtyard in Montvale, New Jersey as the Front Desk Supervisor. Within that year, the next promotion was presented but he learned of a new hotel coming to his home town of the Bronx. He studied this management company and yearned to join the team. It took a bit of persuading to convince Mr. Clement Carey that a guy with only a year and a half of hotel experience deserved to be the Front Office Manager of the new Residence Inn. But he aced the interview. Michael reflects, “Clement Carey took a gamble on me and I vowed to never let him regret it.”

For sure there are no regrets. The hotel stands today in the top 4% in the brand for GSS. Michael has SMART goals built into his monthly action plans. He has increased social media followers dramatically and even created a hotel mascot named Jonas the Giraffe. Jonas is traveling the world telling the story of the Residence Inn By Marriott Bronx.

Michael credits his family and his girlfriend for being amazing influencers in his life, consistently challenging him to reach for his very best every day. He gained his education from DeVry University in Technical Management and Hospitality Management. He has his FDNY Fire and Life Safety License and his FDNY Emergency Action Plan License. He is a passionate sports fan as long as it has something to do with the Yankees, the Giants or the Knicks.

The Meyer Jabara story has helped Michael become the leader he has always wanted to be...and the journey continues.



Richard Cowan

“Making a guest happy, building heart connections and finding a new friend...that’s a great day.”

Inn at Henderson’s Wharf

General Manager

Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2011

Richard Cowan is not a “wee bit of a nice man” he is a very, very nice man.

Life in the hospitality business began for Richard in Forte Crest Hotel, Glasgow Scotland. His first management position was as Front Office Manager at the Marriott Glasgow. Then he found his home in America and worked as the Assistant Front Office Manager at the Courtyard Marriott Times Square.

It was the Journey culture that made Richard Cowan consider Meyer Jabara Hotels as his professional home. He joined the Sheraton University City as Guest Service Manager and Assistant Director of Housekeeping. He described the atmosphere as a breath of fresh air. Everyone was warm and inviting and he found a grand mentor in Phil Hogan. “The Principles are a good anchor that everyone can revolve around.” That constant is comforting and empowering.

Richard is happiest when helping guests be successful along their own journeys. His positive attitude and approach to every day is contagious. Working at the Sheraton University City provided many opportunities for Richard to develop heart connections with special guests visiting Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. One special guest was Jenson. She was a newborn with a challenging heart condition. Her daddy was stationed in Iraq and Mom stayed at the hotel. Over the course of her treatment Jenson’s family became very close with Richard. They honored him with a special t-shirt and service flag.

Richard is a native of Scotland. He valued his Scottish education very much but credits his grandmother for teaching him sense and sensibility. He is a graduate of Glasgow College of Food Technology and Hospitality Management. He is a passionate volunteer for those less fortunate – working for Alex’s Lemonade Stand and Shriners’ Children’s Hospitals. He is a Shriner and a Mason...and of course, an IPA connoisseur. His ‘mum’ lives in Cyprus; a sister in Australia and another sister in England.

His journey has brought him to the beautiful Henderson’s Wharf as General Manager. Within this boutique experience, he is able to welcome guests as if he is welcoming them into his own home.



George Zoumboulis

“Memorable Moments challenges us to take what would have been a ‘nothing’ moment and make it unforgettable!”

*Stamford Marriott Hotel and Spa
Assistant Director of Human Resources
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2008*

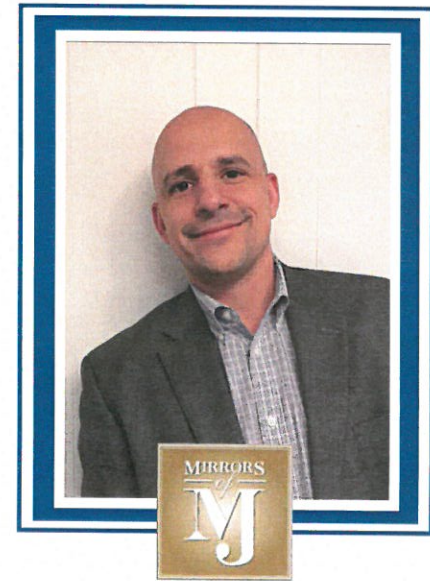
The housekeeping staff calls him Mr. George because that last name is just too much! Some call him Geo or Hollywood. But he is mostly known as Mr. Pastry Guy because he has one every morning with his coffee. But you see – the pastry thing is very purposeful. It gives George time to interact with his most important customer – the associate of The Stamford Marriott. It’s just like having breakfast together around the kitchen table. He learns more there and makes more heart connections over an innocent pastry than in any formal meeting.

George Z. is a people person. He knows all 250 Hosts by name and he knows what makes them perform at their best. He is kind and concerned about each person’s well-being and brings the principles of The Journey to life in his daily behavior. He is the Journey Champion and serves on the Journey Leadership Opportunity Team.

Each day George has a mission to retain and invigorate the A Players on the team and to find more A Players – people to step up. He uses transparency and waterline to make sure people have the information and the authority to do what they know they must do. He fully understands how to interact with guests after having worked in the F&B department of the hotel for seven years. He engages with the staff to share tricks of the trade and ways to make guests’ days memorable.

George is an amazing father of three young children. He is very close with his family. They are his foundation. When a day isn’t going perfectly he stops and counts his many blessings—always coming back to the wonderful relationships in his life. He received his Associates Degree in Travel and Tourism from Berkeley College and his Bachelor’s from the University of Bridgeport. He is an active member of his church, serving on the Parish Counsel and volunteering as a Sunday School Teacher. He also always holds a second job to provide well for his family.

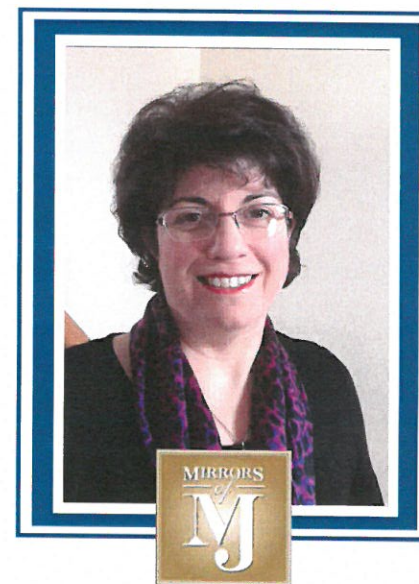
Mr. George makes the world at The Stamford Marriott a brighter place to spend this journey.



Charlene Dickie

“At the end of the day if I have completed my work, helped others along the way, and truly felt happiness and accomplishment, it has been a great day!”

*Providence Marriott Downtown
Catering Admin
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 1988*



She started with Donna DiOrio over twenty-five years ago, sitting outside of her office working as the administrative assistant. BEOs were typed back then. There were no computers. Her first year they booked over \$4 million dollars in catering business and Charlene typed every document. Donna recalls, “One day I was so overwhelmed with work. The forecast was due and I just knew I wasn’t going to get to it. Amidst my anxiety, I looked up and there stood Charlene with the completed forecast in her hand. I had no idea she knew how to do the forecast. I checked it over and it was all just perfect!”

That’s Charlene...learning, self-starting, stepping up and helping everyone out. That is her style. One Saturday she was filling in for sales coverage when a Mom and Bride-to-be stopped by unannounced for a wedding site visit. It was to be a New Year’s Eve wedding and they were shopping around. She was nervous – not being a sales manager. But she showed them the ballroom, shared stories and talked about family. They found common ground and made a true connection. The wedding was booked. Donna enabled Charlene to help work the wedding on New Year’s Eve. It was a beautiful event. And the hotel relished in the \$50,000 New Year’s Eve!

Charlene is a prime example of a Mirror – seeking only the good in others and reflecting that good. She is loyal and honest, kind and compassionate and efficient. She began her career with the Marriott in 1988 and met her husband, Bob who worked as the Catering Service Manager. They were married at the hotel in 1992. Together they celebrate two beautiful daughters, Alexandra and Ariana.

She loves to travel, family game night, watching movies and getting hooked on great TV shows.

Charlene Dickie mirrors the best of the Providence Marriott culture.

Eva Malabre

“I get to hear new stories every day and share my own stories with guests. I just love my job.”

*Providence Marriott Downtown
Lobby Attendant
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 1992*

Shhhh! Do not tell Eva Malabre that the lobby at the Providence Marriott is not the lobby in her own home. She behaves as if it is and everyone likes it that way!

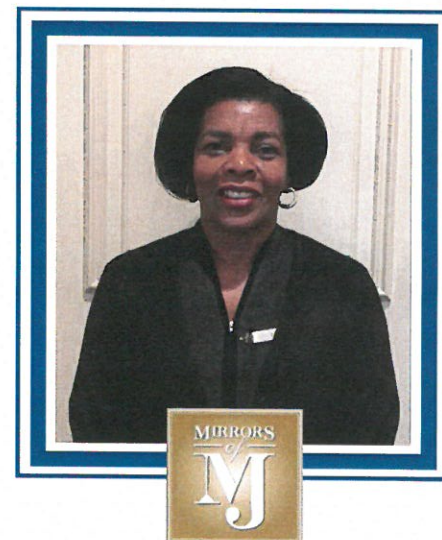
“It is my home away from home!” Eva declares passionately. And it has been Eva’s second home for twenty-five years. She came to America from Jamaica in 1988 and started working in Washington, D.C. but being homesick caused her to reach out to family in Providence. She saw an ad in the newspaper for a job at the Providence Marriott. She landed it and has been welcoming guests with a warm, genuine smile consistently since that first day!

Eva’s position as a Lobby Attendant causes her to work alone for her entire shift. Some people would become complacent and isolated but not Eva. She embraces the other lobby shift associates by spending extra time communicating with them at the beginning and end of her shift. She conveys information about the guests in house and what has happened throughout her day. She believes in carrying the guest through the day with a seamless experience. Eva is a pillar of knowledge but never a silo.

Eva’s shift begins two hours before the rest of the day team arrives. When everyone walks in, the lobby is sparkling clean, pillows are fluffed, flowers are fresh. There she stands with a smile on her face ready for the day.

There is an aura of kindness with Eva. She is an ever-present source of positivity and can-do attitude. The Providence Marriott guests are her guests and she will do whatever it takes to create memorable moments. But she also realizes this means creating a positive environment for her co-workers. She loves to serve and brings that heart into each interaction. She treats them all like family.

Family is an important word to Eva. She is journeying through life also caring for her 92-year-old mother. Relationships matter to Eva Malabre.



Chef Tim Twiford

“Attitude affects everything. It is really amazing how great a day can be if you expect great things.”

*Crowne Plaza Reading
Executive Chef*

Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 1999

Chef Tim shares that The Journey is a blueprint for both his professional and personal happiness. He consistently competes against his own personal best with a challenge statement, “Is this really the best that I can do?” He does everything in his power to never disappoint his family, his team or himself.

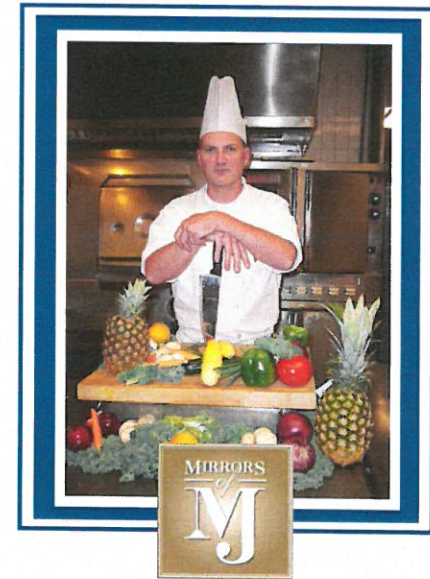
This energy and positivity is contagious. Chef Tim’s department is a progressive, opportunity-focused team of learning individuals who take pride in what they do. Each understands their waterline and vivaciously embraces change. Chef is often caught saying, “The Terrible Truths are our drivers. We cannot allow success to be our enemy. I must change first. I must not be the problem.”

The Crowne Plaza Reading is known for its charitable outreach. This is due in large to the power of their kitchen. Chef Tim’s Table is famous. Mr. Jabara challenged them to “own their street corner.” Well they decided to own the whole block and then the whole town. The Chef’s Table is always welcoming special organizations, giving back to the community, making the news and changing lives. Two years ago, a young lady named Heather was hosted at the table. Heather was battling Leukemia. Her friends put on a dinner and celebrated her life, making some incredible memorable moments. Today her health is coming back strong and she is well on her way to being a cancer survivor. The ladies that joined her that evening still talk about those moments. They have returned several times to the restaurant.

In all the times of change for Reading, Chef Tim is the constant. He feels a sense of responsibility to remain Front of the House, building trust with the community. To the Sales Team he is known as The Crowne Gem...an easy sell and a true differentiator. To the Budget Keepers he is also a shining star, conscientiously keeping his budget in line. He is a Journey champion and a grand storyteller. Most of all he is a memory maker.

Chef feels blessed in his life...an amazing wife, Chrissy and three terrific children: Felicia, Kevin and Kylie.

May there always be room for one more at Chef Tim’s Table.



Matthew Stambler

“I don’t worry about mistakes. I capture learning. I remind myself that this is only one day out of the year. There are 364 more days to make up for it!”

*Residence Inn By Marriott Bronx
Director of Sales
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2014*

It is rare when a salesperson is driven by a holistic, “greater good” purpose beyond the money in the bank. But when Matt was asked what motivates him to do his very best he replied,

“Knowing that hitting my revenue numbers leads to stable hours for all of our associates.”

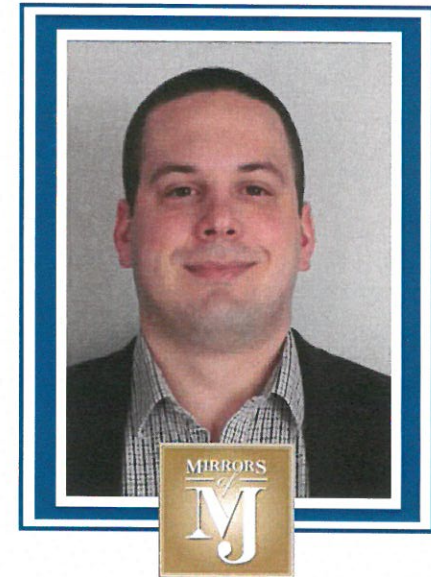
Now before thinking that he is only a servant at heart he added onto the end of his sentence, “Making bonus is a great motivator as well!”

Matthew Stambler is a nice guy with a big heart and the desire to serve others. He brings that heart to each and every sales opportunity and that is why he is so successful. He has been instrumental in creating unity among the four MJ hotels in the NY area, assisting the Cambria Hotel & Suites White Plains, using his knowledge of that market to help with quarterly blitzes. He orchestrated the booking of a large account that books rooms, not only at his hotel, but at the Hyatt Place Flushing and the Courtyard LaGuardia. Revenues are up! High tide raises all boats.

Matt is a Journey Facilitator and serves on the Journey Leadership Opportunity team. His hand reaches to the sky every time a call for mentors is issued. He loves to teach. As a teacher, he is able to make heart connections with his fellow associates. He cares. He is a trusted friend, often engaging in conversation over a cup of coffee, learning how to mend relationships, develop learners and encourage “A” performers.

Matt is on a fast track to success. Not because someone put him on that list as a target, but because he worked his way onto that list. He is a go-giver who helps those around him find success.

He married his college sweetheart and soon they will welcome their first child...at least their first human child. Lincoln, the chocolate lab, might argue that he was the first!



Thomas L. Gephart

“There are so many more colors in the hospitality world than just red and black.”

*Courtyard by Marriott Canton
Controller / Director of Human Resources
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 2012*

To Thomas The Journey is a roadmap for success. Prior to truly believing in The Journey as a living culture, Thomas saw the world in black and white and focused on how the right and wrong of every thing affected the bottom line. Then Thomas got involved in teaching The Journey classes and his view of the hospitality world began to change. He stepped up and accepted the responsibility of leading November’s “30 Days of Giving” initiative. He raised his hand to be a Journey mentor. He developed the hotel’s Journey Board and keeps it current. And now he is a true Culture Keeper at the hotel.

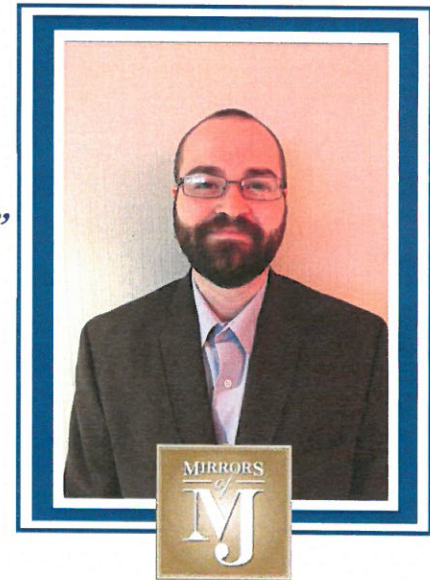
Like every Controller, Thomas has a desk. But he is never stuck there, often stepping out to serve a guest, drive a van, coach an associate or resolve a billing issue with a guest face-to-face. The most important Journey principle for Thomas is Heart Connections. “I love having an emotional investment in our associates, then watching them invest with the guests.”

Thomas received his Associate’s Degree in Accounting Technology from Brown Mackie College. He loves life with his wife, Jaqualine, their baby daughter, Rhiannon Aurora and long-time best friend, Cocoa the dog.

Volunteering to make life better for others is like air to Thomas. He needs it to fully thrive. Find him working with United Way for their Stone Soup project; or at the local book drive for underprivileged schools and families; or with the Stark County Hunger Task Force and Refuge of Hope.

Prior to coming to Meyer Jabara, Thomas worked ten years with the Subway organization. When asked about their culture, “The best thing I can say about that place...I met my wife there!”

It is an honor to have Thomas Gephart reflect the culture of Meyer Jabara Hotels.



Nicole K. Pfahl

“Keep improving every day. Reach a goal and go for more!”

*Cambria Hotel & Suites White Plains Downtown
Sales Manager
Began her Meyer Jabara Journey in 2013*



Nicole Pfahl has held many different jobs within the hospitality industry as well as within Meyer Jabara Hotels. The one constant has been her focus on “Making It Brilliant” for her guests. She even has a sign at her desk spotlighting those words.

Her first job was at Stew Leonard’s grocery store. She was 15 but the company motto, “The Customer Is Always Right” was embedded in her brain. After graduating from Lyndon State College with a BS in Resort Management and Marketing, she entered the Vermont resort world in Guest Services: Stowe Mountain Resort and Burke Mountain. Family beckoned her back to the Connecticut area and she started at the Stamford Marriott as a Guest Service Agent. Ten months later she was Front Desk Supervisor and then Front Office Supervisor. When the newest MJ property opened in White Plains she accepted the position of Sales Coordinator and today is the Sales Manager of the Cambria Hotel and Suites.

One of Nicole’s favorite guest stories involved the Jr. Yacht Competition hosted at The Stamford Marriott. A single mom and her son were staying in a room with only a shower. The other boys were talking about their bathtubs and how it gave them time to mess with their boats. Nicole overheard the conversation and promptly moved the boy and his mom. He actually won the entire event. Nicole ordered a giant cookie with CONGRATULATIONS on it and sent it to his room. A few days later a thank you note arrived with a picture of the boy and his boat and team number. She keeps that thank you note still to this day as a reminder of the power of “Making It Brilliant.”

Nicole and her boyfriend Kyle have been enjoying life together for seven years. They have one rescue mutt named Sienna. Her heart and soul find strength in the process of rescuing dogs. Pound Hound, Res-Q, Marley’s Mutts and Second Chance Rescue all receive the support of Nicole and Kyle. A Nicole-rescued dog is a happy dog, hiking on any day off, swimming at Candlewood Lake, snowboarding or wakeboarding. Life is always adventurous and always good.

Robin Robinson

“It is a joy to step back and say, look what we have accomplished today!”

*Meyer Jabara Support Office
Special Projects Engineer
Began his Meyer Jabara Journey in 1997*

He enjoys his work so much sometimes he must remind himself it is work. Negativity bounces off of him as if it is repelled. He looks at each obstacle as an opportunity and enjoys getting many heads wrapped around that opportunity and many hands working on it to make it perfect.

“Inspector Gadget” is a perfect mental image of Robin Robinson. He has been known to drop what he is doing and head to a crisis – maybe even pushing a magic button to reveal a helicopter in his hat! When asked why he simply replies, “I like to cause smiles on faces.” And the stereotype of an Engineer is just to fix things. Well - - that is what Robin is doing...fixing things like broken smiles.

Robin loves children. He has one daughter, Jennifer Martin, and her six children. There is also his cat named Lilli and she has a permanent seat next to Inspector Gadget. This love of children drives Robin to volunteer every year with the Boy Scouts of America at two camps. He was awarded the prestigious Purple Arrow. This is the highest award given to a non-scout. It is an honor voted on by the scouts, nominated by troops and voted up by the council. Robin humbly stood to receive this amazing award for his selfless volunteerism and love of brotherhood and learning.

One associate described Robin, “His phone is always on and his answer is always right.” Robin dropped everything to help the guests and the associates during Hurricane Irene and Hurricane Sandy. During the Blizzard of 2015 he was available 24/7. If an associate needs a ride to work, a washing machine goes down, a lighting system needs installing or gas needs to be restored to a building... Robin is there. When doing this interview, seven current Mirrors raised their hands to submit stories and words to champion Robin Robinson. “Experienced, Teacher, Leader, Appreciator, Thoughtful, Kind and Loyal.”

No smile is ever broken for long around Robin Robinson.

