

**Tourism industry celebrates service excellence at the  
47<sup>th</sup> Annual Calgary White Hat Awards**

Calgary, AB – April 9, 2009: The best of Calgary's hospitality and tourism industry were honoured tonight at the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium when Tourism Calgary and industry partners presented the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Calgary White Hat Awards.

A record number of 700 applicants – ranging from waiters, waitresses, bus and shuttle drivers, bartenders, valets and other service industry representatives – were nominated for this year's awards. Minister of Tourism, Parks & Recreation, Cindy Ady; Mayor Dave Bronconnier and industry partners presented winners in 28 categories with a coveted white Smithbilt cowboy hat – a symbol world-wide of Calgary's genuine western hospitality – as a token of the city's appreciation for their unfaltering commitment to service excellence.

"It's our privilege to recognize the outstanding individuals who elevate our hospitality and tourism industry, add to the authentic Calgary experience and embody the welcoming spirit for which our city is known," said Aldon Wells, Interim Chief Operating Officer of Tourism Calgary. "For nearly 50 years, almost as long as Tourism Calgary has existed, we have prided ourselves and our city on hosting this premier event, which annually and deservedly shines the spotlight on the people who work day in and day out to make Calgary a great place to visit and live."

At the awards ceremony, often described as the "Academy Awards" of the hospitality and tourism industry, winners received a trophy, winner's plaque and sterling silver pin in addition to their white Smithbilt cowboy hat. A champagne reception followed the awards.

**Honorary Award Recipients**

The **Mayor's White Hat Award** honours an individual who is committed to the continued development of the hospitality and tourism industry. The nominee must have a minimum of five years of related experience and must have displayed leadership and proficiency in the hospitality and tourism industry. Mayor Dave Bronconnier presented the award to: **Trevor Smallwood** from the **Sheraton Suites Calgary Eau Claire**.

The **Media Recognition Award** acknowledges an individual in the media for his/her commitment to the city of Calgary. Bryce Nimmo from Smithbilt Hats Inc. presented the award to: **Joe Carbury** from the **Calgary Stampede**.

The **Honorary Doug Johnson Service Award** recognizes longevity (a minimum of 20 years) in the hospitality and tourism industry. The nominee for this award must have displayed outstanding contributions to the enhancement of the industry by upholding high standards of service throughout their career. Earl Williams, chairman of Tourism Calgary's Board of Directors, presented to: **George Dorn** from **Calgary Transit**.

The **White Hat of the Year Award** pays tribute to an individual, group or organization that has made a significant and recognizable contribution to the tourism and hospitality industry in Calgary. Alex Graham, President and CEO of Tourism Calgary, presented the award to: **GlobalFest**.

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## **Category Award Recipients**

Marlene Quartly, Starbuck's Coffee – Panorama  
Best Server: Fast Food/Baristas/In-Room Dining

Dusty Aylett, Calgary Zoo, Botanical Garden and Prehistoric Park  
Best Visitor Service: Tour Guide/Interpretive/Step On Guides

Kim Bacon, Calgary Flames Hockey Club, Avison Young Club  
Delta Hotels Best Server: Restaurant – Downtown

Debby Mueller, Calgary Co-op  
Smithbilt Hats Best Customer Service: Retail Services

Mikkel Sigismund, The Shooting Edge  
Alberta Motor Association Best Customer Service: Information Desk/Attractions

Roosevelt Fevry, Calgary Marriott Hotel  
Calgary Stampede Best Server: Banquets/Catering

Laurie Lyons, Moxie's Classic Grill – Southport  
Best Server: Restaurant – South

Ryan Campbell, WestJet  
Calgary Airport Authority Best Customer Service: Airlines/In Flight Services

Mark O'Brien, Deerfoot Inn & Casino  
Best Customer Service: Casino – Gaming Services

Kimberly Conard, Wellspring Healing Group  
American Express Best Customer Service: Spa, Esthetics & Wellness Providers

Russell Humphreys, WestJet  
Best Operational Support

Simon Cormier, The Westin Calgary  
Calgary Marriott Hotel Best Valet/Doorperson

Helene Ha, The Westin Calgary  
Best Cleaning Services

Syd Banks, Calgary Transit  
Calgary Transit Best Driver: Ground Transportation

Sharon Heriot, Lakeview Signature Inn  
Best Culinary Services

Karen Hopkins, WestJet  
Anderson Vacations Best Guest Service: Reservations/Travel Agents

Justin Keller, Cactus Club Café – MacLeod Trail  
Best Bartender/Wine Steward

Jayne Nicholson, Calgary Stampede  
Best Administration Services

Ouassila Houzi, The Westin Calgary  
Calgary Hotel Association Best Guest Service: Accommodation – Front Desk Agent

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Jason Higgins, Q Haute Cuisine  
Willow Park Wines & Spirits Best Server: Fine Dining

Jane Melgar, Calgary Marriott Hotel  
Best Host (ess)/Maître

Anthony Samson, Sheraton Suites Calgary Eau Claire  
Where Calgary Magazine Best Concierge/Bellperson

Mikyla Hall, Cactus Club Café – Barlow  
Best Server: Restaurant – North

Melissa Leclerc, Anderson Vacations  
Air Canada Best Customer Service: Transportation – Counter Check-in Agents

Tourism Calgary is a not-for-profit, membership based organization specializing in the marketing and promotion of Calgary and area as the destination of choice for leisure and business travel. For over 50 years Tourism Calgary has been the only organization dedicated to this purpose, and has grown to include a network of over 500 businesses; from attractions and accommodations to arts groups, entertainment venues, restaurants, transportation outlets and various services.

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