



# Skål International Orlando

International Association of Travel and Tourism Professionals

Skal Orlando Newsletter

May 2019

## A Message from Our President...



### Dear Fellow Skalleagues,

Your Skal Orlando Club has been very busy this Spring. Hope you all enjoyed our April meeting at the Rosen College of Hospitality Management with many members of the Skal Tampa Club in attendance. Thanks again Dean Wang, for a great program that evening.

I hope you have had a chance to participate in some new club activities, including our new Skal Wine Club at The Vineyard, with the next one coming up May 30, our Victory Cruise excursion and visit to Becks Farm in Windermere.

We had great representation at the 2019 North America Skal Congress in Hawaii last month, including Skal Orlando Immediate Past President John Stine, who is our current Skal USA Representative for the club; Skal Orlando Past President and current Skal USA Membership Director Richard Scinta, Skal Orlando Board Member Carla Alberti, and Skal Orlando Young Skal Members Tania Imani and Kiara Miranda Berrios. Read more about that in this issue of your newsletter, along with announcements of important recognition for two Skal Orlando Members who have given a lot to their industry, community and our Club.

Be sure to listen to the announcements at our upcoming meetings and in our August newsletter for exciting updates on some Fall club activities ahead, including a UCF football game, winery event and Publix Aprons Cooking School. We will also be rolling out a new member award program at our December Holiday Gala. You won't want to miss all the details to come.

*Sincerely in Skal, Keith Wolling*

## **Skal Orlando Past President and Managing Director of Hard Rock Hotel Orlando, Carlton Hudson, Retires**

Carlton Hudson, who served as Skal Orlando Club President in 2012, has been a life-long supporter of Skal and instrumental in the start of Orlando's Young Skal Program, has retired from his post as Managing Director of the Hard Rock Hotel Orlando after 30 years in the hotel industry. Hudson also hosted a very special Spring Skal Orlando meeting for many years, rolling out the red carpet for his fellow Skalleagues.



Hudson was part of the Loews Hotels & Co family for 15 years, starting as the general manager of The House of Blues Hotel, a Loews Hotel in Chicago, and then joining the Loews Hotels at Universal Orlando team in April 2005, as General Manager of Hard Rock. He has been recognized as GM of the Year by Loews Hotels & Co. and Hard Rock International. Under his leadership, Hard Rock Hotel Orlando won Hard Rock International's Hotel of the Year Award an impressive seven times!

Hudson and his team set 15 records in 2018 for total year revenue, GOP, EBITDA, EBITDA percentage, occupancy, average rate, RevPAR and total rooms revenue. During his 30 years in the industry, he and his hotel have contributed time, resources and dollars to a long list of local organizations including Feeding Children Everywhere, Habitat for Humanity, Ronald McDonald House, Second Harvest Food Bank, Coalition for the Homeless, Relay for Life and PINK! )B-R.

Congratulations Carlton on all your career achievements! Thank you for your leadership and support in Skal!



## **Skal Orlando Member and Orlando Venues Chief Venues Officer Allen Johnson Named Downtowner of the Year**

Congratulations to Skal Orlando Member Allen Johnson, Chief Venues Officer for Orlando Venues/Amway Center, for being named Downtowner of the Year. The Downtown Orlando Partnership recently hosted its annual Golden Brick Awards celebration, presenting its highest honor to Johnson. The award recognizes the individual who has generously donated their time, talents and resources towards promoting and advancing Downtown Orlando.

Johnson, who has spent 31 years in venue management, has served as Chief Venues Officer of the City of Orlando's Venues Department, which includes the Amway Center, Camping World Stadium, Tinker Field, Harry P. Leu Gardens, Mennello Museum of American Art, the Bob Carr Performing Arts Centre (2004 to 2014) and the Expo Center

(2004 to 2005). In 2007, Johnson played an integral role in realizing the community venues project (Amway Center, Dr. Phillips Center and Camping World Stadium reconstruction), representing one of the most comprehensive public-private partnerships and multi-building endeavors in the region's history.

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### **Skal Orlando Immediate Past President, Past President, Board Member and Two Young Skal Members Represented Us Well in Hawaii at North America Skal Congress 2019**

Your Skal Orlando Club was represented well last month at the North America Skal Congress in Hawaii, bringing together Skal members from all across North America to discuss their club initiatives, membership, leadership and future goals. Attending on our behalf were: Skal Orlando Immediate Past President John Stine, who currently represents our club as Skal USA Representative, Skal Past President and Skal USA Membership Director Richard Scinta, Skal Orlando Board Member Carla Alberti and Young Skal Members Tania Imani and Kiara Miranda. Imani and Miranda were able to attend due to our club's gracious participation in the Skal Silent Auction held earlier this year to raise funds for their participation.

Congratulations to our attending members and to our own club for its outstanding support!

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### **Young Skal Members Tania Imani and Kiara Miranda Talk About their Experiences at the North America Skal Congress**





For Tania Imani, attending the 2019 Skala North American Congress in Hawaii, the experience heightened her level of understanding and perspective regarding Skala's domestic and international efforts. Meeting Lavonne Wittmann, the President of Skala International, had a lasting impact. "I remember her telling the attendees that if there is no network, there is no work," said Imani. "When I talked with her further during shuttle rides to the various events, she expressed that the professional world is no longer about who you know, but instead who knows you. I found this message especially relevant in regards to Skala International's goals of strengthening the Young Skala and millennial presence, in efforts to elevate the future of Skala members and clubs."

Bringing back a powerful message to her Skala Orlando Club, Imani listened to the Skala USA Executive Board urging members of all clubs to become actively engaged in Skala USA and international online platforms, and dedicating just a few minutes each month to reviewing website updates and newsletters to strengthen their membership experience.

Imani felt honored at the conference in Honolulu to speak before the Skala Executive Board and over 100 North American delegates about the support and encouragement Young



Aloha! I am so humbled, thankful, and grateful to have had the opportunity to represent Skala Orlando at NASC hosted by Skala Hawaii as one of the two Young Skala Students. This year's congress had over 100 Skalleagues in attendance spending three days learning from the productive sessions, attending the amazing events, and great networking with fellow Skala members from the USA, Canada, Mexico, and all around the world. This congress truly fostered unity and interaction across various sectors of the industry, advanced international friendship and promoted the organization's objective to "Do Business among Friends." It was an amazing experience I will never forget.

It is no doubt from the moment I got inducted just a year ago, this organization has taught me the true meaning of what it takes to be a professional in the travel and tourism industry. I have the utmost passion for its growth and success and have returned with a stronger passion and respect for it. During the congress, I was able to break out of my comfort zone, absorb the new learning space, open up to new ideas while investing in myself. All of which I wanted to accomplish and even more bring back new ideas and approaches to the Orlando club.

NASC allowed me to heighten my level of understanding and

Skal receives from the Orlando Club. "As one of four Young Skal Members attending NASC from the Orlando and Tampa Clubs, I was filled with pride from the immense positive response and well wishes that the Orlando Club received, as Kiara and I spoke about the partnership with the Rosen College of Hospitality Management, mentorship program, quarterly educational events and the execution of a phenomenal silent auction fundraiser that allowed us to attend the Congress of a lifetime," she added.

According to Imani, exposure to the 50 USA Clubs, along with Canada and Mexico clubs, has complemented and significantly improved her knowledge of the global hospitality industry and its leaders.

perspective regarding Skal's domestic and international efforts especially with the presence of Lavonne Wittmann, President of Skal International, who deeply inspired me as she addressed heavily to all Skal members "Live the Skal brand constantly and consistently."

"I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation for each of the Board members and Stefanie Zambelli for this opportunity. As I mentioned in my letter stating my reason of motivation three months ago, "I believe there is power in being connected to other people who are active in your line of work." I knew, if given the privilege, the meaning of the quote would come to life right in front of my eyes. Mahalo!

## Welcome New Members

Please join me in welcoming our newest Skal Orlando Members:

### **David Gilmore**

Director of Affinity Sales  
Trip Beat



### **Chadwick Hardee**

President of Hospitality Sales  
APDC Cleaning Services Inc.



### **Shane Jordan**

Area Sales Manager  
Hotelier Textile Solutions

Please introduce yourself to them at our next meeting and share your story of why you love your Skal Orlando Club.

Don't forget to invite a guest to one of our next meetings. Your guests are likely to be our newest

members! Thank you for helping your club grow!



## **Congratulations to Our Newest Young Skal Members**

Welcome to our newest Young Skal Members, Kateryna Serhiyenko and Shannon Barry, who were inducted at the April Rosen College of Hospitality Management meeting and joined by our club's other Young Skal Members. Our Young Skal Program continues to succeed with now 13 Young Skal Students and Young Skal Professional Members. Two more will be inducted by the end of the year. Thank you to Stefanie Zambelli, our Young Skal Chair, for all your hard work!

## **Reminder to Support Our Local Charity Of Choice**

Skal Orlando supports The Perry Pavilion at Dr. P. Phillips Hospital, which provides comfortable, accessible overnight lodging for hundreds of families whose loved ones are receiving medical care. More than half are

travelers on vacation in Orlando.



The two-story hospital pavilion features private guest rooms, a family gathering room, community resource center, laundry facilities and children's play area, accommodating up to 10 families a night. Show your support to The Perry Pavilion by donating some needed items and bringing them to a Skal Orlando meeting. You can find the complete list of donation items on our website at [skalorlando.com](http://skalorlando.com).

## A Bit of Skal History...



*Les 5 membres fondateurs du Skal Club de Paris en 1932.  
Au centre, Florimond VOLCKAERT, Wagons-lits ; debout, à gauche, Pierre SOULIE, Farman ; debout, à droite, Georges ITHIER, Exprinter ; assis à gauche, Jules MOHR, K.L.M. ; assis à droite, Hugo KRAFT, Swedish Amerika Line.*

Skal International unofficially began in the Fall of 1932 in Paris, France with Hugo Krafft, Pierre Soulié and Florimond Volckaert who developed the idea. They formalized their idea in June and on December 16 of that year, they gathered 53 tourism professionals and decided to form the Skal Club of Paris.

Hugo Krafft, Jules Mohr, Pierre Soulié, Florimond Volckaert and Georges

Ithier – a Swede, Dutchman, Frenchman, Belgian and Brazilian – then flew to Sweden and received a very warm welcome there. So they decided to preserve the spirit in a long lasting manner by giving the club the name SKAL, with the initials of four Scandinavian words meaning Happiness, Good Health, Friendship and Long Life.

The official Skål Statutes were presented on January 7, 1933 and an inauguration ceremony of the headquarters at Cintra Bar (La Place de l'Opera) followed on February 3, attended by travel agents and executives from airline, maritime and rail companies, tourism organizations, the diplomatic corps and press. The founder members' First General Assembly was held on February 15th and plans were soon launched for a bulletin and emblem.

**Thank you for being a member!**



**Skål International Orlando**

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