

2025

BLOOMINGTON

DIAMOND SERVICE AWARDS



DOUBLETREE BY HILTON HOTEL
BLOOMINGTON - MINNEAPOLIS SOUTH
GRAND BALLROOM

APRIL 22, 2025



Bloomington *Minnesota Travel & Tourism*

PROGRAM

4:30 P.M.

RECEPTION

5:30 P.M.

PRESENTATION OF FINALISTS

Bloomington Food Safety Awards

Hospitality Hall of Fame Awards

Spirit of Hospitality

Award Dinner

Diamond Service Awards

"Be Our Guest" Tribute to Nominees

EMCEES

Bonnie L. Carlson

President & CEO, Bloomington
Minnesota Travel & Tourism

Jim Cunningham

Actor, Playwright, and Producer



THE PROCESS

Diamond Service Award nominations are submitted by management personnel from the hospitality and retail businesses in Bloomington in 14 categories. All nominees are personally interviewed by a panel of independent judges and rated on a point system to determine final scores. The accounting firm Abdo verifies all tabulations and results.

WELCOME

Welcome to the 27th Annual Bloomington Diamond Service Awards!

Tonight, we gather to celebrate the incredible individuals who embody the spirit of hospitality in Bloomington. Nestled along the scenic banks of the Minnesota River, this city is a testament to the warmth and dedication of its hospitality community. From the iconic Mall of America to the breathtaking Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Bloomington offers a diverse array of attractions and experiences for every visitor. The exceptional service provided by our local hospitality professionals, combined with the city's central location, easy access to major highways, free parking, and convenient hotel shuttles, truly enhances the visitor experience. We appreciate the hard work and commitment of those who make Bloomington a welcoming destination for all.

Bloomington's hospitality industry plays a key role in ensuring that every guest's experience is unforgettable. With nearly 50 hotels, ranging from luxury to economy, Bloomington continues to serve business travelers, families, and tourists alike. Whether it's Mall of America's shopping and entertainment options or the city's extensive hiking and biking trails, our hospitality community makes it all come to life.

As we celebrate tonight's nominees and recipients, we recognize the hard work and dedication that go into delivering exceptional service, from providing personalized guest experiences to maintaining top-tier service standards. Each one of you contributes to making Bloomington a top destination for each one of our visitors.

Congratulations to all of tonight's honorees. Your commitment to excellence in hospitality is what makes Bloomington a vibrant, welcoming destination for visitors from all over the world.

Thank you for everything you do to make Bloomington the exceptional place it is!



BONNIE L. CARLSON

*President & CEO
Bloomington Minnesota Travel
& Tourism*

FINALISTS

BLOOMINGTON FOOD SAFETY AWARDS

For over 50 years, Bloomington’s Environmental Health Division has worked behind the scenes to protect public health, conducting inspections of food facilities, rental housing, swimming pools, and more. From investigating complaints about noise and pollution to ensuring food safety, the team plays a vital role in maintaining community well-being.

At the heart of this work is Bloomington’s food and hotel safety program, designed to prevent foodborne illness and uphold cleanliness standards. Certified Environmental Health Specialists routinely inspect restaurants and food facilities, focusing on critical risk factors identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), such as food from unsafe sources, poor hygiene, inadequate cooking, and contaminated equipment. Establishments must also meet additional safety measures, including employing a certified food protection manager and training staff in proper food handling. High-risk locations receive at least two unannounced inspections per year, ensuring ongoing compliance and education.

Food safety isn’t just about regulations—it’s about trust. Bloomington’s Food Safety Award recognizes local establishments that go above and beyond in their commitment to quality and public health. Nominated by inspectors and evaluated by the Bloomington Food Collaborative, award winners set the standard for excellence in food safety. Their dedication allows the community to enjoy meals with confidence, knowing that every bite is backed by rigorous care and expertise.

Join us in celebrating these exceptional establishments and their dedicated employees for their commitment to ensuring the quality and safety of our food.

Congratulations to the following businesses!

FULL SERVICE HOTEL

- DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington -
Minneapolis South
- Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

FULL SERVICE RESTAURANT

- Applebee’s (Lyndale)
- Olive Garden
- Perk Up Kitchen
- Wahlburgers (Mall of America)
- WhirlyBall Twin Cities

QUICK SERVICE & CAFETERIA

- Bussin Birria Tacos
- Café Fusion
- Chipotle (France Avenue)
- Gyros Grill
- McDonald’s (Nicollet Avenue)
- Panda Express (Mall of America)

GROCERY

- Cub Foods (Lyndale)
- Fresh Thyme Farmers Market

LIMITED SERVICE

- Country Inn & Suites by Radisson,
Bloomington at
Mall of America
- Holiday Inn Express and Suites
Mall of America-MSP Airport
- Tru by Hilton/Home2 Suites



2025

SPIRIT OF HOSPITALITY

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS

Minnesota Sports and Events
2024

U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar
U.S. Senate, 2023

US Foods
2020

**Minnesota Super Bowl LII
Host Committee**
2019

Larry Lee
City of Bloomington, 2018

Bloomington Police Department
2017

Jim Saccoman
Embassy Suites Bloomington, 2016

Gene Winstead
Mayor of Bloomington, 2015

David Fong Family
David Fong's, 2014

Bruce Karstadi
American Swedish Institute, 2013

Steve Fox
Greenspring Media, 2012

Mall of America®
2011

Minnesota Zoo
2010

Rep. Jim M. Ramstad
U.S. House of Representatives, 2009

Jeffrey Hamiel
Metropolitan Airports Commission,
2008

Sen. William H. Belanger
Minnesota Legislature, 2007

Bonnie L. Carlson
Bloomington Convention & Visitors
Bureau, 2006

Sam Thompson
metroConnections, 2005

John Edman
MN Office of Tourism, 2004

Richard Anderson
Northwest Airlines, 2003

Governor Jesse Ventura
State of Minnesota, 2002

Marilyn Carlson Nelson
Carlson Cos., 2001

Gary L. Gandrud
Faegre & Benson, 2000



Airport Foundation MSP is this year's recipient of the prestigious Spirit of Hospitality Award, recognizing its dedication to enhancing the travel experience and supporting the aviation community at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP). Since its founding in 1982 as the Metropolitan Public Airport Foundation, the organization has evolved to meet the growing needs of MSP and its passengers. Initially focused on beautification projects and aviation initiatives, a pivotal moment came in 1992 when it took over the Travelers Assistance program, expanding its role in traveler support.

After its rebranding as Airport Foundation MSP in 2006, the Foundation launched an Arts & Culture program, bringing rotating exhibitions, performing arts, and media displays to MSP's terminals. Expanded volunteer opportunities and tourism initiatives further solidified its mission. Today, with 32 employees and over 400 volunteers, the Foundation supports more than 2 million travelers each year. Programs like MSP Animal Ambassadors provide comfort through pet therapy, while children's play areas and digital displays introduce visitors to the region's attractions. The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program allows travelers with nonvisible disabilities to wear a sunflower-printed lanyard, signaling they may need additional assistance from trained airport staff.

Under the leadership of President and CEO Jana Webster, the organization has strengthened partnerships within the tourism and hospitality sectors. Webster's background in nonprofit management and media has helped position the Foundation as a leader in the aviation and travel industries, ensuring MSP remains one of North America's top airports for customer experience.

Beyond MSP's terminals, the Foundation's impact extends across Minnesota's tourism landscape. With more than 37 million global travelers passing through MSP annually, its partnerships with organizations like Bloomington Minnesota Travel & Tourism play a crucial role in promoting the region and creating a positive first impression of Minnesota.

The Spirit of Hospitality Award is a testament to the Airport Foundation MSP's commitment to service, accessibility, community engagement, and elevating the travel experience. To learn more or become a volunteer, visit airportfoundation.org.

Congratulations, Airport Foundation MSP!

2025

HOSPITALITY HALL OF FAME

The Diamond Service Awards Committee is pleased to announce the 2025 inductions to the Hospitality Hall of Fame, which honors commitment and longevity in Bloomington's tourism and hospitality industry.



28 YEARS OF SERVICE

JODIE GRANNES

*General Manager • Cambria Hotel Bloomington
Mall of America Minneapolis Airport*

Jodie Grannes, currently at Cambria Hotel Bloomington Mall of America Minneapolis Airport, brings over 30 years of hospitality experience to Bloomington. Formerly with Country Inn & Suites Bloomington by Mall of America and Radisson Blu Mall of America, she excels in employee engagement, knowing her team personally and fostering lasting connections. A highlight of her leadership was a heartfelt birthday caravan organized by staff during COVID, showcasing the strong community she has built.



40 YEARS OF SERVICE

ALLEN PLANTE

*Director of Banquets • Radisson Blu
Mall of America*

Allen Plante has dedicated 40 years to Radisson in Bloomington, including 12 years at Radisson Blu Mall of America and over 25 years at Radisson Bloomington South. Renowned for his innovative spirit, he enhances guest experiences while fostering a culture of creativity. Allen's warmth and meticulous attention to detail ensure that every event exceeds expectations, making him a vital asset in Bloomington's hospitality scene.



31 YEARS OF SERVICE

WANDA NOVAK

*Server • DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington - Minneapolis South*

Wanda Novak has been a cornerstone of DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington - Minneapolis South since 1993, starting as a service bartender and transitioning to Banquets. Renowned for her exceptional service, she skillfully accommodates guests' preferences and mentors new staff. Wanda's leadership shines during high-pressure events, and her commitment to community service, including organizing charity events, makes her a true inspiration in hospitality.



33 YEARS OF SERVICE

KIM VO

*Head of Housekeeping • DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington - Minneapolis South*

Kim Vo has spent 33 years at DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington - Minneapolis South, leading the Housekeeping Department with dedication. As a mentor and advocate for her team, she ensures exceptional guest service and creates a "home away from home" experience with thoughtful details. Her genuine care for both guests and staff has fostered a positive work environment, making her a respected figure in hospitality.

PREVIOUS INDUCTEES

2024

Eric Baker

Hilton Minneapolis-Saint Paul
Airport

Luis Blanco

Hyatt Place Minneapolis Airport-
South

Rodney Fors

Crowne Plaza Bloomington

Kevin Westlund

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington - Minneapolis South

2023

Carol Chapman

Hilton Minneapolis/Saint Paul
Airport Mall of America

María Peña

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

James Rasmussen

Bloomington Event Center
Knights of Columbus

Neil Rivard

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington - Minneapolis South

2020

Michael "Mick" Elder

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington - Minneapolis South

Dawn Freid

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

Barbara Phillips

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

Kathy Sarff

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington - Minneapolis South

Tairie Starr

Chapel of Love

2019

Sally Hanson, Sandy Moe, Susie Rudenick

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington - Minneapolis South

Judy Nieto

Hilton Minneapolis/Saint Paul
Airport Mall of America

Ismael Zavala

Holiday Inn Express & Suites
Bloomington Minneapolis Airport
Area West

2018

Champawatee "Bobzin" Beni

Courtyard Bloomington by
Mall of America

Patricia Bymark

Minneapolis Airport Marriott

Tim Krenik

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington - Minneapolis South

Isabel Rodriguez

Holiday Inn Express & Suites
Bloomington Minneapolis Airport
Area West

Dwight Stewart

Crowne Plaza Bloomington MSP
Airport/Mall of America

2017

Jackie Ploen

Embassy Suites by Hilton
Bloomington

Carrie Poepping

Country Inn & Suites by Carlson
Bloomington at Mall of America

Michele Robidoux

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington - Minneapolis South

Sai Rosser-Ichisumi

Crowne Plaza Bloomington MSP
Airport/Mall of America

2016

John Dainty

Thunderbird/Ramada Hotel

Marlene Kurtz

Crowne Plaza Bloomington

Mary Jo Peterson

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

Mildret "Millie" Philipp

Mall of America

Sohrab "Sammy" Sadeh

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

2015

Ursula Chan

Colette Bar and Bistro

Mike Gruebele

Embassy Suites by Hilton
Bloomington

Sue Miller

Woolley's Restaurant

2014

Linda Fleming

Quality Inn & Suites Airport

Terry Jagow

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Bloomington - Minneapolis South

2013

Mohammed Raki

Sofitel Minneapolis Bloomington

2012

Joseph Skluzacek

Thunderbird/Ramada Hotel

2011

Peggy Gaughran Werdan

Thunderbird/Ramada Hotel

SPRIT OF HOSPITALITY • HOSPITALITY HALL OF FAME

2025

DIAMOND SERVICE AWARDS

BEST HOSPITALITY ADMINISTRATION

Stephanie Jaramillo

Hilton Minneapolis/Bloomington

Sharon Kaiser

Great Wolf Lodge

Alexander Pyritz

SEA LIFE at Mall of America

Catherine Rivas

Great Wolf Lodge

Seth Steidl

Radisson Blu Mall of America

BEST GUEST RELATIONS PERSONNEL

Luke Davidson

Nickelodeon Universe

Liam Gillquist

SEA LIFE at Mall of America

Issa Issa

Radisson Blu Mall of America

Marjon Khan

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington -
Minneapolis South

Devyn Lennex

Hyatt Regency Bloomington - Minneapolis

BEST RESTAURANT PERSONNEL

Yesenia Perez-Ramirez

Smack Shack

Felipe Secundino

Cantina Laredo

Mark Spoering

Sonic Drive-In Bloomington

Shirley Strahan

Olive Garden Bloomington

Nancy Thacher

Culver's Bloomington

BEST BANQUET/CATERING PERSONNEL

Ramsey Ferguson

Hilton Minneapolis/Bloomington

Oswaldo Garcia Cano

Radisson Blu Mall of America

Domingo Lopez-Cruz

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington -
Minneapolis South

Josefina Ramirez

Hyatt Regency Bloomington - Minneapolis

Sandra Torres Guallpa

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington -
Minneapolis South

BEST HOTEL GUEST SERVICES (LIMITED SERVICE)

Pierre Curd

Country Inn & Suites by Radisson Bloomington
Mall of America

Noel Gutierrez

Hyatt Place Minneapolis Airport-South

Elaine Jourdain

Hyatt House Mall of America MSP Airport

Sanjeev Parikh

Country Inn & Suites by Radisson Bloomington
Mall of America

Jessica Sanchez

Courtyard by Marriott Bloomington by
Mall of America

BEST HOTEL GUEST SERVICES (FULL SERVICE)

Yeasin Mahmood

Radisson Blu Mall of America

Rosa Mata

Embassy Suites by Hilton Minneapolis Airport

Gonzaga Nyombi

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

Melissa Pumper

Radisson Blu Mall of America

Sharmin Saigo

Hilton Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport

Bloomington Minnesota
Travel & Tourism
2131 Lindau Lane, Suite 420
Bloomington, MN 55425

952-858-8500

BloomingtonMN.org



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**BEST HOUSEKEEPING PERSONNEL
(LIMITED SERVICE)****Lourdes Alvarez**

Tru by Hilton/Home2 Suites

Mariana Amaral

Hilton Garden Inn Minneapolis Airport
Mall of America

Eliot King

Country Inn & Suites by Radisson Bloomington
Mall of America

Cristian Munoz

Tru by Hilton/Home2 Suites

Marlene Pillisa

AC Hotel Bloomington Mall of America

**BEST HOUSEKEEPING PERSONNEL
(FULL SERVICE)****Jorge Guerrero**

Hyatt Regency Bloomington - Minneapolis

Indranie Jaddunath

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington -
Minneapolis South

Niscy Anne Macabeo

Cambria Hotel Bloomington Mall of America

Yerandy Rendon

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

Maria Sanchez

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Minneapolis Airport

**BEST HOTEL RESTAURANT
PERSONNEL****Adel Barbouche**

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

Jaden Evans

JW Marriott Minneapolis Mall of America

Susan Moore

Home2 Suites by Hilton Minneapolis
Bloomington

Jay Ostalaza

Hilton Minneapolis/Bloomington

Virginia Reyes

Radisson Blu Mall of America

**BEST FOOD PRODUCTION
PERSONNEL****Naino Dookhie**

Country Inn & Suites by Radisson Bloomington
Mall of America

Maria Gutierrez-Barraza

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington -
Minneapolis South

Roberto Rivera

Hazelwood Food + Drink

Jiovanni Rosete Hernandez

Hyatt Place Minneapolis Airport-South

Luis Velasco

Courtyard by Marriott Edina Bloomington

BEST TRANSPORTATION PERSONNEL**Bob Bailey**

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington -
Minneapolis South

Bashir Mahamud

Tru by Hilton/Home2 Suites

Mark Nordstrom

Embassy Suites by Hilton Minneapolis Airport

David Quinn

Cambria Hotel Bloomington Mall of America

Jose A. Santana

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Minneapolis Airport

**BEST ENGINEER/MAINTENANCE
PERSONNEL****Richard Czaja**

Nickelodeon Universe

Pedro Garcia

Hilton Garden Inn Minneapolis Airport
Mall of America

Polo Martinez Castellanos

Residence Inn by Marriott Bloomington
by Mall of America

Aaron Raschke

Hyatt Regency Bloomington - Minneapolis

Willyanis Rodriguez

Embassy Suites by Hilton Minneapolis Airport

BEST RETAIL PERSONNEL**Allison Clemons**

SEA LIFE at Mall of America

Miguel Contreras

Mall of America

Simran Karki

Love from Minnesota

Coco Kasin

Mall of America

Lyndsey Rundle

Great Wolf Lodge

BEST BARTENDER**Mary Nelson**

Courtyard by Marriott Edina Bloomington

Teresa Olson

Hazelwood Food + Drink

Christopher Quarfoth

Sheraton Bloomington Hotel

Marta Swenson

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington -
Minneapolis South

Phil Wofford

Applebee's Southtown

THANK YOU

for helping Bloomington Minnesota Travel & Tourism bring this incredible program to life.
Your commitment to exceptional customer service is as evident as those we honor tonight.

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