Celebrating 30 Years of Excellence

2013

Rosen College of Hospitality Management

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Celebrating

30 YEARS

of Excellence

ROSEN COLLEGE of HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA • ORLANDO, FLORIDA
CONTENTS

Dean's Welcome
A Hospitality Program Like No Other
Historic Milestones
Major Donors
Hospitality Catalysts
Hall of Fame
The Direction of Graduate Studies
A Foundation for Excellence
Notable Alumni
Class Notes
It gives me great pride to celebrate the 30th anniversary of hospitality management education at the University of Central Florida. Our program developed immensely over the past three decades, and I know that those who studied and/or supported us share my joy in achieving this historic milestone.

When I arrived at UCF in 1983 to establish the Hospitality Management Department, it was a struggle to find funding and support. Fortunately, the then-blossoming Central Florida tourism industry recognized the value in our program and through its support, we evolved from a small department into the largest full-fledged college in the United States.

Today, the Rosen College of Hospitality Management houses a faculty of internationally recognized educators, conducts cutting-edge research around the world, and offers innovative academic programs. We also hold the honor of offering Florida’s first stand-alone doctoral program in hospitality management.

Thank you to everyone who has supported our program, allowing us to educate the hospitality industry’s future leaders for the past 30 years.

Sincerely,

Abraham Pizam, Ph.D.
Dean, Rosen College of Hospitality Management
With more than 3,500 students taking classes on a unique and state-of-the-art campus, in the heart of Orlando’s hospitality and tourism corridor, with distinguished faculty and experienced industry executives, the Rosen College of Hospitality Management is considered one of the finest hospitality programs in the world. And surely the future portends even greater success for UCF’s unique branch campus. But, as with any great enterprise, in order to fully appreciate current and future accomplishments one must first begin to understand the history and evolution of the program.

The Early Years

Dr. Abraham Pizam was involved almost from the beginning and would become a key figure in the program’s eventual success. The hospitality program that Dr. Pizam helped to begin was an outgrowth of the Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies, which had been established in 1979 in the College of Business Administration in honor of Dick Pope Sr., the owner of Cypress Gardens and one of the pioneers of Florida’s tourism business. The institute worked with the Central Florida hospitality industry to conduct market research and to produce reports related to the area’s lodging and restaurant sectors.

In addition to Dr. Pizam, the program’s first faculty members were Mr. Robert Ashley, Dr. Venkat Chandrasekar, and Dr. Audrey McCool, who were soon joined by Dr. Beshid Farsad and Dr. Ady Milman. These original faculty members are regarded as the founders of UCF’s hospitality program, laying the foundation for success by crafting the first degree and curriculum within the College of Business Administration, as well as by navigating through changes in administrative structure and degree requirements as the program evolved.

Throughout its first decade, UCF’s hospitality program enrolled more students to fund its programs and facilities, and to set itself apart from other hospitality programs. The program had difficulty finding a permanent home in the university, moving from the College of Business Administration, to an independent status under the purview of the provost, to the College of Health and Professional Studies (later called the College of Health and Public Affairs), and then back to the College of Business Administration in the early 1990s. The program finally achieved status as an autonomous school in July 2000 and was elevated to a college in May 2004.

In the mid-1980s, students interested in the food service industry worked at the
Rise to Prominence

Over the next few years, UCF's relatively small hospitality program suddenly expanded into one of the largest programs in the nation. Among the keys to its meteoric rise were outside funding, university support, and strong leadership and vision from talented administrators and faculty members.

First, the law firm Baker & Hostetler and the American Resort Development Association donated $250,000 to build a timeshare program, and soon new specialized tracks were added in Vacation Ownership Resort Management and Theme Park and Attraction Management, specialized courses of study that exist in only a few other programs.

Then, as early as 1998, Harris and Trisha Rosen began publicly talking about donating $10 million to establish a world-class hospitality management program. By late 2000, the Rosens' donation was formalized: $10 million in cash and 25 acres of valuable land for the new campus to be built on. The land would eventually be valued at approximately $8 million, making the Rosens' total donation worth approximately $18 million. The Rosens also donated an additional $1.1 million for scholarships.

Harris Rosen, a local hotelier who operates several hotels in the International Drive area, was known as a significant philanthropist. He had donated $2 million to UCF for scholarships in 1996. He had also won accolades for his Tangelo Park Pilot Program, a partnership wherein Mr. Rosen funds preschool and college education for children in Orlando's Tangelo Park area.

The scope of the Rosens' gift was beyond anything the hospitality program had ever received, and it inspired many other constituencies to join the effort. The state provided $18 million in matching grant money, and along the way many other local hospitality entities provided substantial funding, including: the Orlando/Orange County Convention and Visitors Bureau ($5 million); Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation ($2 million); Walt Disney World Company ($2 million); the Universal Orlando Foundation ($1 million); Anheuser-Busch Foundation/Sea World ($500,000); the J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation ($100,000); the American Resort Development Association International Foundation ($100,000); Hospitality Financial & Technology Professionals ($100,000); and the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association ($50,000).

University administrators now moved quickly to increase its stature. In 2000, the program was elevated to the status of a full school outside the College of Business Administration, and thus came to be called the Rosen School of Hospitality Management. Dr. Pizam, who had been hired to establish UCF's original hospitality program, was fittingly appointed interim dean of the new school, a post he would eventually fill permanently.

Administrators and faculty sought to recruit more students in the late 1990s and early 2000s, in anticipation of a heightened profile for the program, and enrollment rose rapidly in this era: by 2000 there were approximately 300 hospitality majors at UCF; by 2003, there were more than 800 students; and by the time the new campus opened in 2004, the number of hospitality majors topped 1,000.

Faculty members also worked hard in the late 1990s and early 2000s to revamp and improve the curriculum. The program replaced many general business requirements with more hospitality-focused class offerings. The program's restaurant management offerings also matured during this period: the Center for Multi-Unit Restaurant Management (which focused on providing executive education opportunities to restaurant industry professionals) was created under the directorship of Dr. Christopher Muller in 1999, and a stand-alone Restaurant Management undergraduate degree was approved in 2002.

Dr. Pizam mentioned the program's financial woes and lack of kitchen facilities in a 1987 Orlando Sentinel article. A week later, the newspaper reported that an anonymous local hotelier had donated $10,000 worth of kitchen equipment to the program.

Cafeteria, preparing student meals, because the university lacked lab kitchen facilities. Dr. Pizam mentioned the program's financial woes and lack of kitchen facilities in a 1987 Orlando Sentinel article. A week later, the newspaper reported that an anonymous local hotelier had donated $10,000 worth of kitchen equipment to the program. By 1990, the program was able to open its own 2,000 square foot kitchen and 1,000 square foot dining room.

By the early 1990s, the program was also beginning to mature and to take on a higher profile. A $600,000 donation from General Mills Inc. (then the operator of Red Lobster and Olive Garden restaurants), along with a $420,000 grant from the state, led to an endowed chair in Restaurant Management (now called the Darden Eminent Scholar in Restaurant Management). By this time, specialized tracks existed not only in Food Service Management, but also in Lodging Management, Conference and Convention Management, and Tourism and Travel Administration.

For the next few years the program continued to grow, and by the late 1990s UCF was graduating 100 hospitality students annually. Nonetheless, expectations for the program were growing even faster, as Orlando's tourism industry continued to expand. A 1998 Orlando Sentinel article referred bluntly to UCF's "less-than-stellar hospitality program" and stated that many industry professionals in the area felt that the program was underperforming and that university administrators were not supportive enough.

Whether by chance, or as a result of some of the criticism being leveled at it, the program's fortunes began to change for the better.
The scope of the Rosens’ gift was beyond anything the hospitality program had ever received, and it inspired many other constituencies to join the effort.

Finally, in the fall of 2002, following various efforts for securing appropriate land for the project, ground was broken at the site of the new campus, on Universal Boulevard, near International Drive and the Orlando/Orange County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Program administrators and faculty members foresaw that locating the new school in the heart of Orlando’s tourism and attraction area would provide students with almost unlimited internship and job opportunities: more than 50 million tourists visit Central Florida each year, and most of their activity takes place within just a few miles of the Rosen College campus.

A Program Like No Other
The resort-style Rosen College campus opened in January 2004 to wide-eyed students, staff, faculty, and media. The following May, the Rosen School was elevated to the status of a full college. The small hospitality program that had moved around from college to college, with uncertain funding and stature, was now the Rosen College of Hospitality Management, with more than 1,000 students, approximately 20 full-time faculty, dozens of staff members, and a rapidly growing reputation.

The campus’s specialized library acquired many new resources and became a United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) depository (one of only seven libraries in the United States to have such a distinction), and within a few years the college library’s hospitality collection was already among the best in the nation.

In the years since the opening of the Rosen campus, the program has only increased its status as a leader in hospitality management education. An undergraduate degree in Event Management was approved in 2006. The Event Management degree was the first four-year program of its kind in the nation and is now among the most popular majors at the college.

In 2012, the program reached another milestone with the establishment of a Ph.D. in Hospitality Management. A Ph.D. program in Hospitality Education had been offered in conjunction with the UCF College of Education for several years prior; however, with the establishment of the full program in 2012, UCF officially became the first academic institution in Florida to offer a stand-alone doctoral program in Hospitality Management.

Rosen College faculty members are also highly regarded as researchers and consultants, producing dozens of scholarly articles, books, and other publications each year. A 2009 study found, that UCF ranks among the top-10 most prolific universities in publishing in the most highly-regarded hospitality and tourism journals.

The Future of Hospitality Management
The Rosen College campus now bustles with more than 3,500 future hospitality leaders, taking courses in one of three undergraduate degrees and two graduate degrees, with a renowned faculty composed of both distinguished academics and successful industry executives. Its location in the heart of Orlando’s tourism corridor has led to many partnerships with community and industry organizations, and graduates have benefited from both exceptional education opportunities and real-world industry experience and connections.

What will the future bring?
Only time will tell, of course, but more innovations are rumored to be in the works, including improvements to the campus, additional degree programs, and additional overseas partnerships. If the past is any indication, chances are good that the Rosen College will continue to lead the way into the future of hospitality management education.
### Historic Milestones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>The Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies is established after receiving $25,000 from the Florida Public Relations Association.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>The UCF Hospitality Department is established within the College of Business Administration. Dr. Pizam joins UCF as the director of the Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>UCF offers hospitality classes for the first time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>The Central Florida Hotel-Motel Association pledges $20,000 per year for five years to a new degree program in convention and meeting planning. The program also receives a $50,000 grant from the Board of Regents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>An anonymous hotelier donates $10,000 worth of kitchen equipment, leading to the opening of a 2,000-square-foot kitchen and 1,000-square-foot dining room.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Harris Rosen donates $1 million for hospitality management scholarships.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Harris and Trisha Rosen make a multimillion-dollar donation to build a specially designed campus for the hospitality program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>UCF's hospitality program becomes an autonomous school and is renamed the Rosen School of Hospitality Management.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Ground is broken at the site of the new hospitality campus on Universal Boulevard. Restaurant Management degree program begins.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Event Management degree program begins.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Central Florida Hospitality Hall of Fame is established.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Number of hospitality students tops 2,500.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>First Cabaret &amp; Cabernet event, now a successful annual fundraiser, is held.</td>
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| 2012 | Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association pledges $100,000 to the Rosen College. Stand-alone Ph.D. program begins.
The Rosen College thanks those who have made considerable financial contributions to our program over the past 30 years. Through our major donors, along with matching gifts from the state of Florida, our college has received more than $101 million to create our state-of-the-art campus and support academic scholarships, research opportunities, educational programs and more.

Anheuser-Busch Foundation
American Resort Development Association International Foundation, Inc.
Bacardi U.S.A., Inc.
Baker & Hostetler, LLP
Board of Governors for the State
University System of Florida
Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association, Inc.
Courtelis Facility Enhancement
State of Florida
Cracker Barrel Old Country Store, Inc.
Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation
David Benjamin Schaefer Memorial Golf Tournament
Disney Worldwide Services, Inc.
First Watch Restaurants, Inc.
Freeman Decorating Services, Inc.
Harris and Trisha Rosen
Hilton Worldwide
Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals
Joe R. Lee
National Association of Catering Orlando Chapter
OSI Restaurant Partners, LLC
P.F. Chang’s China Bistro, Inc.
Pamela S. Sain
SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment
Smart City Holdings, LLC
The Harris Rosen Foundation, Inc.
The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation
The Langford Family Foundation
Universal Orlando Foundation, Inc.
USTRavel
Visit Orlando
Have you ever wondered how something small turns into something great? Before Central Florida became the tourism capital of the world, it was a desolate swampland. And before Rosen College became the nation’s largest hospitality management institution, it was a department within UCF’s College of Business Administration. Men like Dick Pope Sr. and Harris Rosen, who both played significant roles in Central Florida’s tourism industry, are the true catalysts of Rosen College. Dick Pope Sr. is the man credited with revitalizing Florida’s tourism industry after World War II. The former real-estate businessman built Florida’s first park-like tourist attraction, Cypress Gardens, in 1936, and proceeded to spend the next several decades promoting Florida tourism.

DICK POPE SR.

Originally from Iowa, Pope moved to Lake Wales, Fla. with his family in 1908, where he became involved in real estate at a young age.

Fate fell into Pope’s hands in the form of a 1931 Good Housekeeping magazine, where he read about a South Carolina banker who made $36,000 in three months by opening his family’s estate to the public and charging admission for a tour.

As a result of the article, Pope decided to create his own dream garden, and in 1936, he opened Cypress Gardens to the public, charging a 25-cent admission. The Pope family sold Cypress Gardens in 1985, with the attraction valued at $23 million.

In addition to attracting visitors to Cypress Gardens, Pope was also noted for promoting the entire state of Florida, persuading weather forecasters to describe the weather as partly sunny instead of partly cloudy.

Pope also wanted to better define the contributions of Florida’s tourism industry, so in 1979, he helped establish the Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies at the University of Central Florida.

As an outgrowth of the institute, UCF established a hospitality management degree program in 1983.

Just a few years later, Pope, widely known then as tourism’s “Mr. Florida,” passed away at the age of 87.

HARRIS ROSEN

Orlando hotelier Harris Rosen is the man responsible for turning UCF’s Hospitality Management Department into its own fledgling college.

Born and raised in New York, N.Y., Rosen received a bachelor’s degree in 1961 from the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University. After three years in the United States Army, Rosen began working at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City as a convention salesman. He continued with the Hilton Hotel Corporation before joining the Post Company of Dallas as director of hotel operations, and later, the Disney Company in California as director of hotel planning.

Rosen left Disney in 1974 to purchase the 256-room Quality Inn on International Drive in Orlando. Along the way, Rosen acquired the Rodeway Inn International and subsequently purchased 14 acres on International Drive to build the Quality Inn Plaza. In 2010, the Quality Inn Plaza became the Rosen Inn at Pointe Orlando and Rodeway Inn International became the Rosen Inn.

In 1987, Rosen completed the first phase of his 640-room Comfort Inn Lake Buena Vista, and later added an additional 320 rooms. In 2010, the property was upgraded to become the Clarion Inn Lake Buena Vista.

In 1991, the 800-room Rosen Plaza opened its doors as the first convention hotel within the Rosen Hotels & Resorts family. A few years later, Rosen opened the 1,334-room Rosen Centre in 1995 — the company’s second convention hotel.

Rosen’s newest property is the 1,500-room Rosen Shingle Creek, which opened in September 2006. The resort has approximately 445,000 sq. ft. of meeting space and includes a multitude of resort amenities including the Shingle Creek Golf Club, The Spa at Shingle Creek and 14 dining/lounging options.

In 2002, Rosen made a multimillion-dollar donation to the University of Central Florida to develop the UCF Rosen College of Hospitality Management. The college opened in January 2004 and is currently the largest hospitality college in the nation with more than 3,500 students.
Since 2007, Rosen College has honored outstanding community leaders for their service and commitment to the hospitality industry through the Central Florida Hospitality Hall of Fame. The men and women who have been inducted into this elite group represent some of the most successful hospitality organizations and brands in the world.

Each year, two new members receive a limited-edition Steuben crystal pineapple award during Rosen College’s Grand Tour Gala, an annual fundraiser benefitting hospitality programs. During its inaugural year, the Hall of Fame welcomed Richard J. Walsh and William C. Peeper as its first two inductees. Walsh worked for Darden Restaurants for 24 years before retiring as senior vice president of corporate relations in 2006. Peeper, who worked for multiple convention and visitor bureaus throughout his career, founded the Orlando/Orange County Convention & Visitors Bureau in 1984.

Patricia J. Engfer and Richard A. Nunis were the next pair to be inducted into the Hall of Fame. Engfer has served as the general manager of the Hyatt Regency Orlando International Airport since its opening in 1992. Nunis’ career with The Walt Disney Company spanned 44 years, until he officially retired as chairman of Walt Disney Parks & Resorts in 1999.

Next, Rosen College inducted its chief benefactor, Harris Rosen, in addition to theme park executive Jim D. Atchison. Rosen is president and chief operating officer of Rosen Hotels and Resorts, the largest independently owned hotel chain in Florida. Atchison, who has worked in the theme park industry for nearly 30 years, is the president and CEO of SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment.

In 2010, Carolyn Fennell and Mark McHugh were welcomed into the Hall of Fame. As director of public affairs for the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority, Fennell oversees the internal and external media relations for the Orlando International and the Orlando Executive airports. As president and chief executive officer of Gatorland, McHugh introduced more than 35 new attractions and exhibits to the park.

Theme park executives Al Weiss and Thomas L. Williams joined the Hall of Fame in 2011. Prior to retiring in 2011, Weiss served as the president of worldwide operations for Walt Disney Parks and Resorts. Williams is the chairman and chief executive officer of Universal Parks and Resorts.

Most recently, the Hall of Fame welcomed Albert Covelli and Alan C. Villaverde as members of its 2012 class. Covelli is the founder of Covelli Enterprises, the largest franchisee of Panera Bread. Villaverde is the president of Peabody Hotels Division and managing director for The Peabody Orlando.

In 2012, the college inducted the late Gary C. Sain posthumously into the Hall of Fame. Sain was the president and chief executive officer of Visit Orlando from 2007-2012, and is credited with attracting a record-setting 55 million visitors to Orlando.
Hall of Fame Members

1. Jim D. Atchison
   SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment

2. Albert Covelli
   Covelli Enterprises

3. Patricia J. Engfer
   Hyatt Orlando

4. Carolyn Fennell
   Greater Orlando Aviation Authority

5. Mark McHugh
   Gatorland

6. Richard A. Nunis
   Walt Disney Company

7. William C. Peeper
   Orlando/Orange County Convention and Visitor's Bureau

8. Harris Rosen
   Rosen Hotels and Resorts

9. Gary C. Sain
   Visit Orlando

10. Alan C. Villaverde
    The Peabody Orlando

11. Richard J. Walsh
    Darden Restaurants

12. Al Weiss
    Walt Disney Parks and Resorts

13. Thomas L. Williams
    Universal Parks and Resorts
A Note from Paul Rompf, Ph.D.

As the director of graduate studies at Rosen College, it is my privilege to share the history and success of our graduate programs.

Over the years, our programs have facilitated individual professional growth, resulting in our graduates’ transitions into leadership and executive roles with world-renowned organizations, as well as preparing them for consulting, research and educational positions within the hospitality industry. We have graduate students representing six continents, and, in turn, our alumni work all over the world.

Rosen College now administers six graduate programs to our more than 150 annually enrolled students — two doctorates, two master’s degrees, an international graduate certificate program, and a dual master’s degree program with a partner university in Lisbon, Portugal. Approximately 90 percent of our graduate students are in the hospitality and tourism management master’s program.

In 2005, Rosen College partnered with UCF’s College of Education to create a hospitality-centric doctoral program. The program, the first in Florida, is designed to prepare candidates for teaching and research in the field of hospitality. To date, 12 candidates have completed the doctoral program and another five are projected to complete the program by the end of 2013. Graduates are being employed in leading universities around the world, including University of Florida, Syracuse University, Johnson & Wales University, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

In 2012, Rosen College began offering a Ph.D. in hospitality management, the first stand-alone doctoral degree of its kind in Florida, and one of a handful in the U.S. Seven candidates were accepted into the inaugural class, and interest for admission continues to grow.

I invite those interested in enhancing their education and professional careers in the hospitality field to contact me at paul.rompf@ucf.edu, or visit graduate.ucf.edu to learn more.

Sincerely,

Paul Rompf, Ph.D.
The primary purpose of the UCF Foundation is to advance the development of the university. As the UCF Foundation's assistant director of development for Rosen College, it is my responsibility to raise the community's awareness of the need for private support, to encourage gifts on behalf of the college and to effectively carry out its fiduciary responsibilities.

Support from our alumni and the community is critical to the success of our college and students. I invite you to support Rosen College in any of the following areas:

**SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS**
Scholarships and fellowships provide a human element to private philanthropy. The recipients of scholarships and fellowships are among our most accomplished students.

**FACULTY**
Outstanding faculty inspire students, enhance academic programs and serve as a key element to institutional greatness. Endowed chairs, eminent scholars and distinguished visiting professors are prestigious academic positions held by our most qualified faculty. Providing private support for these positions ensures academic excellence will continue to grow.

**PROGRAM SUPPORT**
Support for research projects and innovative programs are at the heart of the UCF learning experience. Curriculum development, internships, interdisciplinary work, research opportunities and academic enrichment all require private support.

**FACILITIES**
The quality of our facilities is enhanced by private contributions. From the Rosen College to the laboratories of the Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences to the Robinson Observatory and the Nicholson School of Communication, each facility fulfills a unique purpose providing students the complete university experience.

**RESEARCH**
UCF has numerous nationally and internationally recognized research institutes devoted to innovative research and development. Contributions to research help develop strategies that have universal applications and result in outcomes that improve human life. For more information, please contact me at 407-903-8249 or lcosmides@ucf.edu, or visit [ucffoundation.org](http://www.ucffoundation.org).

Sincerely,

Lori Cosmides
Rising Stars Award
Since 2008, the Rosen College has honored deserving alumni who have displayed promise and excellence early in his or her respective field — with the Rising Star Award.

2008 Christopher Iaciofoli, ’03
With more than 13 years of restaurant experience, Christopher Iaciofoli served in a variety of roles from dishwasher to general manager. He is currently the director of operations excellence for Red Lobster, where he oversees projects and initiatives deployed to restaurants to ensure they are aligned with the brand’s standards.

2009 Anne Fischer, ’04
After a two-year stint with Walt Disney World as sales manager, Anne Fisher has gone on to spend the past five years as the interactive marketing director for SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment, where she helps create social media strategies for all 10 theme parks.

2010 Raki Phillips, ’00
After seven years as sales and marketing manager for Universal Orlando Resort, Raki Phillips moved to Qatar, where he was director of sales for The Ritz-Carlton. He currently is the area director of sales and marketing for Fairmont Hotels & Resorts in Dubai.

2011 Jamie Hines, ’08
This hotelier spent five years with Marriott International and Marriott Vacation Club, serving in various roles before being named the general manager of White Lodging Services’ Residence Inn in Mt. Olive, N.J.

2012 Doug Akers, ’07
Doug Akers worked for Busch Gardens, SeaWorld, Universal Orlando Resort and Hard Rock prior to joining the opening management team for Universal Studios Singapore. He currently is the assistant director of park operations for Marine Life Park.

Professional Achievement Award
Since 2006, the Rosen College has honored deserving alumni who have reached for the stars in his or her respective field — with the Professional Achievement Award.

2006 Chuck Zell, ’03
With an interest in alcohol and a flair for entrepreneurship, Chuck Zell established several ventures in the bar service and spirits industries, including helping to create Downtown Pour House, and starting a vodka company.

2007 Scott Kaylor, ’93
If you’ve visited the Student Union, you may be unknowingly familiar with Scott Kaylor. As the creator of Wackadoo’s Grub & Brew, he has contributed greatly to UCF by bringing people together for food and fun.

2008 Alinda Ramos, ’96
While at UCF, Alinda Ramos served as a Hospitality Association director and interned at Premiere Show Group, where she now serves as vice president and director of operations. She frequently returns to Rosen College as a guest speaker.

2009 Scott Spilker, ’99
Since graduating from UCF, Scott Spilker has had an amazing career, moving up the ranks of Marriott, including holding several director roles for The Ritz-Carlton. He currently serves as the director of residences for The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company.

2011 Tom Vogel, ’89
Tom Vogel’s nearly 30 years of experience in the restaurant industry includes serving in several award-winning executive roles with Darden Restaurants. Since 2003, Tom has worked for Logan’s Roadhouse, where he currently serves as chief executive officer.

2012 Mario Ponce, ’90
Mario Ponce’s experience in the restaurant industry includes serving in managerial and director roles for Hard Rock Cafes International, Rosebud Restaurants and Claddagh Irish Pubs, Mario currently serves as principal and operations specialist for Partner in Hospitality, a Chicago-based hospitality consulting firm.
Maricarmen Cardenas, '95, serves as the vice president of Revenue Management and Commerce for Crescent Hotels & Resorts.

Harsh Arora, '02, is a business attorney at Spiegel & Utrera, P.A. He was recently honored by the South Asian Bar Association of Florida for his outstanding service and leadership.

Danielle Derecola, '03, is a sales coordinator for EZYield.com. She also is a board member for the UCF Rosen College Alumni Chapter.

Bonnie Bisignano, '04, is a regional sales manager for ACE Bakery.

Erica Buckalew, '04, and David Buckalew, '05, welcomed their daughter, Harper. David and Erica serve as owner and meeting and event manager, respectively, for Buckalew Hospitality.

Heidi (Berger) Brown, '05, is an account executive for AFR Event Furnishings in Jessup, Md. She is also president of the greater Washington, D.C. chapter of the International Special Events Society.

Jennifer Elizabeth Fox, '06, is a manager at Panera Bread in Clearwater, Fla.

Charissa Matos-Lillo, '06, is an independent event planner in Puerto Rico.

Cristina (Vaughan) O'Connell, '06, is the house manager for the Ronald McDonald House on the campus of the Walt Disney Pavilion at Florida Hospital for Children.

Ralph C. Robinson, '06, is the director of meetings for the Florida Apartment Association and is a Certified Meeting Professional.

Shelby (Alesphere) Rudling, '06, and Will Rudling, '06, welcomed their little Knight, Liam, on January 24 in Jupiter, Fla.

Giancarlo Lanfranco, '07, is the pub manager at DaddyO's Irish Pub at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.

Rachel I. Levy, '07, is the national sales manager for Paradise Point Resort & Spa in San Diego, Calif., and received her Certified Meeting Professional designation in 2012.

Greg Nawrocki, '07, is a sales manager for The Newport Harbor Hotel & Marina. Greg lives in Fall River, Mass. with his wife.

Rachel Perez, '07, is the public education director for BASE Camp Children's Cancer Foundation.

Veronica N. Blanco-De Leon, '08, is an international sales manager for Staybridge Suites Orlando/Lake Buena Vista.

Alan R. Duerr, '08, is a senior team leader for Target.

Tawanna (Frazier) Lewis, '08, is a sales associate at Associated Luxury Hotels International.

Heather McFarland, '09, is the associate marketing director of Florida State University's School of Theatre. She married in 2012.

Carla Damarys Rodriguez, '09, is a group housing coordinator for Rosen Hotels and Resorts.

Holly (Whelden) Carpenter, '10, is employed at Walt Disney World. She recently purchased her first home with her new husband.

Kelly Ann Sharp, '10, is the assistant marketing director for University of Idaho Athletics. She also recently received her master's degree in education from Old Dominion University.

Julie M. Bilsinski, '10, is the human resources coordinator for SkyBridge Resources.

Erin Marie Bennett, '12, was hired as an FDIT with Dignity Memorial in Orlando.

Melissa Germain, '12, is a sales coordinator at Hello! Florida in Orlando.

Lindsey A. Grandsard, '12, married and was hired as an event coordinator for Posh Able Events in Orlando.

Kaley Horsley, '12, is a supervisor at the Orlando World Center Marriott.

Danielle Tieman, '12, is a sales coordinator at Kirkland Events and Destination Services.

Keith Wargula, '12, moved to Las Vegas to begin his career in the hospitality industry.