

## Destination Themes Debut at Area Hotels

Meyer Jabara Hotels of Danbury and Pennsylvania-based LRA Worldwide, Inc., a provider of customer experience management consulting and performance measurement services, recently partnered to create a unique guest experience program at Meyer Jabara's properties.

Each location has been challenged to develop an appropriately "themed" hotel guest experience, reflective of the unique destination, attractions and local culture. The program has been implemented at all Meyer Jabara properties, including the Westport Inn and Marriott Stamford, regardless of brand affiliation.

"We were looking for a way to really distinguish both our branded and independent properties as 'best in class,' either within their particular brand or as destinations in their own right," said Ken Conklin, senior vice president of marketing for Meyer Jabara Hotels.

John Roberto, LRA's senior vice president and managing director of

quality assurance (QA), said, "Meyer Jabara is on to something — they've turned an ordinary hotel stay into a bona fide memory for guests, the type of 'guest



**Ken Conklin, senior vice president of marketing for Meyer Jabara Hotels.**

experience engineering' that one might typically associate with a Disney or Ritz Carlton. And guests who just happen upon the experience their first time at a Meyer Jabara property are seeking it out the next time around."

The experience begins immediately during the reservations process, as the reservations agent introduces the guest to the property's theme and the different themed package experiences available.

The following day, the guest is contacted by an "experience specialist" who gathers enough information about the guest and the traveling party to personalize the hotel stay around the theme.

Guests at a Meyer Jabara property might find themselves learning to mix the perfect margarita at the Holiday Inn El Paso, viewing the royal swan feeding as part of their "estate" experience at the

Hilton Christiana in Delaware or cruising the Inner Harbor on the "Lady Pintail" at any of three Baltimore boutique hotels.

"We thought there was a real opportunity within the mid-price level of the hospitality industry to evolve from being simply reactive 'reservation takers,'" said Conklin.

"A true service organization is able to anticipate needs and fulfill them, and we felt that level of service needn't be limited to luxury properties and exotic locales. We're creating magical, memorable experiences that are accessible to everyone."

For more information visit [www.meyerjabarahotels.com](http://www.meyerjabarahotels.com). ♦

## Ashford Acquires Trumbull Marriott

Texas-based Ashford Hospitality Trust, Inc. recently announced that it has completed its acquisition of seven full-service, upper-upscale hotels, including the 323-room Marriott Trumbull, for \$267.2 million in cash.

"We are pleased to complete this acquisition and move forward with the value-added capital improvements and aggressive property management plan our asset management team has crafted that will enhance both top and bottom-line performance," said Monty Bennett, president and CEO of Ashford Hospitality Trust.

"The attractive financing we were able to secure on this portfolio not only provides us the flexibility to fund this asset management plan, but also pursue potential capital recycling with the Trumbull and Iowa City hotels. We fully expect that these well-branded, full-service hotels will generate returns consistent with previous portfolios we have acquired and aggressively asset managed." The company has commenced marketing the Marriott Trumbull property. It intends to invest approximately \$40 million in revenue-generating brand improvements during the next year.

For more information visit [www.ahtreit.com](http://www.ahtreit.com). ♦

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