

CONTACT

JODI SCOTT
678-516-1207
PR@AAHOA.COM

HerOwnership Conference Ignites Empowerment: AAHOA Unites Women Hoteliers for Leadership and Growth

REDONDO BEACH, CA, September 17—Women hoteliers from across the nation converged at the 2024 HerOwnership Conference by AAHOA, a dynamic two-day event crafted by women for women in the hospitality industry. Centered around the empowering themes of executive presence, hotel ownership, and mental health and wellness, the conference inspired attendees to connect, lead, and thrive in an industry where their voices and leadership are more important than ever.

Some 300 people attended the event, which marked the third annual HerOwnership Conference for AAHOA.



"The hospitality industry stands out because women comprise most of the workforce," said **AAHOA Chairman Miraj S. Patel**. "They are not only the backbone of our families but also our industry and association. Women make up about 40% of our membership today—a significant and growing presence shaping our organization's future. As we celebrate our 35th anniversary and reflect on the work and growth, we see how women members have played a crucial role in our association's development and success."

Keynote speakers were:

- Neeti Dewan, author, speaker, and CEO, spoke on "Mindset Makeover: Personal and Business Growth Strategies of Top Women Hoteliers."
- Raji Brar, co-founder of The Bakersfield Sikh Womens Association and chief operating officer of Countryside, spoke on "Building Bridges: The Power of Women in Political Engagement."



"Women in hospitality are making a significant impact, and nowhere is that more evident than here at HerOwnership," said **AAHOA President & CEO Laura Lee Blake**. "Their vision, empowerment, leadership, and trailblazing efforts are ushering in a new era for the industry. These women strive to provide exceptional service to their guests, make meaningful community impacts, serve as outstanding role models for future generations, expand their portfolios, and shatter barriers."

The event featured breakout sessions covering each of this year's conference's pillars. There were also two pre-conference masterclasses: one by Kalibri Labs on commercial strategy and the second by Gauthier, Murphy & Houghtaling on insurance-purchasing essentials.

"The energy and unity of women hoteliers from across the country was truly inspiring," said **Shetal Zina Patel, Women Hoteliers Director, Western Division**. HerOwnership is not just about breaking barriers, but about creating lasting change—ensuring that future generations of women in our industry are equipped to lead with confidence and vision."

Networking breaks, ownership conversations, and panel discussions also took place along with the La Dolce Vita Festa Reception. The reception reminded attendees to embrace la dolce vita, or "the sweet life," with the Redondo Beach sunset as the backdrop. The Sonesta Redondo Beach & Marina on-site team went above and beyond to provide exceptional decor, service, and special touches that made the evening unforgettable, such as a custom perfume bar and more.

"Being surrounded by remarkable women in hospitality, all eager to learn and support each other, is truly empowering," said Purnima Patel, **Women Hoteliers Director, Eastern Division**. "The HerOwnership Conference is not just an event but a movement. We are creating spaces for women to thrive, grow, and own their success in an industry where their leadership redefines the future."

The enthusiasm from this year's HerOwnership conference was palpable, with attendees already asking about next year's event. While the date and location are still to be announced, AAHOA has plans underway for regional HerOwnership events across the U.S. These initiatives will build on the momentum of the conference and continue empowering women in hospitality nationwide.

###



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

To learn more about AAHOA's HerOwnership initiative, visit www.aahoa.com/herownership. **To request photos from this event, email PR@AAHOA.com.**

About AAHOA

AAHOA is the largest hotel owners association in the world, with Member-owned properties representing a significant part of the U.S. economy. AAHOA's 20,000 members own 60% of the hotels in the United States and are responsible for 1.7% of the nation's GDP. More than 1 million employees work at AAHOA Member-owned hotels, earning \$47 billion annually, and member-owned hotels support 4.2 million U.S. jobs across all sectors of the hospitality industry. AAHOA's mission is to advance and protect the business interests of hotel owners through advocacy, industry leadership, professional development, member benefits, and community engagement.