

New managers recognized for excellence at local businesses

It's been a little more than 18 months since Hoagland Properties in Florence hired new management couples for two of the area's top-ranked TripAdvisor lodgings, The River House Inn and The Old Town Inn. If hundreds of online reviews by the inns' guests are any indication, company president Craig Sanders has hit two home runs with his hires.

"Aaron and Kelsi at The Old Town Inn, and Cord and Ashley at The River House Inn, have done outstanding work since moving into their management roles," says Sanders. "Both have seen ups and downs that are part of the job in the hospitality industry.

"For example, each year, as we approach summer, we try to hire as many qualified housekeepers as necessary and get them trained before the busy season starts. This year, it was difficult to find as many as qualified staff as we needed, and through unexpected attrition, we also ended up being short-handed at other staff positions almost as soon as summer started."

Despite the challenges, both inns not only survived, but thrived, thanks to the efforts of the two couples and their staffs.

Aaron Stone and Kelsi Snook, managers at The Old Town Inn, were expecting their first baby in August. So Kelsi was unable to work as much as usual, and Aaron found that he needed to work extra hours to cover when Kelsi could not be there.

"After their baby was born, Aaron and Kelsi took some time off to be with the new baby. They had trained their staff who stepped up and really did a great job running things in their absence," says Sanders.

When challenges arose at The Old Town Inn that the staff did not know how to handle, they called Cord Kravitz and



Cord Kravitz and Ashley Young (left), Aaron Stone and Kelsi Snook

Ashley Young, managers at The River House Inn.

"Cord and Ashley spent quite a bit of time over at The Old Town Inn, helping work through several issues that occurred there while managing their own property," Sanders says. "Not only did Cord and Ashley go above and beyond in helping The Old Town Inn while Aaron and Kelsi were absent, they also ended up being short-handed in their own housekeeping department."

While helping out at The Old Town Inn, Kravitz and Young were also cleaning rooms at The River House Inn due to their own staffing challenges. They had enough relief personnel to cover the front desk while they cleaned rooms and took care of maintenance at both properties.

"On top of all of that, Cord and Ashley were also managing our new long-stay vacation rental, Portside Place, at 216 Nopal St. This required them to manage its rental, care for its maintenance and housekeeping between guests, and take care of the guest's needs," says Sanders.

Toward the end of summer, amid all the other challenges,

both of our night shift employees gave notice to find jobs in which they could work days instead of nights, according to Sanders.

"Aaron came back to work managing The Old Town Inn,

working 15-hour days as Kelsi was still unable to come to work. Once the night shift people left, the managers at both inns also had to find ways to cover the graveyard shift while training new personnel for that

position," Sanders says. "Both management couples adjusted their work schedule and ended up working the night shift, alternating with some front desk personnel who had been cross-trained and volunteered to change shifts and temporarily cover the night shift.

"These couples are corporate heroes for us," adds Sanders. "We've rewarded them both with extra paid time off, bonuses and other considerations. They have truly earned the respect and consideration of Gary and Loretta Hoagland, our company's board, their staffs, and myself."

During all this, TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel website, announced both inns had

received a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence.

This makes six in a row for The Old Town Inn and seven for The River House Inn.

The Inns have placed on this year's Oregon Business Magazine "100 Best Favorite Destinations in Oregon," and won the Florence Area Chamber of Commerce's top award for customer service for the second year in a row.

"The quality and quantity of our reviews demonstrates Cord and Ashley's and Aaron and Kelsi's commitment to offer a friendly and helpful staff who are knowledgeable about all the fun things to do in and around Florence," says Sanders.

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