



December 17, 2014

TripAdvisor Announces Winners of Its Exceptional Service Awards

World's Largest Travel Site Spotlights Stars of the Hospitality Industry Who Have Provided Exceptional Service in 2014

NEWTON, Mass., Dec. 17, 2014 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [TripAdvisor®](#), the world's largest travel site*, today announced the winners of its inaugural Exceptional Service Awards. TripAdvisor launched the awards first to U.S. and U.K. travelers asking them to nominate hospitality professionals who went above and beyond to deliver outstanding service in the past 12 months. After receiving more than 3,500 nominations in October 2014, TripAdvisor selected 40 winners across 21 countries worldwide.

"Everyone who travels knows that the service you receive can elevate any trip to a memorable one," said Barbara Messing, chief marketing officer for TripAdvisor. "A recent TripAdvisor survey revealed that 67 percent of respondents didn't think hospitality professionals receive sufficient recognition for their efforts. Through the Exceptional Service Awards, we're trying to change that by acknowledging stars of the hospitality industry who made a difference by going the extra mile for their guests and clearly made a lasting impression on the TripAdvisor community."

Winning hospitality professionals will receive a certificate and will be featured on TripAdvisor.

A selection of award-winning exceptional service stories can be found below. To read all of the award-winning exceptional service stories, go to: www.tripadvisor.com/ExceptionalServiceAwards.

Five Stories of Exceptional Service in the U.S.:

Kristen Saeger, Guest Services, at [Hampton Inn Titusville / I-95 Kennedy Space Center](#), Titusville, Florida

When Kristen learned that a young guest would be snorkeling the next day for his fifth birthday, she prepared a surprise party. Kristen decorated the hotel dining room and treated the boy to a decadent birthday waffle treat—she even gave him an underwater camera to make his upcoming adventure extra special. Nominating TripAdvisor member *brennah_12* noted, "This was truly an incredible experience for not only our son, who felt very special, but for all of the guests in the dining area."

Dana Ottoboni, Manager, at [La Quinta Inn & Suites Vancouver](#), Vancouver, Washington

A guest of the hotel was in town visiting her son who had been admitted to the ICU at a nearby hospital. As the son's condition deteriorated, Dana went to great lengths to accommodate the guest's extended family during their loved one's final days. Dana offered guestrooms at a reduced rate and opened the dining room so the family could congregate—she even took care of the guest's grandchildren. Nominating TripAdvisor member *CWS55* said, "On the darkest and worst day and week of my life, Dana was a bright light. Far above and light years beyond."

Kevin Bonner, Assistant Director, at [Hilton Portland & Executive Tower](#), Portland, Oregon

Soon after leaving the hotel with his family, a teary-eyed six-year-old realized his beloved stuffed bunny was nowhere to be found. After frantically searching for the misplaced toy, the mother called the hotel to see if they located the bunny. Upon hearing the panicked mother's distress, Kevin sprang into action. Knowing that plush toys often end up tangled in bedding, Kevin contacted housekeeping, who was able to locate the bunny in the hotel's laundry. "Kevin then shipped Bunny home to us less than a week later with a nice note for Brandon. I am indebted to him," added nominating TripAdvisor member *AParentGetaway*.

John Bilello, Tour Guide, at [San Francisco Comprehensive Shuttle Tours](#), San Francisco, California

A group of passengers had enjoyed exploring the sights during John's Yosemite National Park bus tour, but it wasn't until after the ride that his dedication to service truly shined. After he was notified that his tour group's return train to San Francisco was delayed, John arranged for another bus to give the passengers a ride—only to find out that the second bus was held up in traffic. So John willingly volunteered to drive everyone nearly 200 miles to their destination. "This wonderful guy took us all the way to San Francisco and to our final hotel destinations," said nominating TripAdvisor member *mary5857*. "Our round of applause was not enough."

Rosemary Connelly, Flight Management, at Cape Air, Lebanon, New Hampshire

When a traveler encountered a cancelled flight and missed his bus to Boston, Rosemary provided a car ride to a nearby motel and gave the aggravated traveler a candy bar to lift their spirits. The next morning, Rosemary arrived unannounced to offer a ride back to the airport. Upon landing in Boston, the traveler received a voicemail from Rosemary with details of his upcoming flight home. "Has anybody had such extraordinary personal passenger care from U.S. airlines personnel?" commented nominating TripAdvisor member *jcnenglish*. "A princess in uniform!"

About TripAdvisor

TripAdvisor® is the world's largest travel site*, enabling travelers to plan and have the perfect trip. TripAdvisor offers trusted advice from real travelers and a wide variety of travel choices and planning features with seamless links to booking tools. TripAdvisor branded sites make up the largest travel community in the world, reaching 315 million unique monthly visitors**, and more than 200 million reviews and opinions covering more than 4.4 million accommodations, restaurants and attractions. The sites operate in 45 countries worldwide, including China under daodao.com. TripAdvisor also includes TripAdvisor for Business, a dedicated division that provides the tourism industry access to millions of monthly TripAdvisor visitors.

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*Source: comScore Media Metrix for TripAdvisor Sites, worldwide, August 2014

**Source: Google Analytics, average monthly unique users, Q3 2014; does not include traffic to daodao.com

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