

UCF Rosen College Dean's Alumni Advisory Board-2022



Kennon Adkinson '08
Senior Catering Manager and Chief Kindness Officer, Sonny's BBQ
Orlando, FL

Kennon has worked for Sonny's since June 2013 and has over a decade of culinary experience. As the Senior Director of Catering for the local franchise group, iServ BBQ, LLC, Kennon manages a catering team of 13 across Central Florida. He is most passionate about giving back to his community and the many causes he cares about, such as American Heart Association and American Cancer Society.

Kennon's bigger role at Sonny's is the one of Chief Kindness Officer. There he leads the team's effort to amplify kindness in the communities they serve, inspire acts of kindness, and helps his restaurants share their stories.

In his free time, Kennon loves to travel and dabbles in extreme activities such as skydiving, primitive camping and water sports. Kennon is big on family and is happiest riding around on his scooter with his dog, Elijah, in the sidecar.



Jamie Ancewicz '05, '20MS
Sales Manager, Hampton Inn
Palm Beach Gardens, FL

Jamie Ancewicz is a Sales Manager at the Hampton Inn Palm Beach Gardens. Born and raised in Ocala, FL, Jamie started her hospitality career at a local restaurant at age 16 while also focusing on athletics in high school. She went on to play D1 softball at UCF while earning her Bachelor's degree at the Rosen College of Hospitality Management in '05. After graduation, Jamie worked in various management positions over a 7-year span within food and beverage at Hyatt Hotels & Resorts then transitioned to corporate dining with Compass Group for a more specialized catering food and beverage experience. She was the Director of Catering at the Centers for Excellence in Office Depot's Global Headquarters in Boca Raton for 3 years, leading Eurest Southeast as a model for the organization's catering operations. Following that, she opened and led the catering team as the Director of Catering at Carrier Corporation's Center for Intelligent Buildings in Palm Beach Gardens, FL, catering the top Executives and International business travelers for 3 years. In 2020, Jamie earned her Master's degree from the Rosen College of Hospitality Management. Jamie has catered high profile events including Heads of State, collegiate and professional athletes, and C-Suite Executives, and has a track record of building successful client relationships and winning teams. She is an active member of the UCF West Palm Beach Alumni Association and has recently joined the UCF Rosen College Dean's Alumni Advisory Board. She resides in Loxahatchee, FL with her husband Ed and three fur babies, Sonny, Tucher, and Stella.



Kathleen Apodaca '06
Senior Luxury Business Development Manager, Lux Wines (Gallo Winery)

Following graduation, Kathleen started her career in restaurant management with Hillstone Restaurant Group in Arizona. After a year in Arizona, she moved to a store in Florida where she managed the beverage program and was introduced to the beverage sales industry. Kathleen decided to move into this side of the industry in 2009. She started as a sales representative within the E&J Gallo Winery's Sales Leadership Development Program.

Since starting with the winery in 2009, Kathleen has held various roles throughout the country including District Manager, Market Development Manager, Spirits Specialist, and Business Development Manager. Her current role is as a Senior Luxury Business Development Manager for Florida. Throughout her time at Gallo, she has obtained certifications as a Certified Sommelier, Certified Specialist of Wine, and Certified Specialist of Spirits.

Kathleen has a passion for introducing people to the exciting and always growing beverage industry and the various opportunities within it. She is also the founder of the Fit 500 Initiative which helps college students manage their health and wellness while pursuing their college degrees and future careers.



David Buckalew '05
Owner, Buckalew Hospitality
Orlando, FL

While a student he started his business, Buckalew Hospitality. His business started out by doing mystery shops for hotels and meeting and event management for event planners, they have now transitioned into a nationwide temporary staffing company focused on event management that employs over 500 people every year. In addition to running his business he is very active in the Orlando's Chapter of MPI where he serves as VP of Education, co-hosts Orlando's only meeting and event Podcast -#SwagAndRepeat, and holds the accreditation of Certified Meeting Professional. In his spare time, he enjoys baseball, UCF sports, running and supporting the Orlando hospitality industry.



Caitlin Canning Glassman '16, '20MS
Special Projects and Communications-I-Drive Improvement District
Orlando, FL

Caitlin is a well-rounded and accomplished hospitality professional, born and raised in Orlando Florida. She got her first taste of the busy tourism industry in 2010 as one of the many part-time workers at Universal's newly opened Wizarding World of Harry Potter. From there, the passion for customer service, events and the Orlando tourism industry grew.

In addition to her Master's in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Rosen College, Caitlin also holds a Bachelors in Sociology from UCF. As the Projects and Events Manager for the International Drive Business Improvement District, Caitlin is skilled in marketing and social media coordination, content development, brand awareness and event planning. Working for the District, Caitlin is also informed on future business development and transportation initiatives that fall in the I-Drive Resort Area.

From her past employment with Centerplate at the Orange County Convention center, Caitlin is well versed in handling large scale catering events and high-volume convention services. She is also successful at building client relationships and managing large accounts. Caitlin is an active member of the Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association and the International Drive Chamber of Commerce. She has also served the National Association of Catering and Events board in the past.



Steve Cokkinias '18MS
Senior Vice President of Market Development, FMG Leading
Jacksonville, FL

Steve came to FMG Leading from the hospitality industry, where he held leadership roles for nearly 2 decades at luxury hotels around the world.

He began his hospitality career with Starwood Hotels & Resorts before joining The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company in April 2000 in Jamaica. Steve held various leadership positions at three different properties before becoming the youngest General Manager in the brand's history at The Ritz-Carlton, Kuala Lumpur at age 29. In addition to his current market development and brand oversight responsibilities at FMG Leading, he has delivered learning programs and keynotes on service excellence, culture, and leadership to a wide range of clients.

While in Malaysia, Steve was elected to the Board of Governors of the American-Malaysian Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM), and he has served on the Steering Committee of the U.S. Embassy-based Overseas Security Advisory Committee (OSAC). In addition, he has assisted with the pre-opening of five Ritz-Carlton properties worldwide, including The Ritz-Carlton, Doha (Qatar) and The Ritz-Carlton, Guangzhou (China).

Steve earned a bachelor's degree in History and Sociology from Washington and Lee University, and a Master of Science degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management from the University of Central Florida's Rosen College of Hospitality Management.



Arin Council '04
District Manager, Aramark
Denver, CO

Arin Council has a passion for people and delivering exceptional experiences. As a young girl, she knew from an early age that she wanted to be immersed in the hospitality industry. Immediately after high school, she enrolled in the UCF Rosen College. It was there that she was given the courage to achieve her dreams.

Shortly after graduating UCF, and with the encouragement of her faculty advisors to undertake an overseas internship, Arin had the honor and opportunity to embark on a journey with Aramark Food Service, supporting athletes, coaches, and staff at the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. This experience opened her eyes to the impact that service excellence can have on people from all walks of life, and that commitment to serving others can transcend culture.

In the 17 years since that first step, Arin has risen through the ranks of Aramark Business Dining, delivering consistent leadership, service and performance. Throughout her career, she had the privilege of supporting two Olympic Games, the USA Pro Cycling Challenge, the 2021 MLB All Star Game, and served as project manager for numerous account openings. Arin serves as District Manager, overseeing food service operations in the states of Arizona, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.

Arin is the co-chair of Aramark's Denver Hub of EMPOWER. The mission of this Employee Resource group is to "Empower and grow diverse leadership among women that drives results by promoting career development, networking, and mentoring alongside allies across Aramark." As co-chair, Arin provides Denver-based Aramark colleagues with a platform for networking, personal growth, and advocacy.

Arin has achieved industry honors such as 2016 Aramark Ring of Stars, Winner and 2020 Women's Food Service Forum, Change Maker. Arin is married to fellow UCF alumni and co-pilot Bryan, and together they parent and inspire their two young daughters, Addison (9) and Harper (7).



Dominique Greco '11
Founder, Orlando Hospitality Alliance
Orlando, FL

One of the 50 Most Powerful Orlandoans. Dominique Greco was the first ever Nighttime Economy Manager for the City of Orlando and only one of ten appointed globally in 2017. While one of Greco's main functions as a Nighttime Economy Manager was to develop key relationships between zealous industry stakeholders, skeptical local government, and possible strategic partners to offer equitable solutions within the district's imbalanced environment, this was not her first rodeo dealing with such delicate matters. As a city official, Greco brought forward new programs and policies that were mutually beneficial for the authorities and for the vibrant industries that she forever-remains a dedicated advocate for.

Greco has a strong belief in the power of collaboration and what "local and social" businesses mean to the sustainability and livability of any city. She has spoken on the topic to audiences all over the world with relentless passion drawing from memories from her early career supporting one of the largest privately-owned nightlife portfolios in downtown Orlando as an operator and from her lessons learned as a public official.

Stepping down as Orlando's "night mayor," Greco bet on herself in early 2021 when she committed to serving her industry as a fulltime advocate and entrepreneur. This March, Collective Strategies LLC debuted through which Greco offers individual support to a book of clients. Clients look to Collective Strategies as they create development strategy, streamline business structure, scale and fundraise, and attempt to navigate the "red tape" - in addition to the executive coaching that comes free of charge to all Greco's clients! Collective Strategies' clients and their common needs further set the stage for the bigger goal... the Orlando Hospitality Alliance!

Having felt the direct impact from being without a dedicated advocacy organization specifically to support, promote and protect local and social dining, drinking, nightlife, music

and entertainment establishments in Central Florida for too long, Greco and team have created the Orlando Hospitality Alliance (OHA)! As other successful hospitality alliances have, OHA will do the work needed to promote the actual vitality of the local and social businesses, advocate for meaningful policy reform, and offer real-life solutions that meet the needs of our growing and progressive region.

Greco's stamina and know-how has manifested into multiple written publications, speaking engagements and awards; it was no wonder Orlando Magazine listed her on their annual 50 Most Powerful Leaders in 2018. Followed by The Orlando Business Journal naming her one of 24 Women to Watch in 2018 and 40 Under 40 in 2019. Greco lives in downtown Orlando and is grateful to serve her community as the President of the City District Main Street, a founding member of Rosen College of Hospitality Management's Dean's Alumni Advisory Board and other local and international organizations that also passionately follow their missions to protect small business through education and advocacy.



Alexis Johnson '05, '10MS CFRE
Director of Business Development, Entertainment Central Productions
Orlando, FL

From making magic to changing lives, Alexis Senge Johnson's diverse background has taught her that persevering through challenges looks exactly the same when leading teams through event production, entertainment, organizational change, or philanthropic development. As the Director of Business Development for Entertainment Central Productions, her days are focused on providing engaging options to those orchestrating events, marketing campaigns, or website development. On evenings and weekends, she switches gears and hits the ground running as an Event Stage Manager for Disney Event Group to ensure she's remains in touch with the industry and the ever-changing needs of clients.

When not working directly in events and entertainment, you can find Alexis volunteering as the Development Director for TheatreWorks Florida and using her unique outlook on leadership to creatively inspire people into action across the nonprofit sector. She writes about leadership and life at 21stCenturyGal.com and treasures opportunities to interact with the next generation of great leaders at Rosen College for Hospitality Management. Alexis holds a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management (2005) and a Masters in Nonprofit Management (2010) from the University of Central Florida.



Shamir Kanji '07
Sr. VP – Investments, Xenia Hotels & Resorts, Inc.
Orlando, FL

Shamir Kanji is Senior Vice President - Investments of Xenia Hotels & Resorts, Inc. a NYSE-listed real estate investment trust. Shamir has primary responsibility for overseeing acquisitions, dispositions, and strategic reinvestment analysis. Prior to joining Xenia in 2012, Shamir was a Senior Financial Analyst with CNL Financial Group, Inc. from 2010-2012 focusing on corporate and debt finance, acquisitions, and asset management. From 2007-2010, Shamir was an Analyst with Tishman Hotel & Realty in asset management for the Orlando & Puerto Rico owned resorts. Shamir received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Hospitality Management from the Rosen College of Hospitality Management at the University of Central Florida. Shamir lives in Delaney Park with his wife, Allison (UCF Class of 2007), and son, Aidan. When not working, Shamir enjoys traveling, watching and playing sports with his family and friends.

**Dennis Levy '10****Owner, Levy Hospitality (former owner of Night Auditors of FL)
Orlando, FL**

While completing his internships at the Rosen College, Dennis gained diversified experience with an emphasis on lodging, food and beverage, and accounting operations by working for companies such as Disney and Herschend Family Entertainment. Before he graduated Dennis was named the Director of Business Development for a regional food service management company which he successfully expanded to manage 250 K-12 school cafeterias across the country participating in the USDA's National School Lunch Program. After exiting the business in 2014 Dennis acquired Night Auditors of America and founded his consulting firm, Levy Hospitality. Since that time Dennis has worked closely with hotel managers and business owners of all types to create synergy between departments through management efficiency and custom-tailored business systems. He holds an active Florida Real Estate License and was awarded a fellowship in 2016 by the New Leaders Council, a national organization that develops and networks progressive business and political leaders.

Dennis has a passion for traveling the world and experiencing new and different cultures having visited over 20 countries to date; he hopes to visit many more. He shoots competitively and loves his two cats, Chips & Guacamole. He also serves as the current Vice President of the Heron Cove Community Association and has served the Rosen College previously as a member of the Hospitality Management Curriculum Advisory Board, as well as a Rosen College Ambassador while he was a student.

**Brittany Manzie '09****Administrative Assistant to Marco Manzie, Paramount Hospitality Management
Ft. Lauderdale, FL**

Brittany Manzie is the Corporate Reputation Management Attaché and Assistant to the President of Paramount Hospitality Management (PHM). In addition to coordinating and managing all day-to-day tasks for the President of the company, Brittany plays an integral role in all departments by stepping in and assisting where needed on an ongoing basis whether it's overseeing social media, assisting with sales and marketing efforts, or coordinating social and corporate events.

Brittany has more than 20 years of experience in the hospitality industry. Prior to her current position, she served as the Lead Guest Services Agent at the 432-suite Floridays Resort Orlando. Previously, she served as the Journey Ambassador and Front Office Supervisor at the Hilton Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort, where she quickly worked her way up the ranks quickly becoming Assistant Food & Beverage Manager and eventually Catering Manager, where she was responsible for delivering outstanding guest service and financial profitability. During her tenure at this leading property, she increased annual revenue for food, beverage, and rental by \$200,000 and increased wedding revenue by 100%.

Throughout her career, Brittany has won several accolades including Manager of the Year, Manager of the Quarter and Rookie of the Year. She is committed to the community and has volunteered with several organizations including The National Association for Catering and Events (NACE) as well as HANDY, providing customized programs for children through adulthood, and the Museum of Discovery and Science (MODS), all located in Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

Brittany has been involved in the hospitality industry in some capacity throughout most of her life. PHM is a family business and learning the business from previous generations has given her the tools needed to succeed in the industry. Brittany loves to travel and explore the world with family and friends. She currently resides in South Florida with her husband and daughter.

Marco Manzie, Jr. '11**V.P Business Development, Paramount Hospitality Management****Ft. Lauderdale, FL**

Marco Manzie Jr. is the Director of Business Development for Paramount Hospitality Management (PHM). In his position, he contributes the overall growth of the company by developing and maintaining business relationships, offering expertise in the areas of valuation, asset management, operational evaluation and both marketing and revenue management analytics, while leading a dynamic management team. Most recently he assisted in the acquisition of The Grove Resort & Water Park Orlando an 878 all-suite, full-service, luxury, condo-resort property.

With more than a decade of experience, Marco has proven to be a true leader in the hospitality industry. In addition to his current position, he also serves as the Director of Revenue Management for Floridays Resort, The Point Hotel & Suites, Avanti International Resort and Avanti Palms Resort and Conference Center, each managed by PHM. In this role, which he has held for nine years, he consistently produces weekly 10-day forecasts, monthly 90-day forecasts and annual budgets within 3% accuracy of actualized revenues assisting in the operating efficiencies and the net operating profit of each resort.

Prior to his current roles with the company, Marco was the opening Front Office Manager at Marriott Pompano Beach Resort a 218-room Upper-Upscale, full-service, franchised property owned and managed by Urgo Hotels of Bethesda, MD. During his 2-year tenure Marco was awarded Marriott's "Spirit to Serve" award for achieving consistent, exemplary Guest Service ratings.

Marco began his career as a PHM Management Trainee at Floridays Resort while, as a full-time student at UCF, he had the opportunity to experience all aspects of hotel operations. During his tenure, he worked in all departments and various roles from Front Desk Supervisor, Night Auditor and Reservations Sales Agent to Housekeeping Supervisor, Bartender, Line Cook and Shift Maintenance Engineer, among others.

Marco earned his Bachelor of Science degree from The Rosen School of Hospitality Management at the University of Central Florida. He also earned his Revenue Management Certification from Cornell University's School of Hospitality Management in Ithaca, New York. Currently, he sits on UCF's Rosen College of Hospitality Management's Alumni Student Advisory Board.

Selina Mullenax, CMP, CPCE '12**District Account Executive for Cort Event Furnishings****Orlando, FL**

Selina is a District Account Executive for Cort Event Furnishings representing Florida, Tennessee, and Kentucky. She earned her Bachelors' degrees from Rosen College of Hospitality Management in Event Management and Hospitality Management. Selina's passion is giving back and does so by volunteering on the Executive Board of Directors for the Greater Orlando chapter of Meeting Professionals International (MPI) as the President-Elect, the Rosen College of Hospitality Management Alumni Chapter as the Chair-Elect, the Orlando chapter of National Association of Catering and Events (NACE) as Secretary, the National Academy Foundation's (NAF) Central Florida Area of Hospitality and Tourism Advisory Board and the Rosen College Events Advisory Board. She is a past recipient of UCF's 30 Under 30 award as well as Rosen College's Alumna of the Year. In her spare time, Selina is a co-host of the weekly industry podcast #SwagAndRepeat, the CEO of Tribe International – a women-in-leadership empowerment group, the Founder of The Glittering Hour – a sales mastermind group for meeting and event professionals, the COO of Iva Paleckova Coaching – a coaching incubator and runs her own consulting agency while also being a competitive Greek folk dancer.



Luis Pardillo '04
Co-Founder and CEO, Dreamfield Sports
Orlando, FL

Luis Pardillo is the CEO and co-founder of Dreamfield Sports. His background in corporate strategy and operational leadership has allowed for Dreamfield to become an early leader in the Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) movement for athletes. Prior to creating Dreamfield, Luis was the Vice President of operations for New York City based real estate company, Ollie. The company's focus was finding free market solutions to reduce the rent burden, particularly for working professionals, in an otherwise unattainable housing market in major metropolitan areas. While at Ollie, Luis built a strong working relationship with the co-founder and COO, Andrew Bledsoe, who he would later partner with to form Dreamfield. The underlying concept of finding ways to help others through the free market inspired Luis to move into the NIL space. Luis spent much of his professional career before Ollie working in corporate Operations for Fortune 500 companies such as Symantec and AT&T, where he was recognized with awards for his work in workforce efficiency. In his personal life, Luis is married to his college sweetheart, Elizabeth, with whom they have one son, Dominic. He is passionate about sports, especially his alma mater, UCF Knights, as well as all Miami based professional teams.



Rick Powell '10
Owner/Operator of the Chick-fil-A
Mt. Dora, FL

He leads, trains and develops his team to accomplish remarkable results for his business. Before becoming a Chick-fil-A Owner/Operator, Rick worked in a variety of different roles within Chick-fil-A and eventually began managing their corporately owned locations. Rick's restaurants have consistently produced top results in the Chick-fil-A chain and his teams have won Chick-fil-A's highest annual award, Champions Club, twice. Rick has a bachelor's degree in Hospitality Management from the Rosen College at the University of Central Florida and has served on the Alumni Advisory Board of the college for 2 years. In his spare time, Rick loves to spend time with his wife Melissa and his four children Trip, Presley, Collins and Reaves.



Michael Ridgewell '11
Sarasota, FL

Michael began in the lodging industry in the tourism capital of the world as a PBX Phone Operator at the Hyatt Regency in the Orlando International Airport. The love for the business was developed while on an internship assignment through the Rosen College of Hospitality Management. From there, positions included that of front of the house, back of the house, food and beverage, loss prevention, meetings and events, analytics and finance while his heart remains at the forefront of the industry and in operations. Michael has had the privilege to be immersed with some of the best lodging brands including Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, IHG, Starwood and Best Western. More recently involvement in independent branding and activations.

Michael served as the Area Managing Director for Highgate Hotels at The Keys Collection in Key West, Florida, responsible for the direct leadership of 4 unique hotels 519 guest rooms, 9 food and beverage outlets, 26 Work Force Housing units, unique event and meeting space, and a fleet of transportation vehicles.

Michael earned his BS degree in Hospitality Management from the Rosen College of Hospitality Management at the University of Central Florida in 2011. Michael is also involved with the Rosen College Alumni Association and several local associations in the Florida Keys. Michael enjoys the performing arts and has been seen on some of the largest stages in the country including New York and Disney World. He has even been known to perform in hotel lobbies and continues to create a warm and fun culture while maximizing the experience for guests and teams alike.



Emily Nohrr '13

**Asst. Director of Young Alumni Engagement & Philanthropy, UCF Foundation
Orlando, FL**

A fitness and food enthusiast, whose ideal day would be spent doing a CrossFit workout and then indulging in tacos and margaritas with great friends. Emily has run 19 half marathons in 12 different states and is obsessed with football (GO KNIGHTS,) and all that the fall season brings. If she could live in a constant state of Hallmark movies, Christmas lights, and holiday spirit she would.

As Assistant Director of Young Alumni Engagement and Philanthropy, she works closely with many UCF Advancement and campus colleagues to strategically increase alumni engagement and giving through our Young Alumni Council and programs such as 30 Under 30, ChargeOn Mentoring and the new Adulting Series, to name a few! She has extensive experience planning and executing events, managing marketing and branding and developing and implementing training programs. She is a long time UCF advocate who has worked with many of you over the years during her time at UCF and as an alumna. She is currently the Chair of our Rosen UCF Alumni Chapter and member of our Rosen College Dean's Advisory Board as well as a 2020 class of 30 Under 30 honoree.