

RISING STAR AWARD

The Rising Star Award recognizes individuals who have been in the industry for less than five years, but have demonstrated excellence in their work endeavors and the potential to become a pivotal figure in the hospitality community. Nominations will be evaluated on leadership, enthusiasm for the industry and performance-related accomplishments and achievements.

*required information

NOMINEE

Name*: **Jason Smith**

Title/Position*: **Host**

Business/Organization*: **Capital Café and Wine Bar**

Work Email*: **jsmith@capcafe.com**

Business Address: **1234 Sample Street**

City/State/Zip: **Middleton, WI 53562**

Work Phone: **555.123.4567**

Nominee's manager (if known):

NOMINATOR

Name*: **Sally Jones**

Relationship to Nominee*: **Colleague**

Title*: **Bar Manager**

Org/Business*: **Capital Café and Wine Bar**

Address*: **1234 Sample Street**

City/State/Zip*: **Middleton, WI 53562**

Phone*: **555.123.4569**

Email*: **sajones@capcafe.com**

NOMINATION

What makes this nominee a leader and rising star? * (100 word limit)

Jason is bright, hard-working and a self-starter. He started with our business as a busser and quickly established himself as a dependable and personable employee. He demonstrated an eagerness to learn and take on additional responsibility. Both qualities are indispensable in our business and industry. He has taken advantage of training

opportunities presented to him and has worked diligently to make work a priority as he balances a school schedule. Jason has been able to connect with our diverse clientele and has also proven to be a good mentor and role model to his peers on the staff team.

Using a specific example or examples, describe how this nominee has demonstrated enthusiasm for the hospitality industry.* (200 word limit)

Jason's eagerness is evident in how he shows up on time ready to work and in his willingness to do whatever is needed to keep our business running and successful. This past summer we had a series of unfortunate problems that could have threatened the viability of our business, but Jason's enthusiasm helped us overcome our challenges. Over a three-week period, we suffered a burst water pipe, a serious burglary and our chef moved away to a new opportunity in Chicago. Jason jumped into action after the broken pipe and the vandalism, recruiting friends (and his uncle!) to help us clean everything and repair damage to furniture. He stepped up and helped in the kitchen so we were able to serve food as soon as the restaurant reopened. Jason showed real leadership and his positivity was a source of strength for our owners and the management team.

Describe your nominee's professional achievements. * (200 word limit)

Jason has worked for our company for 3 years. During that time he has been a busser, a server and now a host. Since taking on customer-facing positions, he has consistently received positive service reviews. Our "regulars" have embraced Jason and he has really established himself as an ambassador for our business. He has worked with our promotions manager to create our popular "Tuesday night sup and sip" events, increasing our customer base and revenue on what is usually a quieter night for our business. He has helped our operations manager update our employee handbook and has suggested some policy changes that have increased retention among our younger staff members. In a relatively short period of time, Jason has had a positive impact on our young business.

Is there anything else about your nominee that you would like the committee to consider? (100 word limit)

We want to recognize Jason for his dedication to our business and for "going beyond" in so many ways during his tenure. He is outgoing, but unassuming. We know he isn't looking for recognition, but he's exactly the kind of person we want to see working in our industry. Jason IS a Rising Star and so deserving of this industry recognition. We have recognized Jason as an "employee of the month" and have previously nominated him for an award through the Wisconsin Restaurant Association.

FRONT LINE SERVICE STAR AWARD

The Front Line Service Award recognizes the dedication and service excellence of employees who provide service directly to guests. Nominations will be evaluated on customer service, integrity, commitment to their job/employer and performance-related accomplishments.

*required information

NOMINEE

Name*: **Cindy Sanders**

Title/Position*: **Front Desk/Reception Assistant**

Business/Organization*: **Dane County Inn**

Email or phone number!*: **sandersc@yahoo.com**

Business Address: **3789 Maple Avenue**

City/State/Zip: **Middleton, WI 53562**

Nominee's manager (if known): **me - Mary McHenry**

NOMINATOR

Name*: **Mary McHenry**

Relationship to Nominee*: **Cindy's Manager**

Title*: **General Manager**

Org/Business*: **Dane County Inn**

Address*: **3789 Maple Avenue**

City/State/Zip*: **Middleton, WI 53562**

Phone*: **608-555-3222**

Email*: **mchenrym@danecountyinn.com**

NOMINATION

How has this nominee demonstrated dedication on the job? * (100 word limit)

Cindy is friendly, composed and unflappable - even under the craziest of customer service experiences. She greets each day anew and her warmth and generous spirit have a positive impact on our guests and our entire staff team. Cindy loves to be helpful and will do whatever we ask of her. She is a huge part of why we consistently receive positive reviews on Trip Advisor. Customers mention her by name!

Using a specific example or examples, describe how this nominee has demonstrated service excellence and integrity at their job.* (200 word limit)

Cindy is the first person our guests connect with when they arrive at our property. Some have traveled all day to get there and are tired and grumpy. Others may be traveling with children who are impatient or hungry. There are guests who move quickly and guests who move slowly. Some guests are loud and some are hard of hearing. Whatever the scenario, Cindy is expected to be kind and responsive. She has to treat each guest with respect and she has to make sure she doesn't bring the baggage of the guest in to her conversation with the new guest. Cindy's ability to put a smile on under challenging circumstances was evident when she had to help an irate guest who was unhappy with nearly everything: her room didn't have a water view (we aren't located on water!), we couldn't accommodate her last-minute dinner reservation, she was allergic to the detergent used on the bed sheets, the hairdryer in her room was broken and she missed the shuttle to the airport. Cindy was calm from the first complaint to the last and she was attentive and thoughtful to the guest, working diligently through each challenge to resolve the situations as best she could. This service was rewarded with a handwritten thank you and apology from this guest.

Describe your nominee's professional achievements as a front line service employee.* (200 word limit)

I am so proud to say that Cindy has been with us for over 15 years. This longevity has been a real asset to our property and has had a positive influence on the culture of our business. I wish I could submit the hundreds of notes and cards I have received from guests, many of whom have become returning guests and friends over the years, thanking Cindy for her warmth and personalized attention during their stays. Those notes talk about how Cindy has an "amazing ability" to anticipate a need before the need even arises. Our guests tell us regularly that Cindy is that welcoming and thoughtful. She makes time to listen to stories and she offers the extra bit of attention in moments where guests need that "little bit extra." During her tenure with us she has helped establish our customer service protocols and training materials for new staff. She has helped train staff on our customer service philosophy and policies and she has actively sought opportunities to mentor junior staff as they build their careers in our industry. They look up to her. It is easy to say that Cindy's commitment to our business has been instrumental to our success.

Is there anything else about your nominee that you would like the committee to consider? (100 word limit)

There is so much of what Cindy does that goes unnoticed each day. This is a tremendous opportunity to acknowledge that we appreciate her commitment to our business, her loyalty and her service excellence. She does her work quietly and without much fanfare, but the impact of her work is deep. Cindy has served on the service committee of the Greater Madison Hotel & Lodging Association for the past ten years and is an active volunteer with the service champions program at Madison College.

SHINING STAR AWARD

The Shining Star Award recognizes businesses and organizations for exceptional achievements. Successful nominees will provide a valuable service or product to the local visitor economy and enhance our community's appeal among visitors and local residents. Nominations will be evaluated on how the business or organization showcases its brand excellence, delivers memorable customer experiences and fosters a positive workplace culture.

***required information**

NOMINEE

Name of Business/Organization* **Wok & Roll**
Primary Contact* **Chef Anita and Chef Paul Chang**
Business Address* **1234 Bay Street**
City/State/Zip **Cambridge, WI 53532**
Email* **apchang@wokandroll.com**
Business Phone* **555-783-8952**
Website **www.wokandroll.com**

NOMINATOR

Name* **Chef Damon Kirschaw**
Relationship to Nominee* **Colleague/Peer**
Title* **Chef Owner**
Org/Business* **The Magic Pan**
Address* **15 Terrace Court**
City/State/Zip* **Waunakee, WI 53597**
Phone* **555-907-1452**
Email* **chefdk@gmail.com**

NOMINATION

How has this business/organization distinguished itself in the local hospitality/tourism industry? *
(200 word limit)

Chef Owners Anita and Paul Chang came to the Madison Area about 15 years ago. From their early days they have been known for creating a series of trendy, chef-driven

restaurants where each dish is carefully sourced, thoughtfully constructed and colorfully presented by friendly staff. This was true for their first two endeavors, Yellow Fever (2003-2008) and Dragon (2009-2011) and it certainly holds true with their current offering Wok and Roll. The Changs concentrate on quality, value and consistency – all approached with a light-hand that encourages repeat visitors and rabid devotees. Wok and Roll is known for tasty and affordable cuisine and for offering great options to patrons with dietary restrictions. The Changs have established themselves as innovative in their approach to cuisine and customer service and generous in the kindness they extend to employees, patrons and fellow restauranteurs. The Changs willingly donate gift cards and in-kind services to a variety of local charities including United Way of Dane County and Salvation Army. When my business was impacted by my unexpected absence due to an extended illness, Amy Chang left her restaurant behind to manage my team and keep our doors open. During the floods of 2018, the Changs led the effort to host benefit dinners to raise funds to help our fellow restauranteurs who suffered water damage.

Using a specific example or examples, describe how this nominee has demonstrated a commitment to exceptional customer service.* (200 word limit)

I know first-hand how difficult it is to consistently demonstrate exceptional customer service, but the Changs have done just that and they have maintained that reputation for more than a decade. I don't know what the specific "special sauce" is at Wok and Roll, but I think consistency and communication are two of the major ingredients. Anita and Paul set expectations carefully with staff and with customers. They are dedicated to providing consistent food and service. They focus on wait time and hospitality and they emphasize effective communication in their staff training. The Changs have a reputation for treating customers like family. One story that has been told over and over again involved a wedding rehearsal dinner that grew from an intimate appetizer buffet for 20 to a multi-course sit-down meal for more than 50 people. With three days to make a shift with menu and staffing, Anita and Paul mobilized the team to divide and conquer the details. Having a partnership with Madison College meant that a handful of culinary students were available to support this event and use this experience to learn about their craft. By the time the happy couple and their guests arrived for the dinner, everything was ready to go like it was the plan all along.

How has this nominee fostered a positive workplace environment for its employees?*(200 word limit)

Anita and Paul take a nurturing attitude toward their staff. Their focus on "sustainability" extends to their workforce and their focus on the retention and happiness of their staff team. Against a backdrop of rising labor costs, the Changs have worked hard to set themselves up for success. Their restaurant is open seven days a week, but none of their staff members work more than 5 days a week. Their salaried managers also work five days a week and receive a paid vacation. This has helped them maintain a solid team over the years. That continuity in our industry is rare and a positive reflection on Anita and Paul's

leadership. The Changs have been progressive in their approach to hiring kitchen and service staff, reaching out to veterans, culinary students and retirees to create a great mix of youth and experience throughout the restaurant. They have encouraged team members to play an active role in creating restaurant policies and in take a proactive approach to solving customer requests and complaints. Anita and Paul have built trust with their staff team by being inclusive and supportive of their needs and that goodwill gets repaid over and over in the experience that gets provided to customers.

Is there anything else about your nominee that you would like the committee to consider? (200 word limit)

Paul always says that this work is not easy. “There’s not much downtime, but that’s the beauty of it.” He talks about the synergy of having people working together and engaging guests directly as positives – (“that is the energy that “keeps him going.”) Paul and Amy really exemplify the exceptional service and innovation that we all strive for in this industry. We are fortunate that they have chosen to make the Madison area their home.