

Background: 39 years old.

Company size: 4,737 guestrooms, 31 properties

Describe some of the milestones or turning points of your career in lodging.



My most significant milestone was being promoted to vice president for The Hotel Group. I started my career with THG as a director of sales & marketing at a hotel in Galveston, Texas, and now less than 10 years later am part of the senior management team as well as being a principal and officer for the company. If you work hard, work smart and surround yourself with committed and passionate people, the hospitality industry offers enormous opportunities to be successful. Another milestone in my career was finding my mentor, Doug

Dreher (president of THG) in 1998, who year after year has inspired, taught and challenged me.

What about the lodging industry surprises you most?

The pace! The energy! The change! It's what keeps most of us in it. You absolutely never know what will happen next. At the property level, this has always held true, but now with THG being an active buyer of hotels, via the real-estate and investment momentum we have, each day is a surprise.

If you could make one change in the industry, what would it be?

Better and more affordable health-care options for all associates. Additionally, I believe as an industry we still are not attracting enough qualified and passionate people. For so many years, our industry suffered from a reputation of average to bad pay, brutal hours and poor benefits. We have come a long way in the last decade with better incentive plans and more reasonable hours, but we aren't where we should be as an industry.

What is the biggest personal or professional hurdle you've had to overcome?

Balance, or lack of! With both a busy career and family, trying to keep all the balls in the air simply isn't enough. I have to figure out daily how to be: a hotel transition team leader, team mom, P&L consultant, hostess—for home and work; mentor and leader; baseball mom; trainer and teacher, to name a few! Shifting and linking to my various priorities and roles is by far the toughest thing I do each day.

What is something others would be surprised to learn about you?

I love the water and am a certified scuba diver, despite not having done it for several years! Living in Franklin, Tenn.—a land-locked state—we recently built a pool and most

days in addition to swimming with my son, I can also be found by our pool checking e-mail on the laptop!

What song is "most played" on your MP3 player?

"It Ain't Over Till It's Over," Lenny Kravitz

What gets you motivated to start your day?

A really loud alarm and coffee, lots of coffee—when in town, it is usually delivered by my husband!

How many hours of sleep do you get?

Good days, eight—most days four! I love to sleep; I just haven't figured out how to turn my mind off! I've decided to save this goal for retirement!

What is the best advice you've received regarding working in the lodging industry?

You don't always need to know the answers; you just always need to know the right questions to ask.