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Holiday Inn Asheville, NC East Wins Top IHG® 2018 AWARDS

ATLANTA (May 23, 2019) – The Holiday Inn Asheville, NC East received the IHG® (InterContinental Hotels Group) 2018 Torchbearer Award as well as the Kemmons Wilson Spirit of Family Award (the “Kemmie”) at the worldwide International Hotel Group (IHG) ® conference held in Las Vegas May 13-16, 2019. This is the second consecutive Torchbearer Award that the hotel has earned. The “Kemmie” Award is presented annually to only one full-service Holiday Inn hotel in the world. After a full renovation completed in 2016/2017, the hotel also received the Torchbearer Award in 2017. Winning this award for two consecutive years was certainly an honor for the owners and employees of the hotel.

The Holiday Inn Asheville East is one of 10 of 724 Holiday Inn properties in the United States chosen for the esteemed Torchbearer accolade. The Torchbearer Award recognizes excellence in guest survey comments, strict performance criteria, IHG® inspection scores, and is the company’s highest symbol of excellence as determined predominantly by guests’ appreciation of the quality of the product and the service by the employees.

The hotel was also the recipient of the coveted “Kemmons Wilson Spirit of Family Award, 2018”, (The “Kemmie”). The award was presented to Memphians Ginny and Bryan Nearn by IHG® CEO-Americas, Elie Maalouf, at the Torchbearer Award dinner. It is the top award for all full-service Holiday Inns in the world and serves to honor the brand’s founder, Kemmons Wilson. The “Kemmie” is presented to the one Holiday Inn that most represents a comfortable family atmosphere like Wilson created in forming the company in 1952, with dedicated employees who emulate Wilson’s values, and leadership who demonstrate Wilson’s example of community service in the local market. It is voted on by the top executives of IHG® and the physical award is a bronze likeness of Wilson embracing the Great Sign, the symbol he created to be a beacon of true hospitality.

"It is my pleasure to present these two awards to the Holiday Inn Asheville East as one of the foremost hotels in our industry," said Mr. Maalouf. "This hotel embodies the heart of our brand

promise and continues our story to make our 15 brands well known and loved by guests around the world."

The Holiday Inn Asheville East is located in picturesque western North Carolina. The Nearn's have owned and operated this Holiday Inn since 1983. They were joined in the ownership by local Ashevilleians, Dr. and Mrs. Duncan Dorris, in 2008. The hotel was totally renovated (2017) with contemporary rooms and public areas with just the right touch of rustic mountain charm. The Woodfire Bar & Grill located on property serves up locally sourced meats and seasonal vegetables from its hickory wood fire grill. The hotel is pet- friendly and kid- friendly and offers beautiful gardens and fantastic vistas of the Smoky Mountains. "The Torchbearer has been a goal of ours for many years" says Mr. Nearn, "and we are particularly proud of our staff who work hard daily to make our guests' stay the best hotel experience of the guests' trip and we always try to exceed their expectations. Our being chosen as the "Kemmie" Award recipient is the highest compliment for our leadership and our team of dedicated employees."

The team is led by Dewaine Smith, who was selected as the #1 General Manager among all Holiday Inns in 2017 and Zuma Martinez was selected as the top Maintenance Engineer in all Holiday Inns in 2017. Also recognized by IHG® at the conference this year, the "Housekeeper of the Year" award was presented to Aldelfina Brito, a 17-year employee of the Holiday Inn East.

The Holiday Inn Asheville East is located in Asheville at 1450 Tunnel Road, exit 55 off I-40. Whether traveling for business or pleasure, a visit to beautiful Asheville will be enhanced with a stay at the Holiday Inn Asheville East. To learn more and make reservations please visit holidayinn.com/blueridgepkwy.

Notes to Editors:

[IHG® \(InterContinental Hotels Group\)](#) [LON:IHG, NYSE:IHG® (ADRs)] is a global organization with a broad portfolio of hotel brands, including [Regent Hotels & Resorts](#), [InterContinental® Hotels & Resorts](#), [Kimpton® Hotels & Restaurants](#), [Hotel Indigo®](#), [EVEN® Hotels](#), [HUALUXE® Hotels and Resorts](#), [Crowne Plaza® Hotels & Resorts](#), [voco™](#), [Holiday Inn®](#), [Holiday Inn Express®](#), [Holiday Inn Club Vacations®](#), [Holiday Inn Resort®](#), [avid™ hotels](#), [Staybridge Suites®](#), [Candlewood Suites®](#) and [Atwell Suites®](#)

IHG® franchises, leases, manages or owns more than 5,600 hotels and approximately 837,000 guest rooms in more than 100 countries, with almost 1,900 hotels in its development pipeline. IHG® also manages [IHG® Rewards Club](#), our global loyalty program, which has more than 100 million enrolled members.

In February 2019, IHG® acquired [Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas](#), adding 16 hotels (1,347 rooms) to its system and 18 hotels to its development pipeline.

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