

DENALI HOTEL PROPERTIES



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 31, 2018

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Dee Dee O'Brien Earns Lifetime Achievement Award

Anchorage, Alaska – Alaska's summer visitor season is capped each year with the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) Annual Convention. It is a time for all the ATIA members to come together to network and collaborate on their continuing partnerships. ATIA takes the opportunity while everyone is gathered to celebrate and award leaders in the visitor industry.

The Lifetime Achievement Award, as its name implies, is a unique dedication. This award is given out only occasionally, and this year, Dee Dee O'Brien has been honored with this extraordinary award. Dee Dee has worked in the Visitor Industry for over 30 years, for many different types of properties, from Hotels to restaurants, and is currently the Director of Sales for the Grande Denali Lodge and Denali Bluffs Hotel. She is well known for her dedication, hard work, and compassionate spirit. Dee Dee has contributed immensely to the success of each of the companies for which she has worked, and has been an exemplary mentor to many of Alaska's leaders in the visitor industry today.

In the award speech, Lilly Kelly, Director of Marketing for Visit Anchorage, said, "Dee Dee's passion goes beyond profit. She has contributed her talents to communities and non-profits along the way, volunteering her time with the Anchorage Mayor's Charity Ball, Special Olympics Alaska Auction, Denali Chamber, Mat-Su CVB and the AVA Anchorage Chapter, AVA Travel Auction, and ATIA Marketing Committee. She is a woman of her word, rarely takes no for an answer, and rarely says no in reply."

"It was truly an honor to present the award to Dee Dee," said Ms. Kelly later. "I was lucky enough to work with her nearly 20 years ago and like so many in tourism, have gained much from her mentorship and friendship. She puts her heart into everything that she does, connecting with people and providing a level of customer service that has transformed our industry."

Joe Merrill, Vice President of Tourism for Old Harbor Native Corporation said, "Dee Dee has done a tremendous amount to promote and improve the visitor industry in Alaska, I'm thrilled that ATIA has honored her with this award." Dee plans to retire in March, 2019 to live in Kodiak, AK with her husband, Jim.

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R-L: Jim O'Brien, Dee Dee O'Brien, Chelsea Alletson, Megan Alletson, Lilly Kelly
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