NEWS RELEASE

ROOTED IN HOSPITALITY. RISING TOGETHER. COBBLESTONE HOTELS, LLC HOLDS ANNUAL BRAND CONFERENCE IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS.

October 28, 2026 – Neenah, WI – Cobblestone Hotels celebrated their annual brand conference on October 4th and 5th along the famed riverwalk in San Antonio, a fitting location to celebrate this year's theme "Rooted in Hospitality. Rising Together." From its inception 18 years ago to achieving 160 plus properties and growing today, conversations at this year's event celebrated why Cobblestone started, and how Cobblestone would continue rising to meet today's challenges while remaining true to its core principles.

Change, When It Counts

Cobblestone's leadership team reflected on the changes that have impacted the hospitality industry over the past year, prompting conversations about how to meet the industry challenges while still promoting growth.

Rising costs of operation, including labor, materials systems, and technology has owners everywhere reevaluating the bottom line. Growth, while inevitable, is also costly, and the conversation surrounding growing the right way resurfaced this year as Cobblestone reinforced their perspective that the brand would not continue to demand costly changes of their properties solely for the sake of having new offerings that do not contribute meaningfully to guest experience or operational ease.

The brand alluded to various pilot programs that have been introduced in the calendar year to demonstrate that they are constantly working in the background to test new features and ideas so that they can ensure these new programs and technologies will have a true purpose within hotel operations. "We want to be innovative." said Brand President Josie Kilgore, "We're trying a lot of new things. But every new program has a cost." Though the allure of new technology and products constantly prompts investigation by the brand, Cobblestone Hotels remains steadfast in that they do not want to be a brand that forces costly updates upon their hotels without a justified cause and careful prior testing.

Feedback Drives Progress

This year has seen a push from the brand on gathering feedback, especially from the people who are on the ground working every day within the hotels. One initiative in this area has been the Cobblestone Coffee Connections program, which has been connecting the Cobblestone Hotels Brand Services team to their properties on a more conversational level. This open line of communication has proven invaluable, helping the brand to identify common trends that they can then work towards developing meaningful solutions.

Another key form of feedback comes in the form of the Franchise Advisory Board, which is comprised of investors involved with various hotels throughout the franchise that Cobblestone Hotels ownership and the Brand rely on to convey their perspective on higher level challenges and

feedback on where improvements can be made on the franchising side of the business.

We Don't Have to Do More, We Have to Do What Matters

At the heart of all discussion of change and innovation is the question of virtue. From the beginning, Cobblestone's core values lie with small town America. This encompasses all levels of involvement with the brand, from economic impact, to future development, to operations, and ultimately to the guest. Keeping the value of what small town hospitality means is central to all decisions made by the Cobblestone brand, when it comes to the technologies they adapt and the standards that they require.

Evolution is necessary, and not something that Cobblestone Hotels resists as part of their core tenets. But the necessity to continue growing the correct way is central to each decision that Cobblestone makes. "We're not abandoning what made Cobblestone successful" said President of Development Jeremy Griesbach. Instead, leadership is doubling down. They are focusing on the basics; centering the guest experience and building outwards from there. In the face of changing guest expectations, rising operational costs, and staffing challenges, finding a balance between resisting operational burnout and reaching for new heights in guest satisfaction is not an easy feat. But that balance is ultimately the basis for all decisions made on the part of Cobblestone, to protect what the franchise values at its core.

2025 BRAND AWARDS

The brand awards ceremony was held during a formal dinner, where standout individuals throughout various levels of leadership at the property level were recognized for their dedication to their hotels and to their communities. This year, Cobblestone Hotels ownership brought back an additional award that they extended to last year's Property of the Year winner, which was a $5,000 cash prize to be donated to the property's local charity of choice. Cobblestone remains dedicated to its commitment to the support of small-town America, and this award is a manifestation of that promise. Cobblestone is grateful to all award recipients as well as all of those who were nominated within a category for their dedication to the brand and to the communities that they call home.

Winners of the 2025 Cobblestone Brand Awards:

Investor of the Year: Steve Roquet, Cobblestone Hotel & Suites – Ottumwa, IA
General Manager of the Year: Shay Wilson, Cobblestone Hotel & Suites – Neenah, WI
Employee of the Year: Austin Kersey, Cobblestone Inn & Suites – Brookville, IN
Property of the Year: Cobblestone Inn & Suites – Ashland, WI

These recipients will be recognized for their achievement with plaques to be displayed onsite at their properties as well as personalized name tags identifying them as 2025 awards winners.

About Cobblestone Hotels

Based in Neenah, WI Cobblestone Hotels, LLC is a leading upper-midscale hotel brand with over 160 hotels open, under construction, or in development in 26 states. The company continues to pride itself in filling the lodging needs of communities through its upper mid-scale new build brand. Signature amenities include high-speed Internet access, complimentary breakfast, convenience stores, fitness centers, and more.

Cobblestone Hotels includes Cobblestone Hotels & Suites, Cobblestone Inn & Suites, Riverstone Suites, Boarders Inn & Suites, Centerstone Hotels, and KeyWest Hotels. For development information please visit www.CobblestoneFranchising.com.

Cobblestone Hotels offers the Cobblestone Rewards frequent stayer program where guests receive ten points for every dollar spent, and can be redeemed as award nights, or with other redemption partners. For more information visit www.CobblestoneRewards.com

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