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Mayor's message: Recognizing Hilton Hotels Corporation

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The city is pleased to join officials from the Hilton Hotels Corporation in congratulating Kevin Buchanan, the general manager for their Warwick location, and his staff for earning multiple awards for excellence within worldwide Hilton Hotels Corp.

The Hilton Garden Inn opened in April 2005, just across the street from where the InterLink intermodal train station now stands, thanks to the vision of one of its owners, Joe Piscopio. More than a decade ago, when plans to construct the InterLink a stone's throw from T.F. Green Airport were first announced, Piscopio saw the great potential for growth and success in the area.

In less than two years' time, he had unveiled plans for the Metro Center Plaza, including the Hilton Garden Inn, and hired an environmental firm, which used a unique, on-site process to clean up approximately 2,000 tons of contaminated soil on the property, left over from the days when the location housed a foundry. (A second foundry building remained intact, which Piscopio transformed several years later into the popular Ironworks Tavern.) They are the first projects completed in the Warwick Station Development District and a wonderful example of the area's potential for reuse and transformation.

Today, the Hilton Garden Inn maintains one of the highest hotel occupancy rates in the state, due in great part to the efforts of Buchanan - who has been general manager since the hotel opened - and his team of 100 employees, most of whom have worked there for seven years or more, and are mostly Warwick residents.

In all, 10 awards were given to hotels chosen from the more than 560 Hilton Garden Inn hotels worldwide. The Team in Warwick won 5 of the 10 awards including Buchanan who earned the highest award as 2012 Barbara Bejan general manager of the year and regional general manager of the year/North Atlantic.

The Warwick hotel also earned a Pride Merit Award for being one of the top three hotels in the system worldwide. The award is based on quality assurance audits measuring, condition and brand standards, customer scores that rate staff service, and customer scores for the hotel's accommodations. The Problem Avoidance Award, for hotels with the lowest overall percentage of problems based on satisfaction surveys and reporting, and the HHonors Loyalty award for the highest Hilton HHonors overall guest loyalty round out the honors.

I am pleased to recognize these hardworking individuals, who help us put Warwick in a positive light for the thousands of tourists and business travelers who stay at the Hilton Garden Inn each year.

Scott Avedisian is the mayor of Warwick and the chairman of the RIPTA board of directors.

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