

A Cornerstone Of The Community

An Interview with Sherry Hicks-Buckles, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Greenwich

EDITORS' NOTE *Sherry Hicks-Buckles boasts over 25 years of experience in the hospitality industry, having dedicated her career to the Hyatt Hotels Corporation. Since 2019, she has served as the General Manager at Hyatt Regency Greenwich, where she oversees all operations of the 374-room hotel in the picturesque coastal community of Old Greenwich, Connecticut. Hicks-Buckles launched her career as a catering administrative assistant at the Hyatt Charlotte in Charlotte, North Carolina, and quickly ascended to key leadership roles. Prior to her current role, she served as the Director of Hotel Operations at Hyatt Regency Atlanta, where she was instrumental in enhancing guest experiences and operational efficiency. Her extensive background in food and beverage management includes her tenure at prominent convention, large business, and resort hotels throughout the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Southeast. Hicks-Buckles earned a BS degree in science, biology and secondary education from Concord University.*



Sherry Hicks-Buckles

Will you provide an overview of Hyatt Regency Greenwich and how the property is positioned in the market?

For nearly 40 years, Hyatt Regency Greenwich has been a cornerstone of the community, boasting a rich history and an exciting future. Hyatt Regency Hotels are built on a philosophy of openness, creating inviting spaces that bring people together and foster a sense of belonging. With an average tenure of 15 years among our dedicated team, we are

committed to delivering exceptional experiences, effortless relaxation, and memorable culinary delights.

Our property is a dream destination for meeting planners, featuring nearly 40,000 square feet of versatile meeting space on a single level, with options for natural light. The newly transformed Garden Court offers flexible event areas and unique communal spaces where guests can enjoy offerings from Glenna's Café & Market and Townsend Bar. Our 374 newly renovated guest rooms and suites are

designed to reflect the beauty of our four-story atrium garden, enhancing your stay with elegant decor and furnishings. Our state-of-the-art fitness center is a haven for wellness, featuring an indoor pool, hot tub, balance bar, and the latest strength and cardio equipment, including three Peloton Bikes. This comprehensive renovation positions us as the premier destination in Southern Connecticut and Westchester County, New York.

What can guests expect from the major renovation project at Hyatt Regency Greenwich?

Guests will be delighted by a thoughtfully curated theme that pays homage to the iconic Condé Nast printing publication from the 1920s, blending its rich heritage with contemporary comforts. This unique design seamlessly intertwines nostalgic elegance with modern touches, creating a captivating atmosphere that honors the past while catering to today's discerning traveler. Each detail is meticulously crafted to offer a sophisticated yet welcoming environment, ensuring a memorable stay that bridges classic charm with modern luxury.

PROPERTY BRIEF *A beloved hotel in western Connecticut for its instantly recognizable lobby and unparalleled hospitality, Hyatt Regency Greenwich (hyattregencygreenwich.com) is a 374-room hotel providing modern comforts with touches of the region's history. The hotel, completing a top-to-bottom renovation this year, offers stylish, spacious guest rooms and suites outfitted with decor acknowledging the property's history as the home to Condé Nast Publishing. Just a 45-minute train ride from New York City in Old Greenwich among renowned shopping, dining, family-friendly activities and cultural experiences, the property features nearly 40,000 square feet of meeting and event space, an updated fitness center, indoor pool, and on-site salon. The hotel's dining options include Townsend, a moonlit garden bar in the atrium-style lobby, and Glenna's Café & Market, a full-service coffee shop serving breakfast, lunch, and an assortment of grab-and-go options.*



Glenna's Café



Rendering of the courtyard atrium

How important was it to maintain some of the history and heritage of the property while making it modern and current?

Our recent transformation highlights the property's striking architectural elements, with the Condé Nast water tower – resembling a four-story castle from the early 1900s – serving as its signature feature. The building's historic charm is woven throughout the design, lighting, landscaping, and service. Collaborating closely with Curioso, we embraced the nostalgia of the Condé Nast era while catering to modern needs. Our guests can enjoy prompt breakfast and lunch at Glenna's Café & Market, or savor craft cocktails and shareable plates at Townsend Bar. Our lushly landscaped common areas feature discreet USB and power outlets in semi-private and communal seating. Guest rooms are designed as personal retreats with flexible furniture and convenient charging options, providing a perfect balance of comfort and functionality.

How valuable is it for Hyatt Regency Greenwich to have such a strong suite product?

By valuing insights from our guests and colleagues, we've enhanced our suite configurations and upgraded amenities. This collaborative approach allowed us to increase our suite inventory by 15 percent, adding two new suites designed to elevate the guest experience. One of these suites is tailored for extended stays, featuring a washer and dryer, a kitchenette, and a dining area, ensuring greater convenience and comfort for long-term visitors. These improvements reflect our commitment to meeting our guests' needs and exceeding their expectations.

How has Hyatt Regency Greenwich approached its culinary offerings and what are the keys to being successful in this part of the business?

At Hyatt Regency Greenwich, our approach to culinary offerings is deeply rooted in local

partnerships and a commitment to quality. By collaborating with local farmers, creameries, distilleries, and purveyors, we bring a field-to-table philosophy to life, offering guests an experience that is both accessible and refined. This approach not only supports regional businesses, but also ensures that our ingredients are fresh and of the highest quality. Our skilled culinary team takes this commitment a step further by infusing coastal influences and regional seasonings into our dishes. This blend of local and innovative flavors results in a menu that feels familiar yet pleasantly surprising. We focus on creating dishes that are comforting and inviting while incorporating unique elements that elevate the dining experience.

Success in this aspect of our business lies in our dedication to sourcing locally and our ability to translate those ingredients into extraordinary culinary creations. By understanding and

responding to guest preferences and staying true to our commitment to quality, we consistently deliver memorable dining experiences that stand out.

How do you define the role of a general manager and how do you approach the role?

As a General Manager, my role is to oversee the seamless, efficient, and cohesive operation of all hotel departments. My primary objective is to position our hotel as the preferred choice for guests, colleagues, and owners alike. This involves ensuring that every aspect of the property runs smoothly and that we consistently deliver exceptional service and experiences. I approach this role with a focus on fostering a collaborative environment, where each team member is empowered to contribute to our shared goals. By maintaining open communication, setting clear expectations, and prioritizing both guest satisfaction and team engagement, I strive to drive excellence across all facets of the hotel. My goal is to create an atmosphere that not only meets but exceeds expectations, reinforcing our reputation as a leading hotel brand.

What advice do you offer to young people interested in pursuing a career in the hospitality industry?

A career in the hospitality industry can be incredibly rewarding if you bring qualities such as a genuine care for others, a proactive approach to change, a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and a passion for continuous learning and growth. I discovered the hospitality field 27 years ago, and my journey with Hyatt has continually ignited my enthusiasm for supporting others and helping them thrive. My advice to young people aspiring to enter this industry is to embrace these core values wholeheartedly. Cultivate a genuine desire to make a positive impact on people's lives, stay open to new ideas and improvements, and prioritize inclusivity in every interaction. With these attributes, you'll find that the hospitality industry offers boundless opportunities for personal and professional fulfillment. ●



Fairfield Suite