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CONTACT: Angela Triplett  
AMT Communications  
[angela@amtcomm.com](mailto:angela@amtcomm.com)  
850.642.8421

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Courtyard and Residence Inn by Marriott Sandestin at Grand Boulevard Receive Top Honors**

Miramar Beach, Fla. (March 11, 2015) – Howard Hospitality, a division of Northwest Florida development company Howard Group, is pleased to announce that the Courtyard and Residence Inn by Marriott Sandestin at Grand Boulevard have both received top honors for performance and achievements in 2014. Both hotel properties were recognized out of thousands of Marriott hotels worldwide at the 2015 Marriott General Managers Conference in Washington DC in February.

“Howard Hospitality’s two hotels at Grand Boulevard have continuously ranked high both in guest service scores and on TripAdvisor throughout 2014. The managers’ and associates’ daily commitment to service our guests in the highest manner is incredible,” stated Karen McNevin, Vice President of Hospitality and Human Resources for Howard Group. “Receiving glowing emails from guests about the service received from our associates, the recognition of being a Marriott Rewards member and the compliments on our renovations solidify our team and hotels are top-notch.”

In January 2014, Marriott International implemented the guestVoice program, a new global guest feedback initiative that integrates guest sentiments from social media listening along with the more traditional Guest Satisfaction Survey. Marriott also shortened their Guest Satisfaction Survey and provided a mobile-friendly version to encourage maximum guest participation. These changes from Marriott International in partnership with guests, owners, franchisees, hotels and market leaders were streamlined to provide better insight into hotel performance and customer experiences. The 2014 overall results served as the benchmark for performance awards presented at the annual conference.

The Courtyard by Marriott Sandestin received the Platinum Hotel Award for its overall customer service satisfaction scores ranking in the top one percent out of 1,000 Courtyard hotels worldwide. Tania Koehler received the Diamond General Manager of the Year award for the Courtyard as one of three recipients out of 1,000 general managers. Lastly, the Courtyard by Marriott Sandestin received third place in the entire brand for its Guest Arrival Experience.

The Residence Inn by Marriott Sandestin received the Gold Hotel Award for its overall customer service satisfaction scores ranking in the top 10 percent out of 667 Residence Inn hotels worldwide. Tania Koehler also received the Diamond General Manager of the Year award for the Residence Inn as one of three recipients out of 667 general Managers.

“It’s great to see the Courtyard and Residence Inn by Marriott Sandestin with such positive results in guest satisfaction for both our Marriott brands,” stated Glenn Lewis, Vice President of Franchise Operations for Marriott International. “We are constantly receiving excellent guest comments and letters about General Manager Tania Koehler and her team who all possess that true ‘spirit to serve’ attitude. Marriott International is extremely proud of these hotels, Tania and her exceptional team.”

## Courtyard & Residence Inn by Sandestin at Grand Boulevard Receive Top Honors

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Howard Group owns and developed the two Marriott hotels at Grand Boulevard in 2006. Howard Hospitality took over management of its existing hospitality portfolio as well as future hospitality properties in 2012. Both hotels are situated at Grand Boulevard, a shop, dine, play and stay Town Center located on Northwest Florida's beaches.

**About the Courtyard by Marriott Sandestin at Grand Boulevard:** Designed with business travelers in mind, the Courtyard by Marriott Sandestin at Grand Boulevard completed a renovation in 2013 with 174 beautifully refreshed guest rooms, four meeting rooms totaling 2,000 square feet of space and a new contemporary lobby with vivid colors, flexible seating areas, touchscreens and more. Their new restaurant, The Bistro, offers delicious and healthy menu options as well as serving Starbucks 24/7.

**About the Residence Inn by Marriott Sandestin at Grand Boulevard:** The Residence Inn by Marriott Sandestin at Grand Boulevard caters to the extended stay traveler looking for all of the comforts of home. The premier pet-friendly hotel in the Destin / South Walton Florida area, the Residence Inn includes 120 renovated spacious suites as well as the beautiful lobby for complimentary breakfast and evening receptions. The Residence Inn Sandestin offers studio, one bedroom and two bedroom suites fully equipped with kitchens and pet-friendly options.

**About Howard Group:** Howard Group is a portfolio real estate development company specializing in premier commercial, hospitality and residential developments in Northwest Florida. Established in 1988, Howard Group is responsible for the development of the acclaimed Silver Sands Premium Outlets and Grand Boulevard at Sandestin. For more information, visit [www.howardgrp.com](http://www.howardgrp.com) or call (850) 837-1886.

**About Marriott International Inc.:** Marriott International, Inc. (NASDAQ: MAR) is a leading global lodging company based in Bethesda, Maryland, USA, with more than 4,100 properties in 79 countries and territories and reported revenues of nearly \$14 billion in fiscal year 2014. The company operates and franchises hotels and licenses vacation ownership resorts under 18 brands. For more information or reservations, please visit our website at [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com), and for the latest company news, visit [www.marriottnewscenter.com](http://www.marriottnewscenter.com).

Marriott is consistently recognized as a great place to work by several prominent publications, including Working Mother, DiversityInc and LATINA Style magazines, and for our social responsibility and sustainability successes by global organizations such as Ethisphere Institute, FTSE4Good and Climate Counts. For a list of other awards and recognition, visit <http://news.marriott.com/awards-and-recognition.html>.

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The Courtyard and Residence Inn by Marriott Sandestin team received top honors by Marriott International for Customer Service, Management and Guest Arrival Experience out of thousands of Marriott hotels worldwide.