



## Executive Biographies



**Paul S. Kirwin**, President and CEO since January 2010, is a hospitality and travel veteran with over 30 years of global leadership experience with major brands, including Hyatt, Regent, Radisson, Country Inns and Suites, AmericInn, TGI Friday's, Houlihans, Perkins and Carlson Wagon-Lit Travel.

Prior to this position Kirwin served as President and COO from May 2009 to December 2009. Previously, Kirwin spent 25 years with Carlson, growing from hotel manager to leadership responsibility for several regional theatres, including President, Carlson Asia Pacific and President, Carlson Hotels Worldwide, Americas. Along the way he spent 13 years with Country Inns & Suites By Carlson in various senior operational positions, including five as president, leading the overall business operations and expansion of this industry leading, mid-tier hotel brand. Prior to joining Carlson, Kirwin spent five years in management roles with Hyatt Hotels and Resorts in Washington, DC, Hilton Head, SC, Orlando, FL, and Atlanta, GA.

Kirwin graduated magna cum laude from the University of New Hampshire with a Bachelor of Science degree.



**Brian J. Schwen** has served as Chief Financial Officer since January 2002 and as Controller from August 2001 to December 2001.

Prior to joining the company in 2001, Schwen was Vice President/Chief Financial Officer for Rapp Collins Worldwide—Minneapolis from December 1999 to August 2001. From September 1991 through December 1999, Schwen held various positions including Manager and Senior Manager of KPMG, LLP.

Schwen has a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Accounting from the University of Minnesota.



**Mark S. Nicpon** has served as Chief Information Officer since April 2002.

Prior to joining the company in 2002, Nicpon was the Director of Business Development for ORBIT Systems from October 2001 to April 2002. From January 1998 through October 2001, Nicpon served as Director of Business Development and Business Consultant for Wizmo, Inc., and held positions of Technical Manager, Director of Manufacturing and Vice President of Manufacturing for LecTec Corporation from September 1988 to January 1998.

Nicpon has a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering from the University of Minnesota and a Masters degree in Business Administration from the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota.



**Ron Burgett**, Executive Vice President of Development since January 2010, is a hotel real estate investment, management, and franchise systems veteran with over 20 years of development and operations experience.

Prior to joining the company, Burgett served as Founder and President of Indianapolis-based Hospitality Sales Group, a real estate brokerage and hospitality consulting firm with expanded services in site selection, hotel evaluation, and franchise negotiation.

Preceding Hospitality Sales Group, Burgett spent 13 years with the publicly traded hotel franchisor Choice Hotels International®, managing in progressive roles within the organization from operations to sales, culminating his tenure as the National Vice

President of Development. As Vice President of Development, he managed US and Caribbean sales and development efforts for Choice Hotel's established brands; Comfort Suites®, Comfort Inn®, Quality Inns & Suites®, Clarion Hotels®, Clarion Collection Hotels®, Sleep Inn®, Mainstay Suites®, Suburban Lodge®, Econo Lodge® and Rodeway Inn®. He is best noted for managing the world-class Choice development team through several record sales years. Burgett also has extensive experience in property management from working with the Charlotte, NC based Maxim Management Corporation. He managed hotel operations in high volume franchised properties in Chicago, Indianapolis, and Grand Rapids. Restaurant management experience includes managing multiple Cracker Barrel and Max and Erma's restaurants in the Midwest.

Burgett received his Bachelor of Science degree from Indiana University and received his Certified Hotel Administration (CHA) designation in 1990. He holds real estate licenses in IN, MI, VA and DC.



**John W. Synstegaard**, CLM has served as the Vice President of Franchise Services since October 1999, and as its Director of Franchise Services from its inception in December 1993 through October 1999. In addition, Synstegaard has been employed by Northcott Hospitality, AmericInn's parent company, since 1980. He has served as Rooms Division Manager at the Curtis Hotel and Vice President of Facilities at International Market Square.

Prior to joining the company in 1980, Synstegaard was Assistant General Manager of the Sofitel Hotel in Bloomington, Minnesota. Prior to that, he was Assistant General Manager of the Midway-Twins Motor Inn in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Synstegaard attended the University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, with a major in English.



**Mark A. Clarey** has served as the Vice President of Construction since September 1997. Clarey is an accomplished construction manager with broad construction and development experience, which includes the lodging industry.

Prior to joining the company in 1997, Clarey managed projects for Weis Builders of Minneapolis, Minnesota between January and August of 1997, the Musicland Group, Inc. from 1994 through January 1997, Nelson Brothers Construction during 1993 and 1994 and Teri Construction between 1982 and 1992.



**Jeannine M. Momchilovich** has served as the Vice President of Design Services since March 2004. Prior to this position, Momchilovich had been the Director of Design Services since March 1999, and Staff Designer from March 1996 through March 1999.

Prior to joining the company in 1996, Momchilovich was a Project Interior Designer with an interior design firm from June 1994 through March 1996, and as an Interior Designer with an architectural firm from June 1991 through May 1994.

Momchilovich has a Bachelor of Science degree in Interior Design from the University of Minnesota.



**Nasir Raja** has served as Vice President, Organizational Development and Training since February 2010.

Raja has been consulting and working in the travel and hospitality industry for 15 years - for brands like Country Inns & Suites, Radisson, Regent, Park Inn, TGI Friday's, Pick Up Stix and Carlson Wagonlit Travel. Prior to joining the company, Raja was a management consultant specializing in advising clients to develop strategies in response to external and internal challenges. He spent 10 years at Carlson Companies leading a variety of corporate functions, including finance, corporate planning, business improvement and change management - most recently he was Global Vice President, Planning at Carlson Wagonlit Travel.

Raja has a B.S in Finance and a M.B.A. in Finance.



**Michael J. Strong** has served as the Director of Marketing since January 2010. Prior to this position Strong served as Marketing Manager from May 2006 to December 2009.

He is responsible for the company's national advertising efforts, loyalty marketing, rewards program, customer database, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, public relations and national promotions. Prior to joining the company, Strong worked as a senior account executive at Zimmerman Partners Advertising located in Fort Lauderdale, FL. From 2002 to 2003, Strong was employed by Minneapolis-based Martin Williams Advertising.

Strong graduated with a bachelor's degree in Marketing Management from the University of St. Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota.