



AAHOA Elects First-Ever Female Secretary

NASHVILLE, TN -- April 1, 2016 -- The Asian American Hotel Owners Association this morning elected its first ever female officer over the nearly 30-year life of the organization.

Jagruti Panwala is now also in line to become the first ever female chairwoman of the organization in 2019. With over 15,000 members, AAHOA is the largest organization of hotel owners in the United States.

“It was time – definitely time [for a woman to serve],” said Panwala. “It’s my honor. I am so proud, and it is such an honor that they had enough confidence in me to choose me as AAHOA Secretary.”

AAHOA’s all-volunteer board of 33 are elected from members who own hotels across the country. Four volunteer members hold leadership positions: secretary, treasurer, vice chairman and chairman.

Officers hold each post for one year after being elected secretary. Panwala won a contested election for secretary over two male counterparts in the historic election.

“It’s a great day to be an AAHOA member,” said AAHOA President and CEO Chip Rogers. “I thank AAHOA voters for their participation in this election and I congratulate Ms. Panwala on running a successful campaign.”

A resident of Ivyland, Penn., Panwala served before Friday’s vote as Female Director at Large – Eastern Division. She will serve as secretary for 2016-2017.

The election came at the end of AAHOA’s 2016 convention and trade show in Nashville. The record-breaking event drew over 5,000 members and vendors for three days of networking, entertainment, and education. More than 500 vendors packed the trade show.

Other newly elected board members included Navnit “Nick” Patel (Director at Large), Rashmikant “Haji” Patel (North Carolina Regional Director), and Nishant “Neal” Patel (Young Professional Director at Large). Central Midwest Regional Director Priyesh Patel was reelected unopposed to serve another three-year term.

“It was an exciting race, and I want to sincerely thank the other candidates,” she said. “We are all devoted AAHOA members whose first priority is the growth and success of our association.”

Five-time NFL MVP Peyton Manning and “Shark Tank” personality and investor Kevin O’Leary headlined the convention, serving as keynote speakers on the first and second days, respectively. The general sessions also including panels featuring CEOs from the hospitality industry’s top brands, including Best Western, IHG, Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, Vantage, Choice, G6, Wyndham, La Quinta.

Founded in 1989, AAHOA (www.aahoa.com) is the largest hotel owners association in the world, with more than 15,000 small business owner-members. AAHOA members own almost one in every two hotels in the United States.

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