

# Michael E. Washington

## Biography

Michael founded Palazzo Concessions as an airport concession services firm in 2009. His company manages joint venture agreements with several national prime concession entities, including The Hudson Group, Norm Nixon, Magic Johnson Enterprises, and HMS Host International. Palazzo Concessions' ownership interest is currently located in four airports, Los Angeles International Airport, Hollywood Burbank Airport, San Francisco International Airport, and Portland International Airport. Combined, they have over 50 concessions in their portfolio, including the following brands: Bulgari, Hugo Boss, Armani, Tumi, Michael Kors, Starbucks, Coach, Fred Segals, Harley Davidson, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, Panda Express, to name a few.

While building Palazzo Concessions, Michael served as the General Manager of the Le Meridien San Francisco. Before he transitioned to the Bay Area, he was the General Manager of The Sheraton Gateway Hotel Los Angeles from October 2008-April 2015. The Sheraton Gateway is a full-service 804-room hotel with 50,000 square feet of meeting space and a celebrated Italian Chophouse Restaurant named Papparazzi. In this role, Michael directed the daily activities of over 400 team members responsible for exceptional guest-related services and positive financial results. Under Michael's leadership, The Sheraton Gateway earned the coveted distinction as Trip Advisor's #2 ranked Business Hotel in Los Angeles in 2011 and 2012. Also, in 2011, *Corporate Hotels in Meetings Magazine* ranked The Sheraton Gateway as one of the Top 50 Hotels for meetings in the United States. In 2011, Starwood Hotels and Resorts nominated the Sheraton Gateway Los Angeles for national recognition in three key categories, including Sales and Marketing Team of the Year, Revenue Management Team of the Year, and the best Food & Beverage Hotel. In 2014, Starwood appointed Michael to Sheraton's General Managers Advisory Council of twenty, representing 433 Sheraton Hotel General Managers Worldwide.

Michael's experience in the hospitality industry began over 25-years ago in his hometown of Columbus, Ohio. He is an expert in the areas of hotel accounting, operations, purchasing, housekeeping, food and beverage services, sales, marketing, and executive management. A veteran of Starwood Hotels and Resorts and Hyatt Hotels and Resorts, past properties include the Five Star St. Regis Hotel & Residences in San Francisco, The Westin Los Angeles Airport Hotel, The Westin Long Beach Hotel, and the Sheraton Universal Hotel. Before joining Starwood, Michael served in senior leadership roles with the Los Angeles Biltmore Hotel and the Hyatt Regency Hotels in Los Angeles and Columbus, Ohio. In 2004, Michael served as Chair of Starwood's Diversity Committee and Marketing Council for Southern California. He currently served on the Board of Directors for the Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board, and previously the Gateway to Los Angeles, and the California Chamber of Commerce "Cal Chamber."

Michael is driven and committed to making a difference in the community. To that end, he currently serves as the Chairman of the West Angeles Family Life Center, a \$30 million dollar construction project, which includes a 400-car garage; he also leads the Diversity and Inclusion efforts on this project. Michael previously served on the building committee for the West Angeles Church to construct the remarkable 5,000 seats West Angeles Cathedral, a \$75 Million project. He also completed serving on the Church's Board of Directors. Bishop Charles E. Blake, the Presiding Bishop of the COGIC,

appointed Michael to the role of Convention Co-Commissioners, planning and managing a Convocation with 25,000 attendees. Michael has a passion for golf and currently serves as a board member of the APGA Tour and the Advocates Foundation, which develops young men of color to reach the PGA.

Recognized throughout his career for excellence, including the 2013 NCBMP “*General Manager’s Award*,” 2012 Trumpet Awards, “*Power at the Front Door Award*,” the 2012 National Sales Network, Los Angeles, “*Community Service Award*,” the Wings of Refuge, *Community Advocate of the Year Award*, and he was nominated for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society’s “*Man of the Year’ Award*. Starwood also recognized Mr. Washington with the coveted *Hotel of the Quarter* 2004. In 2003, Michael received the *Sales and Marketing Team of the Year Award* on behalf of the Westin Los Angeles Airport Hotel. In 2001, Michael also received special recognition from Starwood for his leadership at the Westin Long Beach Hotel.

Michael is a graduate of Pepperdine University Graziadio Business School, earning the prestigious President and Key Executive, Master of Business Administration degree. He also graduated from Columbus State Community College and attended The Ohio State University. He enjoys cycling, golf, and traveling with his best friend and wife, Stasia Washington; together, they founded the Annual Save Africa’s Children Golf Tournament, which raised over \$400k of much-needed support for more than 400 orphanages in Africa. Michael and Stasia have three adult children.