

JLL'S PEREZ-ALVARADO RECEIVES CASTELL AWARD

She dedicated the award for trailblazing for other women in the industry to her daughter

By Ed Brock - September 29, 2021



Gilda Perez-Alvarado, global CEO of JLL Hotels & Hospitality, accepted the Castell Award honoring a woman leader in the hospitality investment arena during the 2021 Lodging Conference held in Phoenix.

Gilda Perez-Alvarado, global CEO of JLL Hotels & Hospitality, received the second annual Castell Award honoring a woman leader in the hospitality investment arena Tuesday. In her acceptance speech on the stage at the 2021 Lodging Conference held in Phoenix, Perez-Alvarado dedicated the award to her daughter.

The Castell Project, a non-profit dedicated to promoting women in the hospitality industry, presents the award to women who are trailblazers and leaders for other women in the industry. In her current position, Perez-Alvarado oversees JLL's investment sales, debt and equity placement, strategic advisory and asset management across three global regions, the Americas, EMEA and Asia Pacific.

She also serves on the global advisory board of Qiddiya, a PIF-funded giga project in Saudi Arabia, serves in the board of directors of Sonder, is a member of the Industry Real Estate Financing Advisory Council, and a member of Cornell School of Hotel Administration Dean's Advisory Board. Perez-Alvarado is also a two-time recipient of the Jack A. Shaffer Financial Advisor of the year at the Americas Lodging Investment Summit and she remains the only woman to date to receive this award.

"With women comprising 70 percent of the tourism and hospitality labor force worldwide, it is imperative that we set up an industry and a workplace that works for women. We have to invest in their education and ensure equal rights. It is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing

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Mit Shah, Noble Investment Group CEO, introduced Perez-Alvarado during the acceptance ceremony. He spoke about the many difficulties she faced during her career. He said she inspires others to lead lives that matter.

"Undeterred, adaptable, intentional, driven, Hilda remains a voracious learner, and has built an invaluable team of mentors and advisors who have a stake in the ground about her and the impact that she can have on our industry and on our society," Shah said. "Gilda learned the right way, from doing, and failing, and today she leads a team of 300 world class real estate professionals in over 30 countries."

Perez-Alvarado said she learned early in her career about the need to pave the way for other women in the business.

"I also learned early on that with power comes a great deal of responsibility," she said. "Leaders rise from listening to others. It is the collective. As leaders in the industry we have our duty to ensure the wellbeing and growth of our people."

Her parents taught her the importance of experience and education. However, she said, the most important thing in her life was her daughter. Everything in her life had purpose after the baby girl was born.

"The woman, the mother, the wife, the colleague, the worker, everything made sense to me from that point on," she said. "Not only did my daughter become my source of strength, she gave me the biggest lesson in humility. She taught me that you cannot do everything alone, it takes a village."

Peggy Berg, Castell Project president and founder, praised Perez-Alvarado as well.

"It is a pleasure to showcase the fabulous powerful women like Gilda now leading the hospitality industry – particularly in real estate and finance," Berg said. "In a field notoriously resistant to change, Gilda's success shows that companies which develop diverse talent win in the marketplace."

The Castell Award goes to recipients who meet these criteria

1. Change-maker: Leads strategic improvement for their organization
2. Trailblazer: Opens new paths in the industry
3. Champion: Creates opportunities for women
4. Principled Professional: Demonstrates ethical business conduct

In June, the Castell Project opened nominations [for its 2021 Castell Leadership Programs](#). The programs, which include two different levels, will focus on helping women reintegrate into the post-pandemic hotel work force.

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