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## **Reality T.V. Gets Real, Inspires Innovative Hotel Marketing**

**ATLANTA (June 15, 2009)** -- When the economy gets tough, the creative get . . . more creative. Hotels today are finding innovative ways to market themselves to travelers and the local community.

A case in point is the NYLO Sales Apprenticeship Contest – a cross between “American Idol” and other popular reality TV shows. With roughly 11 percent of Rhode Islanders searching for work, this unique competition took place, June 1 – 4, for the prizes of one sales job and one paid internship at NYLO’s popular Providence/Warwick hotel.

“We were delighted to bring this program to Rhode Island,” says John Russell, CEO, NYLO Hotels. “The hospitality and tourism sector is a driving force in the state’s economy, employing one out of every 10 Rhode Islanders. With the Sales Apprenticeship Contest, NYLO is doing its part to create jobs and help develop the next generation of hospitality leaders.”

### **How The Competition Worked**

NYLO executives selected 10 finalists from a statewide applicant pool and interviews at NYLO Providence/Warwick. Finalists were thrown together to live, eat and sleep at the hotel for six nights. They competed in a series of daily challenges designed to test their flair for sales, marketing, event planning, hospitality and communication.

Among the challenges, finalists staged a fundraiser for the R.I. Community Food Bank, June 4, at The Loft, the hotel’s restaurant/bar, a social hub for travelers and locals.

Contestants were evaluated at the end of each day on a point system. Judges were top NYLO executives, including John Russell, CEO; Christine Nevers, the property’s general manager; Sue Gallogly, its director of sales and marketing; and Toma Brashear, NYLO Hotels. Other judges included regional media and such community and hospitality leaders as senior executives with the R.I. Department of Tourism, R.I. Hospitality Association, Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau, Warwick Department of Tourism, R.I. Community Food Bank and Johnson & Wales University.

## **Winners**

The NYLO Sales Apprentices Contest raised \$3,520 for the Food Bank and garnered extensive publicity for the hotel with newspapers, radio and television throughout the region.

Genna Lepore of Providence, a 23-year-old Northwestern University graduate, earned a position with the hotel sales team. Johnson & Wales University student Maria Pichardo from Penfield, N.Y., won a three-month paid internship at the hotel.

Each of the other finalists got a complimentary two-night, three-day getaway at NYLO Providence/Warwick. Plus, they received mentoring and career guidance from a top-notch team of hospitality veterans, while developing professional skills and high-level contacts in the R.I. hospitality community.

“The Sales Apprenticeship Contest raised awareness of the hotel,” explains Christine Nevers, the general manager. “It also helped the Food Bank, provided professional training and created a job. And we all had a lot of fun in the process.”

## **About NYLO Providence/Warwick**

NYLO Providence/Warwick represents a new kind of boutique hotel that marries high style with high affordability. The property is designed by Stephane Dupoux, one of America’s Top 20 architect/designers. Situated on the banks of the scenic Pawtuxet River, NYLO Providence/Warwick houses 163 guestrooms, called guest lofts, and more than 1,450 square-feet of meeting and event space. Each guest loft has 300 square-feet of bright, airy living space, with 10-foot-plus ceilings, exposed brick walls and oversized windows. The property runs on 100 percent renewable energy and offers a PURE Floor with allergy-friendly guest lofts. NYLO’s lively restaurant/bar/game room, The Loft, features a hip atmosphere, adjoining riverfront terrace and eclectic menu of sophisticated regional cuisine for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

## **About NYLO Hotels**

Atlanta-based NYLO Hotels offers a new class of hotels that combines the dynamic qualities of urban residential loft-style living with the best-of-the-industry features of leading hotel brands. NYLO features bright, spacious loft accommodations; state-of-the-art business center; high-tech gym; and stylish, 24-hour, healthy-alternative restaurant and bar. The brand caters to travelers seeking an energized alternative to the bland, one-size-fits-all experience typically found in mid-priced lodgings. The first NYLO made its debut in Dec. 2007 in Plano, Tex., in North Dallas. A second hotel, NYLO Providence/Warwick, opened in Sept. 2008, and a third, NYLO Dallas/Las Colinas, is on track to premier early in the summer 2009. For more information, visit [www.nylohotels.com](http://www.nylohotels.com).

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