

CHANGING OF THE GUARD



JEFF GATES

MRA Chairman of the Board
The Aquitaine Restaurant Group

**THE
AQUITAINE
GROUP**

GENUINE HOSPITALITY

Dear Members,

My name is Jeff Gates, a partner/operator with the [Aquitaine Restaurant Group](#) and I am humbled and honored to serve as the Chair of the Massachusetts Restaurant Association starting this month. I began in this industry as a dishwasher at the original Davio's on Newbury St in Boston while obtaining a degree in engineering from Northeastern University. I will never forget the energy in the kitchen that first shift. The never-ending procession of plates coming across the pass soon to find their way back into the kitchen across my dirty dish table. I fell in love with the energy of the restaurant industry that first night 40 years ago and never left. Serving as your Chair is a position I will take every bit as seriously as I do my own business.

I take on this role knowing that my predecessor, Pat Lee, has set a high bar and has worked very hard along with the MRA team to make certain that we are both a strong association and a strong industry. Serving on the Executive Committee for a number of years has prepared me for this role, especially during the past two years when I worked so closely with Pat as well as our President & CEO Bob Luz. I have established great working relationships with them and my fellow Executive Committee members, all of whom I will continue to collaborate with during my tenure as Chairman. I would also like to welcome Kathi Turner from Turner's Seafood, as well as Andy Husbands from The Smoke Shop onto this team. Both will bring a new dynamic to the committee.

America, Massachusetts and our industry continue to change rapidly. I am aware of that and one of my biggest goals will be to work closely with our teams to make certain we do all we can to adapt, not only to the current changes but to those that will surely follow. Now more than ever, it is important that we work together

to make certain that our industry is protected and will continue to offer the same kind of career progression that we all have been afforded. It is what sets the restaurant world apart from all others.

As an industry and trade group, we have evolved to where we now prioritize our collective capacity to manage change on those things that are most important to our customers and membership base, instead of sapping our collective energies by simply pushing back against every change that comes our way. We need to continue this prioritized focus so that we can become part of the answer as opposed to part of the problem. We need to continue to invest in our industry's future leaders through expanding ProStart in more high schools across the state along with expanding our Scholarship Program.

Shortly, the MRA and our Board will embark on updating our current strategic plan. Our goal will be to update and expand the existing plan that has served us so well in the recent past, ensuring that even in the face of this ever-changing landscape, we will continue to help all in our industry succeed. As I close, you have my commitment to stick to this broad agenda - and to work very hard on your behalf.

I will be out and about across the state in the coming months, but in the meantime, if you have a need to reach me immediately, feel free to email me at jgates@themassrest.org. I look forward to hearing from you, because together, we really do make a difference. **#TogetherWeWin.**

Sincerely,

Jeff Gates
MRA Chair

jgates@themassrest.org

MEET THE NEW FACES OF THE 2019-2020

The Board this year welcomes a diverse group of new Directors in terms of business model and locations of their businesses. Congratulations to all!

See **page 5** for a recap of the Annual Meeting & Dinner.



SUMIAO CHEN
Sumiao Hunan Kitchen
(Cambridge)



NIA GRACE
Darryl's Corner Bar & Kitchen
(Boston)



NICOLE GREEN
Webber Restaurant Group
(Groton)



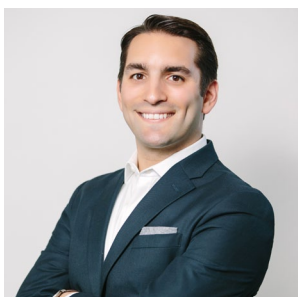
CHARLIE NOYES
Ninety Nine Restaurant & Pub
(Woburn)



RODRIGO SOUZA
Comeketo Steakhouse
(Leominster)



STEVE ULISS
Firefly's
(Marlborough)



ALEX WEISS
US Wealth Management
(Braintree)

MRA STAFF

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President & Chief Executive Officer
bluz@themassrest.org

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Vice President, Operations
kmiller@themassrest.org

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Cape and Islands
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Member Services Manager - West
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Sharon Driscoll

Member Services Manager - Boston & South
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The following letter appeared in the Patch network of neighborhood news outlets:

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: RESTAURANT INDUSTRY IS FAMILY, NOT FOE

All too often, they are then criticized by those, not in the industry, or by the media, as bad employers, unwilling to pay “fair” wages

This past Tuesday night, I attended Taste of The Nation, a charitable event to support No Kid Hungry, a cause to eradicate childhood hunger. The restaurant/chef community embraced this organization and showed up in mass. There were delicacies from Tony Maws, Karen Akunowicz, Joanne Chang, Andy Husbands, Steve DiFillippo, Tiffani Faison, Josh Ziskin, Colin Lynch, Nick Calias, and many more – a total 60 to tantalize the taste buds.

Along with the food, there was much laughter and catching up among the chefs because they rarely see one another. These talented people work while we sleep. They work on nights, weekends, and holidays when we relax. They are there for us in times when we celebrate or need to heal. They are pillars of the community, lending support to local causes – youth sports, school fundraisers, and town events.

They hire our neighbors, our children, and sometimes those down on their luck and needing a break. They provide first work-life skills training for a teenager, and sometimes a flexible job to earn extra money around an individual’s personal schedule needs. They offer a career ladder, where an employee starts as a dishwasher or server, but progresses to management and chef positions, and even ownership.

All too often, they are then criticized by those, not in the industry, or by the media, as bad employers, unwilling to pay “fair” wages. They get lampooned for not posting schedules three weeks in advance. The truth is - their employees are their family – they treat them with dignity and respect, encourage them to grow, and allow them to earn a good living.

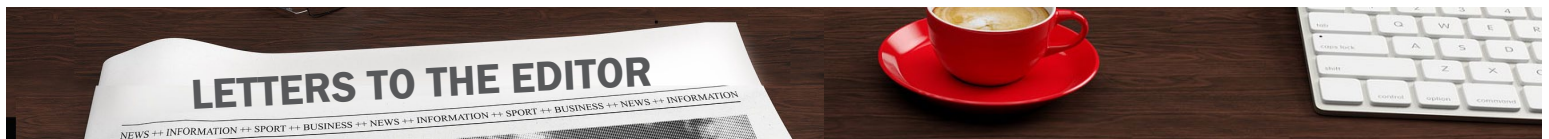
The next time somebody knocks our local restaurant industry, please remember this: On Tuesday evening, they worked together to provide a night to remember serving the community, and more importantly, to help positively change the world. Their philanthropic actions are genuine, heroic and appreciated.

Bob Luz

President & CEO, Massachusetts Restaurant Association

The MRA 
Massachusetts Restaurant Association
 Access • Influence • Protection

(Letter to the Editor continued on next page)



The following opinion piece on tip wage will run in the Boston Globe regional section in response to the following question:

SHOULD MASSACHUSETTS RESTAURANTS BE REQUIRED TO PAY TIPPED EMPLOYEES THE FULL MINIMUM WAGE BY 2027?

Tipped employees in Massachusetts are already paid the full minimum wage. Both Federal and State law require employers to make up the difference to ensure the employee is paid minimum wage for all hours worked.

Tipped employees are the highest compensated workers in any restaurant setting, earning well above minimum wage, with many averaging twenty five, thirty five, and sometimes fifty dollars per hour!

This compensation model has allowed the highest percentage of employees to earn the highest average wage. Do you know who likes this system the most? The tipped employees themselves! A recent survey of tipped employees from industry publication Upserve determined that 97% prefer the current model of base wage plus tips over straight hourly compensation. If given the opportunity, tipped employees would not trade places with any hourly compensated employee in their restaurants.

Servers are not the asking for this, as this radical change is being driven by activists not in the restaurant industry. One national labor group, The Restaurant Opportunities Center, has pushed the narrative that the tipping system needs to go away, but do they really have server's best interest in mind? One of their organizers recently quipped "you can't collect union dues if employees are earning their income through tips."

Servers across the country have rallied to say "leave us alone" because the current system works for them. A recent Maine op-ed was entitled "I am a restaurant server and I don't need anyone to save me!" At the MRA, we have heard from servers pleading with us to help stop this legislation.

Much has been made about the 7 states that do not permit restaurant owners to claim a tip credit. Contrary to what the activists would lead you to believe, this is not a recent development, these states have not had a tip credit for decades.

According to Federal data, the average Massachusetts tipped employee earns more than a dollar per hour more than California servers who are paid the state minimum wage. The current compensation model works for tipped employees because they can maximize their income in the relative short hours that come with being a restaurant server.

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH RULES THAT CBD OIL CANNOT BE INFUSED INTO FOOD PRODUCTS

Massachusetts Department of Public Health rules that CBD cannot be infused into food products. In a recently released FAQ document, the Massachusetts DPH has answered a question that many restaurants and local health agents have been seeking an answer to:

If I have a Massachusetts permit as a Food Establishment, is it legal to add CBD to food I distribute at retail?

No. The DPH sets minimum sanitary standards for food establishments in the Commonwealth. These regulations are enforced by local boards of health in partnership with the state (see [105 CMR 590](#)). The regulations incorporate the FDA's Food Code, which requires that food be obtained from sources that comply with federal, state, and local laws and must not contain any prohibited ingredients. As noted above, the FDA [has concluded](#) that federal law prohibits the addition of CBD to food products because CBD is an active ingredient in FDA-approved drugs. Since CBD is not an approved ingredient under federal law, it may not be added to foods distributed at retail.

Click [here](#) to see full FAQ document.

THE MRA ANNUAL MEETING & DINNER

Annual Meeting & Dinner

During the 2019 Annual Meeting & Dinner at the UMASS Club in Boston, two-term Chair Pat Lee was emotional as he thanked all for their support during his entire tenure leading the MRA. Pat spoke about the tremendous assistance he received from the Executive Committee, the MRA staff, as well as the full Board of Directors. *"#Togetherwewin was a rallying cry that we established over the last two years, and one that I believe will continue long after I depart my role"* said Chair Lee.

He spoke of the consistent evolving landscape that small business and restaurateurs have continued to face, and while there has certainly been change over the past several years, it was by no means as bad as it could have been. There have been wins, there have been losses, and there are still some projects to be completed, but through it all we have worked together. He also pointed out that he will continue to be an active member supporting the MRA.

Pat then welcomed the new incoming Chair, Jeff Gates, whom he enthusiastically stated would be very successful and a terrific leader. He spoke of how active Jeff has been over the years on the political side of the MRA, and that his service on the National Restaurant Association Board for the past three years has been a great asset and will continue to serve him well in his new capacity.

On behalf of the Executive Committee and the full board, he thanked the Board Members who are departing for their commitment, as well as those who stood for re-election.

In addition, he gave a very special thanks to Bill Brady of Sonoma Restaurant, who served for a number of years on the Executive Committee, but also two very successful terms as President of the Educational Foundation. Bill has sold his restaurant and is considering his next step in his career journey.

This departure along with Pat stepping off allowed the Nominating Committee to review a number of candidates to elevate to the Executive Committee for the two open positions. Congratulations go out to Kathi Turner of Turner's Seafood and Andy Husbands of The Smoke Shop who were selected to join the Executive Committee. Both have been very strong supporters of the MRA and will be great additions. Congrats, Kathi and Andy!

The Board this year welcomes a diverse group of new Directors in terms of business model and locations of their businesses. New Board Members include **Nia Grace**, Darryl's Corner Bar & Kitchen (Boston); **Charlie Noyes**, Ninety Nine Restaurant & Pub, (Woburn); **Sumiao Chen**, Sumiao Hunan Kitchen, (Cambridge); **Nicole Green**, Webber Restaurant Group (Groton); **Rodrigo Souza**, Comeketo Steakhouse, (Leominster); **Alex Weiss**, US Wealth, (Braintree); as well as former Board Member **Steve Uliss**, Firefly's (Marborough). Congratulations to all!

Finally, a big thank you to MRA member UMASS Club, their General Manager Dave Eichstaedt and the entire team for an incredible dinner, service and atmosphere on the 32nd floor of One Beacon Street.



THE RISKS OF LEGAL CANNABIS IN THE RESTAURANT AND BAR BUSINESS



One of the most prevalent conversations in the restaurant industry is how the legalization of cannabis will impact the business. This discussion covers multiple fronts; from the employment aspect, to sales, regulation and ultimately the consumer base.

Click [here](#) for the article *"Does Legal Cannabis Make the Restaurant and Bar Business More Risky?"* a great recent article from Richard Welch the President and CEO of Hospitality Mutual Insurance discussing the challenges, risks and preventative measures restaurants and bars need to be aware of when cannabis is immersed at a higher rate into our daily operations.



OWNER:
Rick Walton



WE ARE THE MRA

MEMBER PROFILE

RESTAURANT: Moon Hill Brewing Company & Gardner Ale House

OWNER: Rick Walton

CITY: Gardner

FOUNDED: 2006

MEMBER SINCE: 2007

WEBSITE: www.gardnerale.com,
www.moonhillbrewing.com

RESTAURANT SPECIALTY: Craft beer, brick oven pizza, fish & chips, steak tips, lobster roll, cobb salad, buffalo wings.

WHY IS THE MRA IMPORTANT TO YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS?

The MRA keeps me current with legislative issues and helps me to meet other independent restaurant owners.

Fun Facts about Moon Hill Brewing Company & Gardner Ale House

1. Owner's previous experience is in software and secondary education!
2. Location has been a restaurant for almost 100 years.
3. We are the ninth restaurant in this building.
4. We have a horse ghost in the dining room. Apparently the location previously housed horses.
5. Our restaurant is made up of three separate stores that were combined into one, each one a foot higher the next.
6. When we opened we were one of approximately 25 breweries. We are now one of about 170 breweries.
7. We host a truly large outdoor Oktoberfest celebration nicknamed "Party In the Street". In this event we host the annual Chair Luge Challenge, in which the only person to ever get hurt was the owner, Rick Walton, who broke his leg the first time down the hill. He now never competes. The race and the Oktoberfest attract over 5,000 people each year, weather permitting.
8. We are the only brewpub in N. Central Mass.
9. Almost all of our food is handmade/housemade/fresh.
10. We have 100 employees and a 200-seat restaurant with outdoor deck dining.
11. We feed the pigs. All of our organic waste is sent to a pig farm. No food goes into the trash.
12. We are like an art gallery. Our dining room hosts, free of charge, a new artist on the walls, every 6 weeks. Art is sold right off the walls.
13. Live music 5 days a week dedicated to local musicians.

2019 MRA GOLF TOURNAMENT AT PINEHILLS GOLF CLUB - AUGUST 20, 2019



Join us for great golf, food and camaraderie...Don't miss it!

Tuesday, August 20, 2019 10:00 AM
Pinehills Golf Club
54 Clubhouse Drive
Plymouth, MA 02360
10am registration, 11:30 Shotgun

Cost- \$150 per golfer includes:

- Fabulous box lunch
- Golf
- Cart
- Post tournament dinner
- Awards

Please note: Each foursome **must** include at least one Operator.

REGISTER [HERE](#) NOW
TO HOLD YOUR SPOT!

Sponsor a Hole at Pinehills Golf Club

We are offering hole sponsorship opportunities to all MRA members!

Cost: \$125.00 - includes a tee sign with your logo as well as recognition at the podium at the August 20th golf event.

Interested in sponsorship opportunities?



DEADLINE TO SPONSOR:
Monday, August 12, 2019 - end of day

If interested, email Renée [here](#).

LIMITED TIME DISCOUNT TO MRA MEMBERS FROM BJ'S WHOLESALE CLUB



One of our neighbors of our office in Westborough is BJ's Wholesale Club Home Office. They have reached out to offer the MRA Membership a Limited Time Discount through July 12th to their Perk's Rewards and Inner Circles Programs for NEW and EXISTING BJ's members. Open to all MRA Members and their families. What a great way to save money for your business and personally!

Please click [here](#) to see the one pager for details....and for each member that signs up, BJ's will contribute \$5 to the MRA Educational Foundation!

Simply fill out the [attached application](#) and return it to Kim Sbrogna at BJ's (her contact information is on the application). If you have any questions about this offer, please email Kim Sbrogna directly at ksbrogna@bjs.com.

THE ERNIE TREMBLAY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS GALA

On May 3rd, the MRA Educational Foundation's (MRAEF) Scholarship Committee met to review applications and select recipients for scholarships that were made possible by the generous donations from many of our members. Thirty-six candidates were chosen to receive awards. With members' donations, the MRAEF gave \$100,000 in scholarship awards at our newly named Ernie Tremblay Scholarship Gala on Wednesday, June 12, 2019 at Danversport Waterfront Weddings & Events.

The Scholarship Gala was another huge success. We hosted 31 students and their families this year. Billy Costa did an incredible job, as always, as our emcee. The caliber of students we're awarding scholarships to continues to get better. To highlight some of the scholarships awarded that night – four students were chosen to receive \$5,000 scholarships from Horizon Beverage, one was awarded the People's United Bank \$5,000 scholarship, another was awarded a \$5,000 scholarship from the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority, and two were awarded an additional \$3,000 from the late Raphael Oliver.

Tonia Larkins from Madison Park High School was awarded our annual Educator of Excellence Award. She was honored in Washington D.C. on May 10th.

Karen Coleman, of ARF Financial was the recipient of the newly named Raphael Oliver Leadership Award. The Leadership Award is given to someone who goes above and beyond for the MRAEF. Karen has been a big supporter of our students, providing so much support and mentorship. She has also been named Treasurer of the MRAEF board. Congratulations, Karen, and thank you!

Our Scholarship recipients for 2019 are: Vanessa Archangelo, Jonathan Aresse, Malkia Blake, Andrew Carter, Todd Cummings, Jacob Emerson, Alicia Fletcher, Jennifer Flores, Darren Foster, Jared Goldberg, Kimmee Hanson, Autumn Joyce, Adam Kramer, Vanessa Larrabee, Maxine Lau, Nathan LeBrun, Derek Lewis, Celia Livolsi, Nora Lyons, Ryan McCann, Abigail Newcombe, Melvin Nguyen, Marina Nowacki, Taryn O'Connor, Abigail Pacheco, Blaize Pandell, Maxwell Pfeiffer, Caitrinn Romaine, Taylor Ross, Rachael Ryneerson, Noah Shanshiry, Caroline Sirois, Grace Spinney, Jenna Thompson, Rachel Turner and Joshua White. Congratulations to all of the recipients!

We're very grateful to the DeLorenzo Family, Billy Costa, Joe Piantedosi, Peter Marks, Manny Costa, and all our donors and sponsors. Thank you for your continuous support! Click [here](#) to view the photo album on Facebook.



Making the Future Bright

The Ernie Tremblay
Scholarship Awards Gala



SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION FOR RESTAURANTS

Learn what sexual harassment is, how it impacts all workers, and how to respond in ways that enforce a safe work environment.

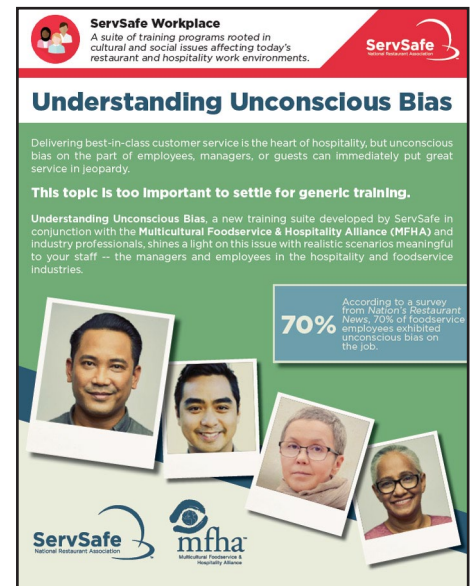
Click [here](#) for more information on this online course.



UNDERSTANDING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IN RESTAURANTS, EMPLOYEE

This is an interactive program that sheds light on the existence of unconscious bias, the impact on individuals and the workplace.

Click [here](#) for more information on this online course.



2019 SERVSAFE TRAINING SCHEDULE

SERVSAFE MANAGER

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
August 14th & 28th	MRA	4-8pm
September 16th & 30th	MRA	4-8pm
October 7th & 21st	Kowloon	4-8pm
November 6th & 20th	MRA	4-8pm

SERVSAFE ALCOHOL

July 30th	MRA	4-8pm
August 26th	MRA	4-8pm
September 11th	MRA	4-8pm
December 18th	MRA	4-8pm

SERVSAFE RECERTIFICATION

July 17th	MRA	4-8pm
October 15th	MRA	4-8pm
December 9th	MRA	4-8pm



To sign up for training, call
(508) 573-4180

CLASS LOCATIONS:

MRA:

160 East Main St., Suite 2
Westborough, MA

KOWLOON:

948 Broadway, Saugus, MA

CHOKESAVING COURSES AVAILABLE AT THE MRA



UPCOMING CLASSES

Thursday July 11, 2019
Thursday, August 8, 2019
Thursday, September 12, 2019
Thursday, October 10, 2019
Thursday, November 14, 2019

All classes are 10-11am.

CLASS LOCATION:

Massachusetts Restaurant Association
160 East Main Street, Suite 2
Westborough, MA 01581

Click [HERE](#) to register.

WELCOME NEW MRA MEMBERS!

FOOD & BEVERAGE OPERATORS

110 Grill - Haverhill
1179 Main Street
(978) 641-3999
Ryan Dion

110 Grill - Holyoke
50 Holyoke Street
(413) 538-4220
Ryan Dion

Breakaway, Inc.
221 Newbury Street
Danvers, MA 01923
(781) 397-7777
Joe Crowley

The Chateau - Norton
48 Bay Road
Norton, MA 02766
(508) 286-4050
Joe Nocera

Dolce Fumo Restaurant Grp
2 Battery Wharf 2303
Boston, MA 02109
(508) 801-2646
Christian Silvestri

East End Tap
734 Teaticket Hwy, East
Falmouth, MA 02536
(317) 750-0132
Paul Pendleton

Fiorella's - Concord
24 Walden Street
Concord, MA 01742
(978) 341-9999
Ralph Vitiello

Mast Restaurant
45 Province Street
Boston, MA 02121
(617) 936-3800
Mr Marco Caputo

Noodle Lab
100 Hanover Street
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 717-4370
Brian Morrison

Pearl Street Station
53 Summer Street
Malden, MA 02148
(781) 322-6410
Alan Robbat

Pisa Pizza
133 Pearl St
Malden, MA 02148
(781) 397 7777
Joe Crowley

Sam Diego's - Plymouth
51 Main Street
Plymouth, MA 02360
(508) 747-0048

Suya Joint Inc.
185 dudley Street
Boston, MA 02125
(617) 708-0245
Cecilia Lizotte

BUSINESS PARTNERS

m cacao
50 Water Street, Suite 301
Newburyport, MA 01950
(310) 462-9510
Mark Lawler
Chocolatier

Pepsico
100 John Road
Canton, MA 02021
Kofi Dwomoh
(781) 302-1546
Beverage Supply

Springdale Barrel Room
102 Clinton Street
Framingham, MA 01702
(774) 777-5430
Brewery

THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 ANNUAL SPONSORS



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Check out the MRA LinkedIn Group