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**MICHELLE THOM OF THE STRATER HOTEL IN DURANGO WINS  
2009 AMERICAN HOTEL & LODGING ASSOCIATION  
STARS OF THE INDUSTRY AWARD**

Durango, CO – Michelle Thom, Operations Director at the Strater Hotel in Durango, was honored with the 2009 Manager of the Year in the Small Property category by the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA). Michelle will be honored on June 24 at the Annual Stars of the Industry luncheon during the AH&LA Summer Summit in Chicago, Illinois.

The award was given to Thom for her outstanding performance and dedication to customer satisfaction, operations processes and efficiencies. In late 2008 she was also recognized by the Colorado Hotel & Lodging Association (CH&LA) for her supervisory role at the Strater Hotel.

“There are so many stars in our industry but Michelle really takes the concept of hospitality to the next level by servicing the customer, the employees and continuously working to make improvement to the overall guest experience,” said Christine O’Donnell, president & CEO of CH&LA.

This annual award is one of four categories recognizing outstanding hospitality professionals throughout the country. Stars of the Industry awards also honor stand-out hotel property programs in six categories. The Stars of the Industry awards have been designated annually to AH&LA members for more than 40 years; this year’s judges are Stefani C. O’Connor, executive editor of *Hotel Business* magazine; Stephanie Ricca, editor in chief of *Hotel & Motel Management* magazine; and Ed Watkins, editor of *Lodging Hospitality* magazine.

For more information on the AH&LA Stars of the Industry program, along with a complete list of 2009 winners, please visit [www.ahla.com/stars](http://www.ahla.com/stars).

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Serving the hospitality industry for nearly a century, AH&LA is the sole national association representing all sectors and stakeholders in the lodging industry, including individual hotel property members, hotel companies, student and faculty members, and industry suppliers. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., AH&LA provides members with national advocacy on Capitol Hill, public relations and image management, education, research and information, and other value-added services to provide bottom line savings and ensure a positive business climate for the lodging industry. Partner state associations provide local representation and additional cost-saving benefits to members.