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ARDA Announces Circle of Excellence (ACE) and ARDY Award Winners

WASHINGTON, April 6, 2009 -- The American Resort Development Association (ARDA) honored the ARDA Circle of Excellence Award and ARDY Award winners at a gala ceremony and dinner during the 2009 Convention & Exposition in Orlando, Florida.

"These companies and individuals represent 'the best of the best' in the vacation ownership industry," said Howard Nusbaum, RRP, president and CEO of ARDA. "Selected by their peers, they set an example of personal and professional excellence for us all."

The **ACE Lifetime Achievement Award** is given to an individual whose pioneering efforts have had a major positive impact on the direction and standards of the industry. This year's posthumous recipient, Jim Lambert, was the founder and visionary force of The Berkley Group and supported ARDA from its formation. He is remembered fondly by all for his record of achievement and support.

The **ACE Project of Excellence Award** recognizes timeshare or mixed-use projects that are considered a success by investors, owners and the local community. The recipient exhibits years of cooperation between planners, engineers, architects, lenders, contractors, designers, sales, marketing, operations, staff, owners, local government, community groups, and the surrounding area. This year's recipient is The Wyndham Bonnet Creek Resort in Orlando, Florida, a showcase resort that became the set for the company's first-ever TV ad campaign featuring legendary golfer Arnold Palmer. It was also the grand prize on "The Dreamers into Doers" contest on the Martha Stewart Show.

The **ACE Volunteer Award**, given in memory of Anne W. Crawford, recognizes an ARDA member who consistently devotes time, energy, creativity and talent to the advancement of the industry. This year, the ARDA member to earn this significant honor is Bob Miller, President of Marriott Leisure. His selfless hours, uncommon support of ARDA and participation in countless strategic governmental meetings make him one of the most outstanding leaders in the industry.

The **ACE Innovator Award** recognizes a company or individual that has developed a ground-breaking product, service or concept that was successfully implemented within the last three years. The winner this year, Wyndham Vacation Ownership, has undergone several break-through "green" initiatives such as creatively harvesting southern daylight for maximized window space and lowering interior cube walls so more light could flow into work areas. Occupancy sensors were also installed to reduce unnecessary lighting expenses and indoor air quality was enhanced with a fresh air intake unit which minimized VOC products

and particles in the air. An employee recycling training program was launched, as well.

The **ACE Philanthropic Award** recognizes an outstanding philanthropic effort for a humanitarian cause by an individual or company. This year, Bruce Thompson, CEO of Gold Key/PHR Hotels, was recognized for his monumental efforts in supporting and participating in the Annual Walk to Defeat ALS (known as Lou Gherig's Disease), in honor of his son who was stricken with ALS and for all those who suffer from the disease. He has taken a lead role in planning events all across the country.

The **ACE Community Service Award** recognizes outstanding community contributions by an ARDA member individual or organization. This year's recipient, the ShareForce workers of the Island One Foundation are honored for their strong support of Habitat for Humanity and their unwavering devotion to helping others.

The **ACE Employer of the Year Award** recognizes an employer that has demonstrated exceptional commitment to its employees. This year's winner, Group RCI, designed a highly targeted new training program, called CATALYST, to create a company culture of leadership. The program includes a comprehensive course which provides a structured development plan of how to obtain competencies needed for advancement.

The **ACE Employee of the Year Award** recognizes an outstanding employee who has demonstrated commitment, loyalty, superior performance, and the willingness to go above and beyond. This year's recipient, Olga Dancaescu, is Project Coordinator of the Island Empress Resort on Santa Rosa Island, Pensacola Beach. She guided a team of architects, designers, financiers, marketing and PR specialists to create a new island resort and is recognized for her respect, focus, integrity, graciousness, exceptional skill and devotion.

The **ACE Women on Their Way Award** is a brand new award this year, recognizing the outstanding achievements of women who continue to excel and advance in the industry. The very first recipient of the ACE Women on Their Way Award is Jenniver Vanlerberghe, Director of Global eCommerce for Group RCI, who quickly became the driving force behind the development and introduction of RCI's new Enhance Search Internet Service, a new approach to booking online

In addition to the ACE Awards, ARDA awarded ARDYs to finalists in advertising and promotion; resort design; management and administration; and marketing/sales categories. For a list of winners and finalists, please visit the "Awards" section of the website at www.arda.org.

The American Resort Development Association is the Washington D.C.-based professional association representing the vacation ownership and resort development industries. Established in 1969, ARDA today has over 1,000 members ranging from privately held firms to publicly traded companies and international corporations with expertise in shared ownership interests in leisure real estate. The membership also includes timeshare owner associations (HOAs), resort management companies, and owners through the ARDA Resort Owners Coalition (ARDA-ROC).