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Bruce L. Thompson
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Bruce Thompson has been a leader in the travel industry for more than 25 years. His first venture grew to become the largest ski operation on the East Coast. That company evolved into Professional Hospitality Resources (PHR), as Thompson expanded into hotels and restaurants. In 1986, he entered the vacation ownership industry, co-founding the highly successful **Gold Key Resorts**. He is a nationally recognized leader in the hospitality industry and his companies own and manage hotels, resorts, commercial real estate and restaurants in Virginia and North Carolina. Today, his companies employ over 2,000 associates.

Thompson ardently supports the travel industry, serving as a director of the American Resort Development Association (ARDA) and sits on several tourism and development boards. He served for seven years on the Governor’s Travel Advisory Committee, American Resort Development Association Board, Resort Area Advisory Commission, Resort Leadership Council, Virginia Beach Festivals Committee and the Virginia Small Business Financial Authority. Additionally, he was the chairman of Governor Bob McDonnell’s Transition Team for Film and Tourism and was appointed to the Governor’s Economic Development and Jobs Creation Commission. In July 2010, he was appointed by the Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS) Foundation Board of Trustees to serve on the EVMS Board of Visitors.

He is a vocal proponent of community service and creating quality life initiatives for those suffering mental and physical disabilities. Thompson’s premiere fundraising event, The JT Walk & Beach Party has raised over \$7 million dollars and given hundreds of thousands

of dollars towards ALS research since 2008. Additionally, the JT Walk helped financially support the design and development of the first fully accessible beach park and playground (JT’s Grommet Island) plus the kid friendly neonatal and pediatric ambulance (Grom-bulance) for the Children’s Hospital of the Kings Daughters. Recently he has embarked upon a project along with a group of young men he’s mentored since 2008 (the Virginia Gentlemen) to build a \$15 million dollar, 73 acre camp and recreational facility. Camp Grom will be a camp where our wounded warriors, gold star families (families of the fallen) and adults and children with disabilities or special needs can truly have an extraordinary recreational experience.

He has been honored with the 2009 ARDA Ace Philanthropic Award, the 2009 Outstanding Community Visionary Award from Amerigroup Foundation, the Virginia Center of Inclusive Committees Humanitarian Award and after many years in support of the Virginia Beach Neptune Festival, in 2010 Thompson was crowned King Neptune XXXVIII. Furthermore, Gold Key Resorts received the ARDA Ace Community Service Award in 2010. In recognition of his accomplishments in the timeshare industry, he was awarded “Best Industry Leader” in 2012 by *Perspective Magazine*. In April of 2012, he received the Lenora B. Matthews Lifetime Achievement Award from Volunteer Hampton Roads, recognizing his continued commitment to the community. He was announced as the 2013 Virginia Beach First Citizen and Inside Business has recognized him as #1 on the Hampton Roads Power List for three consecutive years (2014, 2015, and 2016.)

