

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 23, 2022



**WINNERS ANNOUNCED FOR 2022 INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS PRESENTED BY BAR & RESTAURANT EXPO**



Day 3 photos available for download [Here](#)  
Credit belongs to David Becker and Gabe Ginsberg with Getty Images

**LAS VEGAS** – Today, the **Bar & Restaurant Expo** announced the winners of the **2022 Industry Excellence Awards** during a special awards ceremony. The Industry Excellence Awards, sponsored by Sunday, recognize, celebrate, and support the people who make the independent bar and restaurant industry great.

The award recipients were selected by a panel of expert judges based on their talent, integrity and commitment to equality, sustainability, community, and culture across the industry. The Industry Excellence Awards are dedicated to recognizing, celebrating, and supporting the companies and individuals who make the independent bar and restaurant industry great.

### **2022 Winners of the Industry Excellence Awards:**

- **Bartender of the Year- Josh Davis, Brown & Balanced, IL**
  - *A bartender of exemplary performance, skill, and dedication, both behind the bar and beyond it. This person has worked tirelessly to improve their bar program, their bar culture, and the industry at large, serving as a positive example for other beverage professionals.*
- **Chef of the Year- Rhonda McCullar, Uchi Dallas, TX**
  - *A chef who has dedicated themselves to culinary excellence, as well as sustainable, ethical practices and inclusive culture. This individual sets high personal and professional standards for food professionals across the industry, behind the pass and beyond it.*
- **Cocktail Bar of the Year- drink.well, Austin, TX**
  - *A cocktail bar that consistently demonstrates exceptional hospitality, creativity, training, culture and service. The Cocktail Bar of the Year has a unique identity and has established itself as a leader within the category.*
- **Community Leadership Awards- Jeremy and Natalee Price, Taste of Tuscany Ristorante, CA**
  - *This award is open to anyone in F&B who has demonstrated outstanding contributions and dedication to bettering their local community, and by extension, the F&B community at large.*
- **Innovator of the Year- Christie Lawler, The WITI Group, TX AND Lindsey Johnson, Lush Life Productions, NY**
  - *This award is open to anyone in F&B who tirelessly moves the industry forward, pushing existing boundaries and establishing new foundations for the industry to build upon that are both equitable and sustainable.*
- **LGBTQ Venue of the Year- Downtown Olly's, Indianapolis, IN**
  - *This bar or restaurant consistently delivers exceptional hospitality, creativity and service, while championing the LGBTQ community. The LGBTQ Venue of the year fully epitomizes what it means to be an LGBTQ Venue and has a demonstrated history of supporting the queer community.*
- **Most Original Concept- Cosmic Gorilla, Cincinnati, OH**
  - *A new or rebranded bar or restaurant that breaks the mold of convention, creating an exciting, new standard likely to make a significant impact in years to come. (Must have launched or re-branded in 2021)*
- **Operator of the Year- Barbara Sibley, La Palpa / Holiday Cocktail Bar, NY**
  - *A bar/restaurant owner dedicated to exemplary hospitality, creative entrepreneurship, ethical business practices and the betterment of the industry at large. This person serves as a role model, paving the way for a better future for F&B.*
- **Restaurant of the Year- Lumi, San Diego, CA**
  - *A restaurant that consistently demonstrates exceptional hospitality, creativity, culture and service. This venue boasts a unique atmosphere, thoughtful F&B offerings, and a*

*training program. The Restaurant of the Year has established itself as a leader in the community and has made a significant impact within the industry.*

- **Sports Bar of the Year- Dawg House Saloon & Sports Book, Las Vegas, NV**
  - *A place that embodies the spirit of the category, including excellence across design, F&B offerings, training, events and community engagement. The Sports Bar of the Year has a unique brand identity and has established itself as a leader within the category.*

The winners were presented with a beautiful custom award and a VIP Ticket to attend the Expo in 2023. Winners are also eligible to become part of the judging panel moving forward.

For more information about the 2022 Bar & Restaurant Expo, visit [barandrestaurantexpo.com](http://barandrestaurantexpo.com). [Bar and Restaurant Expo will return to Las Vegas on March 27-29, 2023.](#)

###

### **About Bar & Restaurant Expo**

Bar & Restaurant Expo, formerly known as Nightclub & Bar Show, has continued to evolve to mirror the fast-paced, trend-setting nature of the hospitality industry. The event has been providing the specific tools that bar and restaurant owners, operators, and managers need to grow their businesses, compete, and succeed in this hyper-competitive and dynamic industry. The Bar & Restaurant Group is a division of the Questex Hospitality Group which also produces VIBE Conference, World Tea Conference & Expo, and daily content on [barandrestaurant.com](http://barandrestaurant.com). Follow Bar & Restaurant on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for all the latest industry news and trends.

### **About Questex**

**Questex helps people live better and longer.** Questex brings people together in the markets that help people **live better**: travel, hospitality and wellness; the industries that help people **live longer**: life science and healthcare; and the technologies that enable and fuel these **new experiences**. We live in **the experience economy** – connecting our ecosystem through live events, surrounded by data insights and digital communities. We deliver experience and real results. **It happens here.**

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

Kirvin Doak Communications

[BarAndRestaurantExpo@kirvindoak.com](mailto:BarAndRestaurantExpo@kirvindoak.com)