

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 20, 2024



BAR & RESTAURANT EXPO ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF THREE PRESTIGIOUS INDUSTRY AWARD CATEGORIES ON MARCH 20, 2024

Recipients of the Industry Excellence Awards, Industry Impact Award, and Supplier Awards were honored on the keynote stage.

LAS VEGAS- Today, Wednesday, March 20, attendees of this year's [Bar & Restaurant Expo](#) gathered to celebrate outstanding leaders, venues and suppliers as event organizers announced winners of three esteemed industry award categories: **Industry Excellence Awards**, **Industry Impact Awards** and the first-ever **Supplier Awards**.

"These individuals and businesses represent the best of the best, and we are proud to recognize their achievements and contributions," said Tim McLucas, Vice President of Bar & Restaurant Group. "Congratulations to all our winners!"

The winners of each award can be found below:

2024 Industry Excellence Award Winners

The Industry Excellence Awards celebrate dedication to the independent bar and restaurant business. These winners exemplify integrity, commitment to equality, sustainability, community, and culture across the industry.

Winners in each category were selected by a panel of experts from Johnson & Wales University who evaluated each submission based on several criteria:

- Panel Chair: Brian Warrener, Associate Professor & Director of the Center for Beverage Education & Innovation
- Jennifer Broderick, Professor
- Sarah Malik, Associate Professor
- Deana Marzocchi, Associate Professor
- Dean Mistretta, Assistant Professor

"The quality of the entries this year was uniformly excellent," said Warrener. "Our panel of judges believe these winners truly represent the best in the industry."

Bartender of the Year

Dominique Jackson, Realm of 52 Remedies
San Diego, California

Community Leadership Award

Ebony Austin, Nouveau Bar & Grill
Atlanta, Georgia

Chef of the Year

Iliana de la Vega, El Naranjo
Austin, Texas

Best Cocktail Program

WATERTRADE
Austin, Texas

Best Hospitality Training Program

Your 3rd Spot
Atlanta, Georgia

Bar of the Year

Happy Accidents, Albuquerque
New Mexico

Restaurant of the Year

OTOKO
Austin, Texas

2024 Industry Impact Award Winner

This award recognizes an individual who has displayed an immense passion for their craft and has helped make significant advancements in the field. Considerations for the award include enhancing employee culture, raising the visibility of under-represented businesses and owners, implementing fair wage compensation, practicing sustainability, and supporting mental health, sobriety and addiction recovery initiatives.

Derek Brown, Founder of Positive Damage, Inc.

Author and Founder of Positive Damage, Inc., Derek Brown has been recognized as a leading beverage figure affecting positive change in the global bar industry. As one of the nation's top bartenders, Brown owned Spirited Awards 2017 "Best American Cocktail Bar" winner, Columbia Room, in Washington, D.C. He now works as a wellness coach and consultant on low- and no-alcohol drinks.

2024 Supplier Award Winners, supported by CM Profit Group

Bar & Restaurant Expo worked with research company CM Profit Group to present the inaugural 2024 BRE Supplier Awards. These awards aim to honor trailblazers who have redefined the bar and restaurant landscape with their exceptional products and solutions. Suppliers submitted products for consideration across six categories, and then Bar & Restaurant Expo attendees voted on which they considered the best in each category based on their experience with the company and its product.

Best Alcoholic Beverage

Diageo's Don Julio Alma Miel Joven Tequila

Best Entertainment Product

Team Trivia

Best Equipment, Tool, or Bar Supply

True Manufacturing

Best Food Product/Producer

Oh Snap! Dilly Bites

Best Non-Alcoholic Product or Mixer

Ritual Zero Proof Spirits

Best Technology Product

Draft Top PRO

For more information about these awards, visit www.barandrestaurantexpo.com. Stay connected with Bar & Restaurant Expo on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#). Details for next year's event will be announced shortly.

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About Bar & Restaurant Expo

Bar & Restaurant Expo has continued to evolve and 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 part of the Questex Travel & Hospitality Division and also produces [World Tea News](#), [World Tea Academy](#), as well as [Bar & Restaurant Expo](#), [Bar & Restaurant News](#), and [Vibe Conference](#).

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.**

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