



PROJECT 24

Executive Interview Series

Fall 2015

Spotlighting: Hospitality Industry Executive



Sarah Joseph

Employer: InterContinental Hotels Group—Owners Association



InterContinental Hotels Group

Position: Director, Meetings and Events

InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) is a British multinational hotels company headquartered in Denham, UK, with America's headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. IHG has over 4,800 hotels across nearly 100 countries. Its brands include Candlewood Suites, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Hotel Indigo, Hauluxe, InterContinental, and Staybridge Suites. The IHG Owners Association is the owners' voice to InterContinental Hotels Group and is comprised of owners of IHG properties throughout the world, working hand-in-hand to improve hotel profitability and exchange ideas and best practices. The Association represents the interests of nearly 2,000 owners and operators of more than 3,000 IHG brand hotels.

Sarah Joseph joined IHG-Owners Association in 2001. She obtained her Certified Meeting Planner (CMP) designation in 2015 and has received over a dozen prestigious industry awards while serving with IHG.

Joseph graduated from Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia with a B.A. in Economics. In 2009, she graduated from the IAHI Leadership Institute, held at Emory University's Goizueta Business School. The IAHI (the Owners' Association of InterContinental Hotels Group) Leadership Institution is an invitation-only leadership development program. Additionally, Joseph spent a year studying abroad at the Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici (LdM). LdM is one of the most distinctive and well-established study abroad institutions in Europe.

10 Years Married

3 Children

**Favorite Family
Vacation Spot?**

**Cape San Blas,
Florida**

All-American Triathlete and Ironman Finisher Sarah Joseph is not your typical Executive.

Competitive to the core and a dedicated executive, Joseph has found a way to win at both career and family. Sarah and husband Matt have three boys: Will, Fletcher, and Miles. Not surprisingly, Sarah and her family enjoy staying active outdoors. Some of their favorite family activities include biking, hiking, swimming, camping, and time at the beach and lake.



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- Sarah Joseph

Joseph with husband Matt and sons Will (7), Fletcher (5), and Miles (2).

Q: How would you define your mission as a parent?

A: “Be present, supportive, and teach my kids unconditional love.” Joseph admits it is difficult to slow everything down in order to stay focused on family, but does her best to avoid over-committing to activities, sports, and volunteer positions. Yet she admits there is always the temptation to ‘do it all.’

Q: What are the biggest challenges you face in balancing demands at the office and home?

A: “Honestly, balancing life and work takes ongoing commitment—not only finding quality time with my family, but also finding time for myself.” Joseph credits a somewhat flexible work schedule with ensuring she is home for dinner and night-time routines most weekdays. Additionally, she works from home one day a week. “On Wednesdays, I stay locked in my home office—but my family knows I’m there. I have amazing support from my husband and we are fortunate to have wonderful help with childcare. I also have my parents close by who help when I am traveling. The saying is true—it takes a village!”

Q: What secrets can you share that have helped you both protect and grow your marriage while balancing career demands?

A: “The biggest struggle for me right now is finding quality time with just the two of us. We have started scheduling time on our calendar (as embarrassing as it is to admit) — working out, dinner together, porch time, etc. My husband is the greatest person in my life. Unfortunately, he often falls last in line for attention.”



Joseph enjoying the finish line (above) and with son, Will (right).

Q: With so many different demands for your time in both your personal and professional life, how do you prioritize everything? Are there tips, techniques or habits you've developed to manage how you spend your time?

A: "Family is always first. As hard as it is, setting that alarm early to squeeze in a workout or catch up on work seems to be a big help."

Q: What is the greatest challenge in parenting today's youth?

A: "Two words: quality time. I make it a priority to spend focused, face-to-face, 100% 'in' quality time with each of my children every day. That means no iPhone, no TV, no cleaning, and no distractions. With our crazy schedules, it's tempting to move from one thing to another, but I've learned to just stop. If the laundry doesn't get done, life will go on. If the kitchen is a disaster, we clean it in the morning."

Q: If there's one "life lesson" you can choose to pass on to your children, what would it be and why?

A: "Never judge a book by its cover. You never know the struggles people face in their personal lives."

**"Family is
always
first."**
