



## Gerson Velasquez Appointed Managing Director at OKANA Resort & Indoor Waterpark



A significant leadership change has been announced at ⚡ **OKANA Resort & Indoor Waterpark** in Oklahoma City. **Gerson Velasquez**, a seasoned hospitality professional with over two decades of experience, has been appointed as the Managing Director of the property. As the newest addition to Oklahoma City's **Horizons District**, OKANA Resort & Indoor Waterpark is a \$400 million entertainment and hospitality destination. In his new role, Velasquez will oversee all aspects of the resort's operations, including the resort, waterpark, retail outlets, and dining experiences. His leadership will ensure the continued excellence of the property, contributing to its reputation as a premier destination for both leisure and business travelers.

Gerson Velasquez brings an impressive and extensive background in the hospitality industry to OKANA Resort & Indoor Waterpark. Before joining OKANA, Velasquez played a pivotal role at ⚡ **Kalahari Resort** in Round Rock, Texas. As a member of the opening team, he contributed to achieving record-setting guest satisfaction levels, team engagement, and financial performance. His management responsibilities included overseeing 25 food and beverage outlets, retail operations, accommodations, the spa, and the expansive indoor waterpark. His work at ⚡ **Kalahari** highlights his ability to drive success across various departments, enhancing the guest experience and operational efficiency.

Velasquez's experience in large-scale resort operations extends beyond Kalahari. Prior to his time at Kalahari Resort, Velasquez had an impressive career spanning nearly two decades in Houston's hospitality and entertainment sectors. He held significant roles at well-known landmarks such as **Hilton Americas-Houston**, **Reliant Stadium**, and **Minute Maid Park**. Throughout his career, he held several executive positions, including **General Manager**, **Assistant General Manager**, **Director of Food & Beverage**, and **Director of Operations**. His collaborative leadership style and results-driven approach earned him recognition and respect from peers and industry professionals alike.

### **An Early Start in Hospitality**

Velasquez's journey into hospitality began early. He graduated with a **Bachelor's degree in Business Administration** from **Central American University** in **San Salvador**. His first significant hospitality role was at **Baltusrol Golf Club** in **New Jersey**, where he had the opportunity to manage high-profile events, including the prestigious 1993 **U.S. Open Golf Championship** and the 80th birthday celebration of **President George H.W. Bush**. These events, attended by distinguished guests and dignitaries from around the world, helped shape Velasquez's approach to high-level hospitality management.

### **Leadership at OKANA Resort & Indoor Waterpark**

At OKANA Resort & Indoor Waterpark, Velasquez will oversee the day-to-day operations of the 390,000-square-foot property, which includes a four-star resort, a state-of-the-art indoor waterpark, signature dining concepts, and versatile meetings and events spaces. The resort is set to become a major player in Oklahoma City's hospitality sector, and Velasquez's extensive experience in managing large, complex resorts will be instrumental in ensuring its success.

His leadership will be focused on maintaining the highest standards of service across all guest experiences. Whether it is the thrill of the waterpark, the relaxation of the resort's accommodations, or the diverse dining options, Velasquez will ensure that guests receive a memorable and high-quality experience at every turn. With his comprehensive background in resort management, he is well-equipped to address the unique challenges that come with overseeing such a large and multifaceted operation.

## The Role of OKANA Resort in Oklahoma City's Growth

OKANA Resort & Indoor Waterpark plays a key role in the ongoing economic development of Oklahoma City. As a wholly owned subsidiary of the **Chickasaw Nation**, the resort is a major investment in the city's tourism and entertainment infrastructure. It serves as a destination for both local residents and visitors from around the country, offering an array of attractions and amenities that cater to families, business travelers, and event planners alike.

With the addition of Velasquez as Managing Director, OKANA is poised to continue its growth and enhance its standing as a top-tier resort destination in Oklahoma. His leadership will be critical in positioning the resort as a competitive force in the region's hospitality landscape.

### Building on Previous Successes

Velasquez's appointment follows a distinguished career marked by his ability to elevate guest experiences and operational performance. His leadership style is characterized by collaboration, strategic thinking, and a focus on results. This approach has earned him a reputation for being an effective manager who can bring out the best in his team while delivering impressive business outcomes.

His success at **Kalahari Resort**, where he helped achieve significant milestones in guest satisfaction and financial performance, serves as a testament to his capabilities in driving operational success. Velasquez's leadership has been instrumental in transforming resort operations into highly effective and guest-focused models. At [📍 OKANA Resort](#), he is expected to bring the same level of dedication and vision to ensure the resort's long-term success.

### A Strong Foundation for Future Growth

As OKANA Resort & Indoor Waterpark continues to develop and attract visitors, Velasquez's leadership will be crucial in shaping its future. His vast experience in the hospitality industry, coupled with his proven track record in managing large resorts, positions him perfectly to lead the property to new heights. Velasquez's ability to drive guest satisfaction, manage diverse operations, and inspire his team will be key to the resort's continued growth and success.

Under his guidance, OKANA Resort is expected to thrive in Oklahoma City's competitive hospitality market. The resort will not only cater to leisure travelers seeking a unique experience but also to business clients looking for an ideal location for meetings and events. Velasquez's strategic vision will ensure that OKANA remains a destination of choice for a wide range of visitors.