

Congratulations To Our CRFPs

David Bohner, Ashley Hodge, Roger Lam, Billy To

What do you enjoy most about your job? Bohner: Having a chance to help and develop others. Hodge: I enjoy the aptitude of handling something unexpected on a daily basis. I enjoy problem solving and the self accomplishment of completing projects. It is challenging because you always have multiple projects to attend to at one time—that makes the job exciting. There's never a dull moment in facilities! Lam: I love learning every day. I also enjoy meeting different people every day, traveling and being challenged by multiple tasks. To: The people with whom I work with every day. It is great to know that Panda has great people who care and support one another. Working at Panda is not just a regular job but a lifestyle.

What other companies have you worked for prior to your current position? Bohner: The U.S. Air Force (as a Helicopter Crew Chief 20th Special Operations) and Steak 'n Shake (as a Maintenance Supervisor). Hodge: I'm new to the facility management industry and have an eagerness to learn by being adaptive, thorough, customer-focused and results-driven. I've worked for Verizon Wireless as a business account manager for three years and Wells Fargo as a personal banker for four years. I started with Panda Restaurant Group four years ago in marketing and transferred into building operations, where my passion and curiosity for facility management developed. Lam: I've been with Panda for 14 years; seven in Operations and seven in Facilities. Before that, I was with Bitove Food Concession at Toronto International Airport and Sarku Japan. To: After college, I joined the U.S. Army. During my eight years in the Army, I served as a communication officer in an infantry battalion. In the private sector, I worked for more than three years at Wal-Mart as an assistant manager before moving to Panda Restaurant Group, where I held multiple positions over the last 11 years: training leader, loss protection specialist and lead facilities manager.

When you were new to the industry, what was the most surprising thing you learned about the restaurant world? Bohner: Encountering various mindsets from the Operations team, and what Facilities is and can do for Operations. Hodge: Time management is crucial. Even if I have a perfectly planned day, there is a big chance that I will get distracted from what I had originally planned to do. So, I choose to be flexible; I don't have the privilege of leaving important tasks to the last minute, as my priorities might be shifted around, which delays the completion of planned tasks. However, prioritizing plays a key role when dealing with unforeseen service failures. I use an electronic Outlook calendar to organize my days, which is also a great help when you need a reminder or to ensure you don't miss important deadlines. At the end of the day, I have an extremely supportive team that is always ready to step in if needed. Lam: The workability and sense of urgency. Also, the rules and regulations, including ADA, NFPA, OSHA and so on. To: I was most surprised to learn that no two days are ever alike. Each day presents unique challenges and great learning opportunities.

What is your all-time favorite movie? Bohner: "Forrest Gump." Hodge: One of my many favorites is "Whiplash." I used to play the clarinet in middle and high school band, so this movie resonated and brought back many memories of challenging band sessions. This movie portrays the struggle musicians go through, along with the unquenchable thirst for success that pervades any musician, along with their love for their craft. Anyone passionate about their work will love the thin line between passion and obsession—the one that you sometimes need to cross to be where you want to be. You can feel the character's tension the whole movie. Lam: The first three "Kung Fu Panda" movies. To: My favorite movie is "The Matrix" because it presents life in a different perspective.

What is the most challenging situation you've ever faced in a facility or on the job? How did you handle it? Bohner: The Florida hurricane season of 2004, which included Hurricanes Charley, Frances and Jeanne. Not only was my own home in the path of all three storms—we didn't have power for weeks and had to use a generator to power our home—I had to organize and facilitate the Steak 'n Shake Restaurants back to full operation. I had rolling conference calls with the field associates to find AC panels and secure the buildings from any further water intrusion, and drive fuel into areas with curfews through four-way multi-lane intersections to deliver materials to bring units back up and going. Hodge: Finding ways to do more with less. We are always looking for ways to impact our company's profitability by producing cost savings to directly benefit our bottom line. Some strategies include avoiding unnecessary repair costs through client self-help systems and knowledge-based documents, flagging all assets and equipment under warranty to prevent unnecessary payments, and managing price control with vendors. Lam: The level of intensity is a challenge. I've had to learn how to restore a restaurant and get it back up and running in a timely manner without delay or loss of sales. This has happened after several incidents forced a store to shut down, including a broken water heater, a sewer back-up, a fire with ansul discharge and a car being crushed. To: I view all challenging situations as learning opportunities to better myself and to help others.

What is your favorite work-related app? Bohner: Google Maps. Hodge: Google Drive. You can access all of your information within one app— whether its files, reports or photos. I also love Waze for taking me around Los Angeles traffic and FaceTime. If I need to show my vendor something, I can show them instantly! Lam: Parts Town, which includes equipment manuals by manufacturer, model numbers, document type, etc. To: My favorite app is the one I helped create for Panda. We spent three years creating a site survey app that lets our facility managers rate the overall condition of their stores. This helps them plan for upcoming projects, assist in rollout projects and many other tasks.

What is the best advice you ever received? Bohner: I'm no good to others and the team if I don't take care of myself. Hodge: "The greatest investment a young person can make is in their own education, in their own mind. Because money comes and goes. Relationships come and go. But what you learn once stays with you forever." — Warren Buffett. Lam: Strive for work-life balance. Work can't be 24/7. You need time off to relax and recharge energy. To: My former supervisor would say, "Don't take things too personal. Seek to understand other people's perspectives, and you will learn to work better with others."

Who is the most impressive person you have ever met? Bohner: Dick Cole (General Doolittle's Co-Pilot), the last surviving Doolittle Raider. Hodge: Our founders, Andrew and Peggy Cherng, are committed to being the world leaders in people development. My coworkers are the most impressive group of individuals I have met— our mindset is like no other, and I love how we challenge each other. We have a sense of purpose to perform at our absolute best, which results in delivering an exceptional dining experience to our guests. Lam: The founder of Panda Restaurant Group, Andrew Cherng. He inspired and elevated us to seek out the possibility of a better life. He pushes us to be outstanding. To: The most impressive person is my wife. When I first met her, she was learning how to read/write in English while working two jobs to support herself and her mom. Today, she is working toward a nurse practitioner master's degree while holding a full-time job as a nurse.

To what would you attribute your success in achieving your CRFP? Bohner: My HVAC-R mechanical background, years of knowledge and continual education. Hodge: It comes down to these five attributes: passion, work ethic, curiosity, willingness to learn and being humble to always polish my craft. Lam: Job knowledge and sharing with colleagues. To: I attribute my success in achieving my CRFP to my wife and the Panda Facility Department. They have been supportive and encourage me to better myself.

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues? Why? Bohner: Yes. It reveals where you're strong and where you need further industry knowledge. Hodge: Certainly! The coursework offers a great scope of what facility managers face day to day in the restaurant industry. Lam: I would highly recommend it to anyone in the field. There is a lot to learn, and this is a chance to gain more knowledge. It's very practical knowledge that applies to daily operations. To: Hands down, I would recommend and encourage my colleagues to attain their CRFP. It's like the CPA or M.D. but for facilities. It's a very challenging test if you dare to take it.

What do you do for fun in your spare time? Bohner: Working out at the gym and running, diving, spear fishing, camping, fishing and travel. Hodge: I enjoy being active and living a healthy lifestyle. I recently competed in a power-lifting competition and won third place by lifting more than 670 pounds. I love volunteering, traveling and being outdoors. Whether it's hiking, snowboarding, skydiving or camping—I love being in nature. Lam: I love to travel, especially road trips. To: In my spare time, I love to work. Just kidding. I love the outdoors (hiking, biking and camping with family and friends). I also enjoy playing basketball with my friends. We are going on 15+ years playing together in a local basketball league.