

CRFP Spotlight

Get to know some of our recent CRFP designees! We are excited that more of our members are joining this distinguished group. We credit their knowledge and experience, as well as their initiative for taking advantage of our online learning modules.

Thomas Lin, CRFP

Thomas Lin, CRFP Above, clockwise: First class on the founder's jet; wishing this was his prize for finishing a triathlon; exploring the architecture in Germany; taking a stroll in Luxembourg, where even the dogs want to say hello; enjoying a family vacation in Taiwan; getting remarried to his wife.

Ricky Mathews, CRFP

Ricky Mathews, CRFP Clockwise from middle: Mathews with his wife, Julie; Mathews behind the wheel of his 1968 Chris Craft Commander on Lewisville Lake; walking on the beach at Coronado Island; Mathews with his son at Old Town San Diego having an outrageous margarita; enjoying his "weekend office" at the marina.

Don Turner, CRFP

Don Turner, CRFP Above: Turner enjoying lunch with Darden facilities team members David Masone, Shannon Rogner and Curt Swan; Turner and his long time girlfriend, Maureen, atop the Arapaho Basin Ski area in Colorado; sailing in British Virgin Islands with family and friends; Turner receives a RFMA Lifetime Achievement award; Turner is surprised to receive his second Darden Individual Brilliance Award; Turner and Maureen in Alaska.

Shannon Roepke, CRFP

Shannon Roepke, CRFP From top: Roepke and her nephew; enjoying her love of hiking at the Grand Canyon; acting as maid of honor at her sister's wedding in San Diego; Roepke and her niece; Roepke is a huge animal lover and a self-described aspiring crazy dog lady.

Congratulations to Our CRFPs

Thomas Lin, CRFP— Regional Facilities Manager, Panda Restaurant Group

Ricky Mathews, CRFP — Facilities Manager, Del Frisco's Restaurant Group

Shannon Roepke, CRFP — Account Manager, Legacy Air, HVAC

Don Turner, CRFP — Facilities Manager, Darden Inc., The Capital Grille and Eddie V's

What do you enjoy most about your job? Lin: Each day brings new challenges, and I get to learn something new. Mathews: I enjoy interacting with people and the challenges the work presents. Roepke: Working with my team. We're able to work efficiently while maintaining a sense of humor. We're all problem solvers. Our jobs are to fix any issues that may arise throughout the process of a service call, which means work can be stressful. Having a team I can laugh with is crucial. Turner: The time in the restaurants spent observing and troubleshooting, finding creative ways to solve current problems with long-term solutions and helping staff understand better use, cleaning and maintenance of the many physical assets they utilize. I love teach-and-learn time in the restaurants.

What other companies have you worked for prior to your current position? Lin: I have only worked for Panda Restaurant Group. Mathews: My first employer was the U.S. Marine Corps. I am very proud to have served our nation and enjoyed numerous duty stations around the world. My career in facilities management stems from many years in the restaurant construction trade. Roepke: Before this, I worked with hiring managers of Fortune 500 corporations, staffing aerospace and mechanical engineers. Turner: Rare Hospitality, Uno Restaurants, Houlihan's Restaurants, General Mills Restaurants, International Dairy Queen, De Laval Separator Co., Riverside Press, my own print shop and Stephens Quality Printing.

When you were new to the industry, what was the most surprising thing you learned about the restaurant world? Lin: I started working in restaurants when I was young. When I was 12 or 13 years old, my parents owned restaurants. I held every single position there was; I even scrubbed toilets and floors. Mathews: Facilities management is a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week professional commitment. Quality relationships with our restaurant management teams and our valued vendors are key to success. Roepke: How much money is spent annually on maintaining the property and equipment. Holy cow. Turner: The lack of sanitation and concern for it by hourly employees. And their bad habits we had to correct.

What is your all-time favorite movie? Lin: "Braveheart." Mathews: "African Queen" with Humphrey Bogart and Katharine Hepburn. Roepke: "Pulp Fiction." No explanation needed! Turner: Not one. Depends upon how I am feeling that week. I have broad interests, but I am a sucker for solid writing, a turn of phrase and plot twists. I do not like to be stuck watching and waiting for the obvious to occur.

What is the most challenging situation you've ever faced in a facility or on the job? How did you handle it? Lin: Last year, during the blizzard that swept through the Northeast, more than 30 stores needed plow services. Everyone was scrambling, trying to get vendors out so we could open the stores. Turner: Several times I have had buildings in varying stages of collapse. Two were imminent, and we caught them as they were starting to self-destruct.

What is your favorite work-related app? Lin: Either Service Channel's app or Google Maps because of all the traveling I do. Turner: Excel. I always create a spreadsheet to track stuff I cannot remember.

What is the best advice you ever received? Lin: Just do your best. At the end of the night, if you know you have given your best, then you have given your all. Mathews: Be calm, and use your assets. Roepke: Sell your financed car that you can't afford and buy a cheap car with cash. Liquid assets only! Turner: Find something fun embedded within everything you do. Concentrate on it while you trudge through the rest. "It is not doing what one likes to do but finding joy in what one must to do."

Who is the most impressive person you have ever met? Lin: My mom and dad. They put up with me and my sisters, and they gave me all their wisdom about life and how they treat every day as a new day. Other than my parents, I would say Andrew Cherng, the Owner/Founder of Panda Restaurant Group. He is always thinking ahead and challenging everyone to be their best. Mathews: As a drill instructor at Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego, I served under the leadership of Harold G. Overstreet, who later became the 12th sergeant major of the Marine Corps. Overstreet was a model of leadership, and his lessons remain with me today. Roepke: John Wittman, Vice President of Legacy Air. He's a two-tour veteran of the Iraq war, an Arizona State University alum with a degree in music and a self-made executive having started at the bottom of the totem pole at Legacy Air and working all the way up. Turner: No one person. I love to learn, especially about history, so I'm a sucker for a good story. And in history and even today there are many people with good stories. Those stories hold a lot of truths about life and lessons to be absorbed. Some are better storytellers, but most people have something to share, with benefit to both the person speaking and those listening.

To what would you attribute your success in achieving your CRFP? Lin: I wouldn't have made it if it wasn't for my great colleagues at Panda Restaurant Group. They encouraged me to take the test and gave me the space and time to study and learn the tricks of the trade. Overseeing almost 200 stores in 10 states is a lot to juggle, and I couldn't have made it work without their support. Mathews: Del Frisco's Chief Development Officer, Bill Martens, who provides excellent leadership and encourages personal growth and excellence. Roepke: Hard work and determination. Maybe a little undergrad experience. I had no knowledge of the industry prior to accepting this job, and I earned my CRFP in the first four months of employment. Turner: Determination. If it is to be done, just get it done and move on to the next thing. Learn what you have to and use that knowledge on the next thing. Make it as fun as you can, but advance.

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues? Why? Lin: Yes. The CRFP has given me lots of knowledge about things I would have never known about. It is just a matter of time before certain situations occur, so this prepares me for any issues that may arise. Now, I have a little knowledge on how to handle each situation. Attaining the CRFP is an accomplishment; for me, it's like winning an Oscar! Mathews: Yes. It's a credential that demonstrates personal dedication to the profession and competence in the field. Roepke: Absolutely. Knowledge is power in this industry. Turner: I have often done so. It is not about the title as much as confirming what you know and learning what you need to know to do the job well. The title of CRFP is cool. But using the knowledge and continuing to learn is the key to being a useful and invaluable member of the company's team to support operations.

What do you do for fun in your spare time? Lin: I like to travel to different parts of the world. I've been to four countries and more than 35 states in the past three years. Mathews: My wife and I enjoy golf, fishing and travel. Recently, I've become a certified scuba diver—ticking off a "bucket list" item. Roepke: Family and friends are everything. Camping, traveling and going to any and every concert is right up my alley. Turner: What spare time? I sail, ski, write, read, study history, theater, music, cook, eat too much, email, budget, plan projects, take calls/text... Oh yeah, spare time.