

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.

David Pogach, CRFP

Above, clockwise: Pogach and his daughter at the Harry Potter Festival in Philadelphia; rising to the occasion when a vendor needed a hand; enjoying the Jersey Shore; Pogach hanging with Chief Wiggum; Pogach at a Harry Potter release party; another day at the ballpark cheering on the Phils.

Michael Anderson, CRFP

Clockwise from middle: Anderson on the field at Cowboys Stadium; Anderson and his wife on a night out; with his daughter, Makenna, on Father's Day; Anderson with his daughter after a tournament win; catching fish at Lake Twakoni.

Donnie Pemberton, CRFP

Above: Pemberton watching his sons' first KC Royals game; having drinks with Pizza Hut colleagues at Epcot during RFMA 2017; fun on the water with his two sons; enjoying a golf tournament with good friends; Pemberton and his wife take in a KC Royals baseball game; Pemberton enjoys wine tasting with his wife, Jovetta, in Napa, Calif.

Jonathan Cao, CRFP

From top: Cao and his cousins explore ancient mansions in the south of France; Cao and his niece hike through Banff National Park in Canada; Cao and friends celebrate New Year's Eve on Treasure Island in San Francisco; reconnecting with high school friends at a Halloween birthday event.

Congratulations to Our CRFPs

Michael Anderson, CRFP — Facilities Manager, Zoes Kitchen

Jonathan Cao, CRFP — Senior Facilities Coordinator, Black Angus Steakhouses

Donnie Pemberton, CRFP — National Facilities Manager, Hooters of America

David Pogach, CRFP — National Facilities Manager, The Capital Grille - Darden Restaurants

What do you enjoy most about your job? Anderson: Helping people solve problems. Cao: I enjoy the constant and fulfilling relationships I build with all of the store GMs, district managers and our supportive leadership team. Their experience, insight and encouragement helps me build confidence within my very impactful facilities role. Pemberton: I love the problem solving and having a new challenge every day. It is never dull. I also enjoy seeing and meeting new people around the country and growing relationships. Pogach: Finding new and different ways to help my operations partners solve their problems.

What other companies have you worked for prior to your current position? Anderson: Chipotle Mexican Grill. Cao: After graduating with a hospitality management degree, I honed my customer service and F&B skills through various hotels and country club management internships. But it was really my facilities roles at Gap Inc. and Facebook that steered me toward a unique and rewarding career in facilities management. Pemberton: I had two years as a facility manager for Pizza Hut Corp. and nine years with QSI Facilities. Pogach: I started working in the restaurant industry in the eighth grade, bussing tables at The Deli by Food-a-Rama in Philadelphia. I've also worked with Morrison Restaurants/Ruby Tuesday, Starbucks Coffee and Darden Restaurants - Longhorn Steakhouse. Now I'm back at Darden in The Capital Grille Division.

When you were new to the industry, what was the most surprising thing you learned about the restaurant world? Anderson: How important each piece of equipment is to a store. Cao: During my first round of store visits in my current role, I was really surprised by how the tenured store GMs are able to motivate their staff and provide countless high-quality guest experiences in our 30-year-old, aging buildings, while working with nearly original kitchen equipment. Fortunately, now with a renewed facilities leadership, we are upgrading and remodeling our restaurants. Pemberton: How many different challenges you face. You're not an expert on just a few things. There is no normal! Pogach: The razor-thin margins and how one mistake can affect profits for a whole month, quarter or year. This was beat into me at a young age working in an independent deli in Philly—from using the plastic spatula in a mayo gallon to fixing whatever you can yourself when feasible.

What is your all-time favorite movie? Anderson: "Apocalypse Now." Cao: "True Lies." Pemberton: Any sports movie. I love "The Sandlot," "Tin Cup," "Rudy," "Trouble with the Curve" and "Caddyshack"! Pogach: "The Godfather," "Rocky," "The Empire Strikes Back," "Better Off Dead," "Pink Floyd: The Wall," "Raiders of the Lost Ark," "Ferris Bueller's Day Off," "Rocky Horror Picture Show," "Guardians of the Galaxy 2" and so many more.

What is the most challenging situation you've ever faced in a facility or on the job? How did you handle it? Anderson: I had to replace a store's internal grease trap, which required the floor to be jack-hammered. This was on the bottom level of a three-story building that had apartments above it. There was a noise/work restriction ordinance after 10 p.m. Cao: My most challenging situation was the unexpected passing of my mentor and first director at Black Angus. During the same time, I had to take oversight and manage a 30-person corporate office move to Los Angeles. I was barely nine months on the job, and I had to quickly learn all of the facilities roles and support all requests from every direction during a very difficult transitional time. I believe I grew and learned the most here, both professionally and emotionally, to overcome many of these simultaneous challenges. Pemberton: Any unexpected store shutdown, from natural disasters to the unexpected. You have to slow down, take it one step at a time and do your best to help! Pogach: In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, multiple locations were without power for extended periods of time and had facilities issues that ranged from damaged roofs and windows to burst pipes. In assessing the issues, I used a triage mindset: Stop the bleeding and get to the next patient. Then after all had received initial care, I circled back to ensure that the bandage that was used didn't become the permanent fix.

What is your favorite work-related app? Anderson: I really like Waze. It's a big time saver for driving. Cao: Big Sky/ ServiceChannel. After working with stone-age technology, this facilities management platform has dramatically increased our productivity, communication and supporting abilities for all of our facilities' needs. Pemberton: My Navigation; I would be lost without it! I also use Excel to stay organized. Pogach: Onenote has become my organization tool for everything from work to kids' sports schedules.

What is the best advice you ever received? Anderson: Do it right the first time. Cao: My mother, who overcame three cancer episodes, once said, "If you stay positive during the most challenging times, you will find happiness and success without any regrets and doubts about your achievements." Pemberton: Discover the importance of making mistakes and learn from them. Pogach: Control what you can control, influence what you can influence and don't obsess on what you can't. (It's the third one I have struggled with.)

Who is the most impressive person you have ever met? Anderson: William Butler. I have never seen anyone in my life work smarter or harder to find a resolution on anything. Cao: My uncle is a retired United Nations diplomat who worked in many third-world countries to overcome civil war and ruthless leaders and help rebuild after major natural disasters. His dedication and high work ethic inspired me to achieve my goals and to stay positive against all odds. Pemberton: My dad, who taught me everything in life and to be the man I am today. Pogach: My brother Richard, who overcame more than anyone I know to achieve more in a shorter time than most do in decades; Bill Clinton, because he simply commands a room and left me awestruck; and Howard Shultz, a genuine servant leader who truly cares.

To what would you attribute your success in achieving your CRFP? Anderson: Determination, above all else. At the 2017 RFMA conference, I told myself in 2018 I would have my CRFP and walk across the stage. Cao: With some perseverance and constant guidance from my current facilities mentor, Casey Elliott, attaining my CRFP was a very rewarding experience for my career success. The topics were very applicable to the current challenges we face every day. Pemberton: Hard work and the desire to always learn more. Pogach: Put a date to all goals that you set for yourself. If you miss it, don't forget it; just reset it.

Would you recommend attaining a CRFP to other colleagues? Why? Anderson: Absolutely. The knowledge you gain while you are studying for the program and test alone is worth it. Cao: Absolutely. This certificate really gives a unique insight into the world of restaurant facilities, where we support the Heart-of- House staff in providing a high-quality hospitality experience. I also believe this designation displays true dedication and career sustainment in this industry. Pemberton: I would absolutely recommend the CRFP. It has given me tools and knowledge I use daily. Pogach: Yes. Although I have been in the industry in both operations and facilities for my entire career, the CRFP still had material that I was unfamiliar with. You don't know what you don't know.

What do you do for fun in your spare time? Anderson: I love to fish, watch my kids play ball and spend time with my family. Cao: Watching sports, hiking, being a whiskey connoisseur, searching for the best fish tacos, and traveling the world with friends and family. Pemberton: I love spending time with my family, watching baseball, swimming and enjoying outdoor activities. Pogach: Sundays in the fall are always spent with Da Birds, a.k.a., the Philadelphia Eagles. I have been going to the games since I could walk, and my family has had seats going back to Franklin Field. Taking my children to The Linc with stops for Pat's, Geno's or Tony Luke's on the way is a great day, whether they win or lose. I spend as much of my summers as possible with my toes in the sand at the beaches in Ventnor, N.J. For fitness and sanity, I have found that hitting bags and sometimes people in Thai boxing is a great stress reliever. While I have woken up looking at the ceiling lights a few times over the years, overall, it is fun.