



Unlock Tampa Bay with the latest news from Florida's hip, historic, urban tourism destination. With new hotels, amazing dining and thrilling attractions, the treasures of Tampa Bay are yours to discover! For more information and photography go to [VisitTampaBay.com](http://VisitTampaBay.com).

## **Visit Tampa Bay names 2016 Ambassador of the Year**

### ***Hotel Motel Association leader honored during National Tourism Week***

TAMPA, FL (May 4, 2016) – Bob Morrison, executive director of the Hillsborough County Hotel Motel Association, has been named Visit Tampa Bay's Gonzmart Family Ambassador of the Year. The honor was bestowed as Hillsborough County's tourism industry celebrated National Tourism Week on Tuesday at T Pepin's Hospitality Center in Tampa.

"It's our privilege to honor Bob Morrison for his efforts on behalf of Hillsborough County's booming tourism business," said Santiago Corrada, president and CEO of Visit Tampa Bay. "Bob's leadership and vision will help keep Tampa Bay growing as a key international tourism destination for many years to come."

The annual award honors a leader of Hillsborough County's tourism industry for their work on behalf of both the industry and the community at large. During the past year, Morrison has led Hillsborough County hoteliers in discussions about voluntarily taxing themselves to provide more money for marketing the destination.

The award was presented by Columbia Restaurant Group President Richard Gonzmart, who noted that he and Morrison have been friends since they played on the football team at Tampa's Jesuit High School more than 40 years ago.

Morrison said he knows industry people who eager to move to other sides where they can climb on the "bandwagon" of their tourism efforts. Here in Tampa Bay, "you get to build the bandwagon," Morrison said.

Visit Tampa Bay's National Tourism Week celebrations also included honoring seven front-line employees for their work to ensure visitors have a fun, happy and memorable experience in the destination.

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Visit Tampa Bay also awarded a scholarship to Aneel Shaikh, a college-bound high school senior who has completed his school's travel and tourism program.

The festivities also included a performance by dancers and stilt-walkers from Busch Gardens Tampa Bay.

Visit Tampa Bay will extend its National Tourism Week observance to June 24, when it hosts Tourism Gives Back, a day-long gathering of industry members focused on helping Feeding Tampa Bay create food packs for needy families. The event will be held at Amalie Arena.

**[Photos attached.]**

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## **About Visit Tampa Bay**

Visit Tampa Bay encourages adventurous travelers to unlock our destination's trove of unique treasures. We are a not-for-profit corporation that works with more than 750 partners to tell the world the story of our home – the hip, urban heart of the Gulf Coast of Florida.

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