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## Homewood Suites By Hilton New Orleans French Quarter Celebrates Grand Opening

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NEW ORLEANS—The new Homewood Suites by Hilton New Orleans French Quarter, located at 317 North Rampart Street, hosted its grand opening celebration earlier this month, introducing a bright, spacious and upscale, all-suite, extended-stay hotel to the New Orleans tourism landscape.



The opening was marked by the attendance of New Orleans Mayor, Mitch Landrieu and Global Head of Homewood Suites and Home2 Suites by Hilton Adrian Kurre, as well as executives of HRI Properties (HRI) and HRI Lodging (HRIL), Hilton Hotels & Resorts, the Industrial Development Board and Wells Fargo Bank. Palmisano Group was the general contractor for the project with HCI Design serving as architect of record.

"We are thrilled to celebrate the grand opening of this hotel in New Orleans. This area has been transformed – and this beautiful hotel now welcomes visitors to our great city in a first class and authentic manner," said Tom Leonhard, HRI Properties' President and CEO. "Where else in America can you experience a street car ride, tour a 300-year-old cemetery, step back into history with a stroll through the world class French Quarter, have a fabulous meal, listen to some jazz and then come back to a beautiful and quiet retreat offered here at the Homewood Suites? Only in New Orleans!"

The new Homewood Suites by Hilton New Orleans French Quarter offers a combination of stylish studio and one-bedroom suites, including 12 balcony suites, which feature fully equipped kitchens and separate living and sleeping areas. Guests are provided all of the essentials needed for a comfortable and convenient stay including a complimentary hot breakfast seven days a week, an evening social Monday through Thursday, fast and free Wi-Fi, and a grocery shopping service. The hotel also makes it easy for travelers to unwind with an outdoor space that includes a pool, kitchen and grill area, billiards room, putting green, 24-hour fitness center and concierge services. The hotel includes more than 1,500 square feet of flexible meeting space, with catering options for up to 75 guests.

With its proximity to Bienville Basin mixed-income community, a \$30.5 million Choice Neighborhood Grant project also redeveloped by HRI, the company and Urban Strategies partnered to present a pilot Hospitality Career Training Initiative, designed to provide hospitality training for former public housing residents to prepare them for a career in the hospitality industry. Five of the program participants were hired by Homewood Suites by Hilton New Orleans French Quarter.

"Working with our community and neighborhood is extremely important to us whether it's hiring area residents or supporting nearby charities," said General Manager Tony Welch. Two not-for-profit organizations were recognized at the opening: New Orleans' St. Jude Community Center and the Fore!Kids Foundation. Each received a \$2,000 donation, plus Fore!Kids received an additional \$1,000 as a result of votes by guests participating in a putting contest in the hotel's unique outdoor space.

After a brief ribbon cutting ceremony, guests of the grand opening were treated to tours of the hotel that included common areas, studio and one-bedroom suites, the hotel's unique pool deck and putting green and a "Southern comfort food" spread including miniature chicken and waffles, bacon grilled cheeses and barbecued chicken. In addition, guests commemorated the opening by posing for a souvenir photo with Homewood Suites' mascot, Lewis the Duck. Live music was provided by local band, Motel Radio.

The Homewood Suites by Hilton New Orleans French Quarter is located on the edge of New Orleans' Historic French Quarter, with its numerous restaurants, bars, art galleries, music venues, and shops. New Orleans' revitalized theater district is a short walk from the hotel. Expansion of the streetcar system on Rampart Street also provides connectivity to New Orleans' Central Business District, City Park, the Garden District, Tulane and Loyola Universities, the Union Passenger Terminal, The Louisiana Superdome and Smoothie King Center, the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, and Frenchmen Street.