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R.D. Olson Expands for Hotel Growth

By Bob Howard



Dickens

IRVINE, CA-R.D. Olson Development has named a director of private equity and a director of development for the locally based hotel developer's expanding list of projects throughout California and in bordering states. The new director of private equity is Jennifer Dickens, and the development director is Dave Smilgys.

Dickens has been hired to raise capital from the private sector for investment in R.D. Olson's project. She is a sales and marketing specialist with a long run of successes in investment endeavors, according to Olson. Before joining Olson, she held positions at KPMG, one of the world's largest professional services firms, and Merrill Corp., a global financial document service provider.

R.D. Olson Development CEO, Robert Olson, notes that the appointments of Dickens and Smilgys come at a time when the firm has enjoyed steady growth, particularly within the past four years, when it has increased its hotel holdings throughout California and neighboring states.



Smilgys

Smilgys, an industry veteran whose work in construction and development began more than 25 years ago, will manage Olson's portfolio of hotel projects. He will collaborate with architects to craft new concepts for hotels and resorts and also will lead production teams and oversee construction.

Smilgys is known within building circles for his management of large, complex projects. His career includes representing Disneyland Resort on managing the construction of such developments as Disney's California Adventure Paradise Pier, consisting of eight attractions, six restaurants, four merchandise facilities and other structures. He also managed the construction of the Savemart Center, a 15,000-seat arena for Fresno State University, and oversaw construction of the USC Galen Center. Before joining R.D. Olson, Smilgys worked for Clark Construction as senior project manager for six years.

The projects that Olson has under way include a \$67-million Marriott Renaissance ClubSport in Aliso Viejo that will be a combined 174-room full-service Marriott Renaissance Hotel brand and a 70,000-sf fitness center. Most recently the company completed two California signature projects: a five-story 166 extended-stay suite Burbank Marriott Residence Inn, and Marriott's newest prototype, a four-story 125-suite Residence Inn by Marriott in Oceanside.

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