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WARWICK

Hilton Garden Inn honored

Hotel rated best out of more than 550 hotels worldwide

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WARWICK — Local and state officials visited the Hilton Garden Inn Wednesday to applaud the job being done by the hotel, which boasts one of the highest occupancy rates in the state and recently bested more than 550 worldwide hotels in the Hilton Garden chain to win top company awards.

John "J.R." Pagliarini, chief of staff for the state Economic Development Corporation, said that the hotel's success and recent corporate honors are a tribute to the management and staff "for making the Hilton Garden Inn a top-notch addition to Rhode Island's hospitality industry."

The 160-room hotel opened in a former industrial area on Jefferson Boulevard eight years ago. It is adjacent to the Iron Works Tavern, which brought new

life to the old brick building that once housed the offices for the Rhode Island Malleable Iron Works.

Developer Joe Piscopio said he picked the location because of its proximity to the airport and the train station linked to the airport (which was not yet built when the hotel and restaurant opened). Piscopio has also said that, in addition to the lure of transportation, he was interested because of the city's plan to revitalize the area.

On Thursday Mayor Scott Avedisian praised not only the hotel, but Piscopio's faith in the city's vision. The hotel and restaurant are "the first projects completed in the Warwick Station Development District," he said, "and examples of the area's potential for reuse and transformation."

Besting Hilton Garden Inns from around the globe, the Warwick hotel earned several top awards from the Hilton chain, including general manager of the year for manager Kevin Buchanan

who has run the hotel since it opened.

Giving credit to his staff, he said the Warwick hotel has an average annual occupancy rate of about 70 percent.

The state average last year, according to a report by the Rhode Island Tourism Division was about 47 percent.

Local officials said that Warwick, with its proximity to the airport and now commuter rail, has an average occupancy rate of about 65 percent for its hotels.

The regional average for New England is 48 percent.

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