

FACES OF THE FRONT

Wyatt Cardwell

Manager, Courtyard by Marriott

The Wow Factor

Wyatt Cardwell needs just one word to sum up his reaction to his first Capitol Riverfront visit in 15 years. “Wow.”

The manager of the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel at L Street and New Jersey Avenue, SE, says he has been both stunned and excited by the transformation of what he calls “this city within the city.”

“I was in total awe of what is already here and what is going to be here in the future,” says the 20-year Marriott employee, who until recently managed the hotel chain’s BWI property. “It is really something special.”

From Cardwell’s perspective, the hotel and the Front are perfectly matched. Guests love the neighborhood movie nights, the parks, and the friendly greeters at the Metro station who provide a smile and advice on how to get around the District. In return, residents enjoy the hotel’s bar and an outdoor seating venue that has become a popular neighborhood hangout.

Outsiders contribute to the neighborhood’s vitality as well. While business travelers are the hotel’s bread and butter, Cardwell says he is seeing a spike in leisure travelers, with August numbers beating all expectations. A strategic location just five stops from the Convention Center coupled with competitive pricing is drawing tourists – and legions of Phillies, Red Sox and Mets fans who have discovered the Front’s convenience and value.

Professionally, Cardwell delights in The Front’s opportunity for growth. Personally, he savors a much shorter commute from suburban Maryland and the contagious energy that accompanies Riverfront change.

“You can feel the vibrancy. You can feel the transition coming. Who wouldn’t want to be in the midst of this transition and all of its opportunity?” Cardwell raves. “It’s just awesome.”

