

# Member Update

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By Tony Burton • Jan 26, 2026

Smart Brevity® count: 3 mins...860 words

## In today's January 26, 2026 Update:

- **Immigration Resources Available:** Stay Proactive During Immigration Operations
- **Congratulations Are In Order:** Minnesotan Operators Highlighted as [2026 James Beard Awards Semifinalists](#)
- **New Guidance on Break Laws:** Stay In Compliance
- **2026 Advocacy Opportunities:** [Registration Now Live](#) for 2026 Advocacy Opportunities
- **Tell Us Your Story:** [Share Your Paid Leave Experience](#)
- **Minnesota STR Data - December 2025 Summary:** Log Into [Member Portal](#) for More Insights
- **ServSafe Offerings:** Find A Class Near You
- **In the News**

Is your organization interested in sponsorship? [Email us](#) to learn more.

## ICE Operations in Minnesota: Potential Pro-Bono Resources Available



**The big picture:** Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operations continue to be active in Minnesota, creating significant uncertainty and concern for hospitality employers and their teams.

- **New resource opportunity:** Mitchell Hamline's Business Law Clinic may be able to offer restaurants pro bono legal assistance with issues presented by ICE's ongoing deployment in the Twin Cities area (I-9 self audits, for instance). Please inquire with [Professor Davis Sensemam](#) and they'll be able to let you know if the Clinic can assist.

[Browse Our Resources](#)

## Congratulations to Minnesota's 2026 James Beard Award Semifinalists!

### JAMES BEARD FOUNDATION 2025 JAMES BEARD AWARD SEMIFINALISTS MINNESOTA

#### NATIONAL CATEGORIES

- **OUTSTANDING RESTAURATEUR:** Mike Brown, Bob Gerken, and James Winberg, [Travail Collective](#) (*Travail Kitchen & Amusements, Dream Creamery, etc.*, [Robbinsdale](#))

#### OUTSTANDING CHEF

- Ann Ahmed, [Kháluna](#), [Minneapolis](#)

- Alex Roberts, [Alma](#), [Minneapolis](#)

#### OUTSTANDING RESTAURANT

- [Bar La Grassa](#), [Minneapolis](#)

#### EMERGING CHEF

- Kyle Lussier, [The Pines](#), [Grand Rapids](#)

#### OUTSTANDING HOSPITALITY

- [Joan's in the Park](#), [St. Paul](#)

#### REGIONAL CATEGORIES

##### BEST CHEF MIDWEST

- Shigeyuki Furukawa, [Kado no Mise](#), [Minneapolis](#)

- Diane Moua, [Diane's Place](#), [Minneapolis](#)

- Gustavo Romero and Kate Romero, [Oro by Nixta](#), [Minneapolis](#)

- Yia Vang, [Vinai MN](#)

CONGRATULATIONS FROM HOSPITALITY MINNESOTA!

**In case you missed it:** Last week, the [James Beard Foundation](#) released the list of 2026 James Beard Award semifinalists.

- **Why it matters:** As our hospitality operators struggle to find reason to celebrate in this time of uncertainty, this strong showing in the semifinalist round of this year's James Beard Awards is [an unmistakable nod to our industry's determination, excellence, and resilience](#). Join us in congratulating Minnesota's semifinalists!

#### NATIONAL SEMIFINALISTS

##### Outstanding Restaurateur:

- Mike Brown, Bob Gerken, and James Winberg of [Travail Collective](#) (*Travail Kitchen and Amusements, Dream Creamery*)

##### Outstanding Chef:

- Ann Ahmed, [Kháluna](#)

- Alex Roberts, [Alma: Cafe, Hotel & Restaurant](#)

##### Outstanding Restaurant:

- [Bar La Grassa](#)

##### Emerging Chef:

- Kyle Lussier, [The Pines](#), [Grand Rapids](#)

##### Outstanding Hospitality:

- [Joan's in the Park](#)

#### REGIONAL SEMIFINALISTS

##### Best Chef Midwest:

- Shigeyuki Furukawa, [Kado no Mise](#)

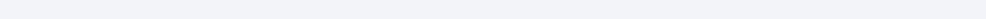
- Diane Moua, [Diane's Place](#)

- Gustavo Romero and Kate Romero, [Oro by Nixta](#)

- Yia Vang, [Vinai MN](#)

[Read the Announcement](#)

## Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) Offers Updated Guidance for Work Breaks



**DLI Guidance available:** Operators with questions about the new Work Break and Rest Periods DLI has created [this page](#) as first stop to find general guidance and answers.

**Take a look!** Contact [Ryan](#) if want to talk through follow up questions that are unique to your business.

[Access DLI Guidance](#)

## REGISTER NOW for All Key 2026 Advocacy Opportunities



**Attention advocates:** As of today, registrations for all three of our key 2026 advocacy opportunities are LIVE.

- **ALL MINNESOTA OPERATORS:** [2026 Day at the Capitol](#) | April 8, 2026 in Saint Paul

- **RESTAURANT OPERATORS:** [Restaurants Act Public Affairs Conference](#) | March 10-12, 2026 in Washington D.C.

- **lodging OPERATORS:** [Hotels on the Hill](#) | May 12-13, 2026 in Washington D.C.

#### Market Highlights:

- **Bloomington** led the state with a 55.0% occupancy rate and a RevPAR of \$69.54.

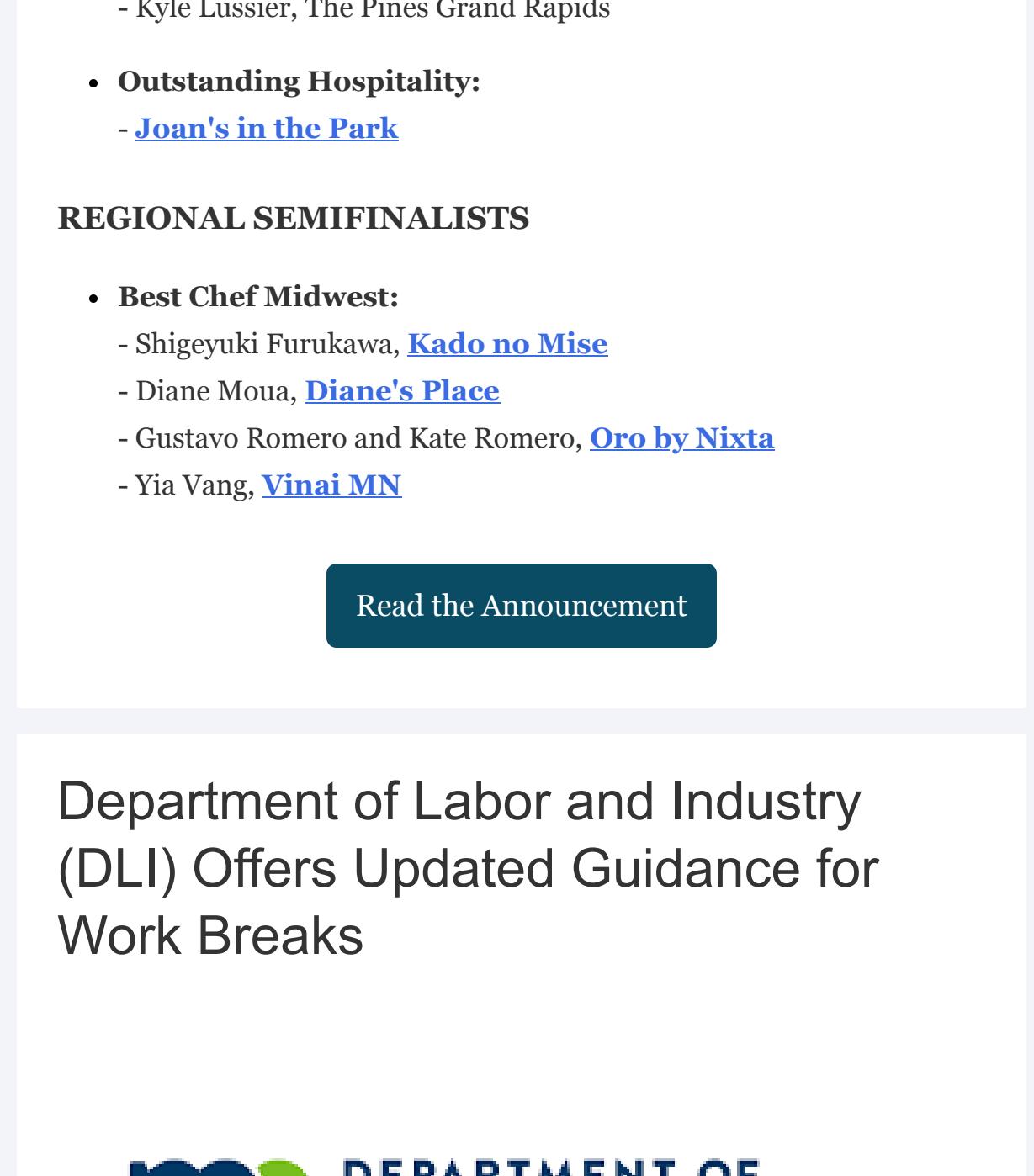
- **Duluth** commanded the highest Average Daily Rate (ADR) in the state at \$151.52.

- **Rochester** saw a significant jump in occupancy, reaching 50.9% compared to 44.9% last December.

- **Minneapolis - St. Paul** markets remained steady, with Minneapolis at 46.3% occupancy and St. Paul at 46.3%.

[Share Your Experience](#)

## December 2025 Lodging Performance Update



December data is in: Minnesota's lodging industry showed resilient year-over-year growth this past December.

**By the numbers:** Statewide occupancy rose to 44.3%, up from 43.2% in December 2024. Revenue per available room (RevPAR) also saw a healthy climb to \$53.67, compared to \$52.29 the previous year.

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[Read the Announcement](#)

## ServSafe Classes Near You



**Did you know?** Minnesota law requires establishment certified food manager to staff at nearly every food establishment, certified food manager to staff at nearly every food establishment, certified food manager to staff at nearly every food establishment.

**Check our Event Calendar** for upcoming ServSafe classes!

- **Mankato - January 27**

- **Minneapolis - January 27**

- **Minneapolis - January 28**

- **St. Paul - January 28**

- **Wabasha - January 28**

- **Wabasha - January 29**

- **Wabasha - January 29**
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