

For 35 years, Logan Hotel doorman has had a window into Philly | We the People

Updated: FEBRUARY 28, 2018 — 5:00 AM EST



Anthony Rodriguez’s favorite part of The Logan, one of Philadelphia’s finest luxury hotels, is the front door. It’s not a particularly fancy door or a beautiful one, but it is his door.

For 35 years and through every season — including the three decades [when the hotel was the Four Seasons](#) — Rodriguez, the hotel’s doorman, has stood watch at its entrance, greeting guests and passersby as if they were his old pals from Spanish Harlem in New York City, where he grew up. “Good morning, my friend! Good morning, my lady!” he says with a smile that’s as sweet and pure as real maple syrup.

Between greetings, Rodriguez, 58, rushes to open taxi doors and park guests’ cars quickly and tightly in a game of automotive [Tetris](#) while [Nelly’s “Ride Wit Me”](#) plays over the outdoor sound system at the hotel on Logan Square. Rodriguez, whose father died in the Vietnam War, moved to Philly from New York City when he was 18. He had an aunt here and wanted to live where life was “a little more cozy” and the skyline was a little less cluttered by high rises.

He worked a few jobs, including in the shipping department at [John Wanamaker](#), before landing a position at the Four Seasons in 1983, prior to its opening. Rodriguez had applied for a job in engineering or housekeeping, but the hotel’s hiring manager must have seen his sparkling personality. She asked whether he would like to work as a doorman, instead. The manager told him to try being a doorman for a month and if he didn’t like it, he could have another position in the hotel. Now, 35 years later, Rodriguez is still at the door because it has two things he loves: people and the outdoors.

“It’s always changing. There’s always different people coming by and I might have a bad moment with you, but two seconds later I’ll have a good moment with them,” he said. “No matter how miserable you might be, I’m going to smile at you.” And Rodriguez smiles unabashedly despite waking up at 3:45 a.m. every day to drive 80 minutes into work from his home in Mohnton, which is just south of Reading in Berks County.

Living that far outside the city allows Rodriguez’s wife to stay at home with their 10-year-old twin girls, one of whom has Down syndrome, and their 8-year-old son, who also has Down syndrome. Despite his long commute, his wife has the more difficult job, Rodriguez said. “When you have kids with special needs, you have to put the time into it,” he said. “I couldn’t do what she does.”

When it comes to his own job, Rodriguez said he couldn’t disclose the names of celebrities or athletes he’s served while working the hotel’s door, but he did say he’s been present for many of the major events along the

Parkway, including [the Eagles' Super Bowl parade](#). "It was fantastic, the city did great," he said. "It was a beautiful thing to see." For the last 35 years, Rodriguez has also had a front-row seat to the transformation of Center City.

"All these buildings that you see along the side of the Parkway, on Cherry Street and Arch, weren't there when I started. There were three-story row homes and little shops, nothing was built up," he said. "It's been amazing to watch." Two weeks ago, Rodriguez learned he had been selected from thousands of workers nationwide as employee of the year for [Sage Hospitality](#), the group that manages the Logan and more than 75 other hotels. On Monday, the company flew Rodriguez to Denver for a banquet and award ceremony.

For once, he got to be the hotel guest instead of the doorman.

Why Philadelphia?

"I actually had family here and liked the city. So I just moved out here and never left."

What's been a classic Philly moment for you?

"The Eagles parade. The championship parade was fantastic. The crowd was great. It was exciting to be part of it. I was actually glad to work that day."

If you had a wish for the city, what would it be?

"To fix up Penn's Landing. ... The city can do so much with that waterfront. What they've done now is just the beginning. They can go all the way. The city will just shine ever more."