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**ALOFT CHARLOTTE BALLANTYNE EARNS COVETED  
LEED CERTIFICATION FROM USGBC**

*Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne Becomes Tenth LEED-Certified Property  
for Industry Leader Starwood Hotels and Resorts*

<http://www.aloft-hotels.com/charlotteballantyne>

**White Plains, NY, September 29, 2010** – Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne has earned a coveted Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification from the United States Green Building Council (USGBC), it was announced today. Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne becomes the tenth LEED-certified property for parent Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. (NYSE: HOT), which leads the industry in green-building initiatives.

Set along the grassy greens of The Golf Club at Ballantyne in an upscale lifestyle community, Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne is just steps from chic shops and Ballantyne Corporate Park – and a quick trip to downtown. Created to shake up the staid, traditional select service segment of the hotel industry, Aloft Hotels delivers style at a steal, with urban-influenced, modern, open and vibrant design – and a social guest experience – all at an affordable price point. In the same way that W Hotels broke through the clutter of conformity in the upscale hotel arena a decade ago, Aloft is shaking up the industry for the next generation of traveler.

LEED certification verifies that Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne has achieved significant enhancements in energy efficiency, water conservation, and green cleaning, and has proven dedication to responsible sustainable practices in operations, maintenance, and upgrades.

The property, opened in October of 2009, has earned raves from travelers, on TripAdvisor.com: “What a wonderful surprise in one of Charlotte’s most beautiful communities,” one reviewer applauded. “Once you arrive, you’re taken back by all the modern amenities... A refreshing break from your average beige walls & wall to wall carpet.”

Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne joins a growing list of eco-conscious, LEED-certified buildings in Charlotte, including the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Library’s ImaginOn children’s theater and Hickory Grove library branch, as well as Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities’ operations center.

“For both guests and our neighbors in Charlotte, we know that staying green is a priority, and we’re very proud that Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne achieved the high standards of the US Green Building Council to earn its LEED certification,” said Brian McGuinness, Senior Vice President of Specialty Select Brands for Starwood. “It’s gratifying for us that guests can have an Aloft experience and know they’re helping reduce waste and conserve resources.”

Joe Hallow, President of Starwood’s Charlotte partner, Bissell Hotels, which owns and operates Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne, agreed. “All of us at Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne are very proud of this certification, and we will stay committed to further developing sustainable practices as we provide the best possible guest experience,” he said.

Bissell Development, oversaw the construction of Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne. “In keeping with all of our new building within Ballantyne Corporate Park, we are dedicated to offering the best environment, and the construction of LEED certified buildings demonstrates this commitment,” said Clifton Coble, President of Bissell Development.

To achieve its LEED certification, Aloft Charlotte Ballantyne partnered with local firms, including construction partner Cox & Schepp and architecture firm LS3P Associates, and local subcontractors such as PowerWorks Electric, P.C. Jackson, and commercial flooring leader Garmon & Company.

LEED is a point based system where building projects earn LEED points for satisfying specific green building criteria. By using less energy and sustainable products, LEED-certified buildings reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to a healthier environment for residents, workers and the larger community.

Aloft’s parent, Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc., is an industry leader in green building initiatives. Starwood made history in 2008 when it launched Element Hotels, Starwood’s green trailblazer and the first major hotel brand to mandate that all U.S. properties pursue LEED certification. Starwood’s W Hotel San Francisco recently became the first hotel owned by a major brand to receive Silver LEED certification for an existing building from the USGBC. Across its entire portfolio, Starwood is rolling out initiatives that aim to conserve energy and water, reduce waste and enhance indoor environmental quality for Starwood guests and associates alike.

### **About Aloft Hotels**

Aloft hotels are geared toward savvy, design-conscious consumers who grew up with the democratization of design. With 40 hotels open in the 18 months since Aloft first arrived on the scene and 10 more opening in 2010, Aloft can be found everywhere from Abu Dhabi and Baltimore to Dallas and Beijing and everywhere in between. For more information, please visit [www.alofthotels.com](http://www.alofthotels.com).

Guests at Aloft can earn free nights at any Starwood Hotels & Resorts property – the world’s most sought-after collection of hotels – through the Preferred Guest program. To learn more, visit [www.spg.com](http://www.spg.com).

### **About Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc.**

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. is one of the leading hotel and leisure companies in the world with 1,000 properties in nearly 100 countries and territories with 145,000 employees at its owned and managed properties. Starwood Hotels is a fully integrated owner, operator and franchisor of hotels, resorts and residences with the following internationally renowned brands: St. Regis®, The Luxury Collection®, W®, Westin®, Le Méridien®, Sheraton®, Four Points® by Sheraton, and the recently launched Aloft®, and Element<sup>SM</sup>. Starwood Hotels also owns Starwood Vacation Ownership, Inc., one of the premier developers and operators of high quality vacation interval ownership resorts. For more information, please visit [www.starwoodhotels.com](http://www.starwoodhotels.com).

### **About Bissell Hotels**

Bissell Hotels is a subsidiary of The Bissell Family of Companies, owned by Smoky Bissell.

Bissell Hotels owns and operates multiple hotels in the Charlotte area. The Forbes Four-Star, AAA Four-Diamond Ballantyne Hotel & Lodge is the company's flagship property. For more information, please contact Christina Thigpen at 704-248-2010 or visit the website at [www.bissell-companies.com](http://www.bissell-companies.com).

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