



## **RICHARD C. KESSLER**

### **Chairman and CEO**

Combining an entrepreneurial business sense with creative energy and dedication to purpose, Richard C. Kessler is a visionary, entrepreneur, astute businessman and philanthropist. Richard was born in Savannah, Georgia and lived his early years in nearby Effingham County. Richard earned his bachelor and master degrees at Georgia Tech. He received an honorary Ph.D. from Valparaiso University and Newberry College. Born in Savannah, Georgia and reared in Effingham County, Richard has received the Effingham County Honored Treutlen Award for Outstanding Leadership, the distinguished Alumnus Award at Georgia Tech, and the Dean's Medal for singular commitment and contribution to the Candler School of Theology at Emory University. During his 41 years in the field of hotel development and operations, including nine as President and Chairman of Days Inns of America and 27 as President and CEO of The Kessler Enterprise, Inc., Kessler has become a nationally recognized industry leader. Having served seven years on the Industry Advisory Council of the American Hotel and Motel Association, he has helped to develop outstanding hospitality practices nationwide. His hotel company is known as The Kessler Collection, a portfolio of ten boutique three and four star quality properties located in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Colorado and New Mexico.

Kessler is a consummate supporter and leader of worthy causes. He has served as Chairman of the Board for Lutheran Brotherhood (a Fortune 500, thirty billion dollar Minneapolis-based financial services organization), founder and Chairman of the New Ebenezer Conference and Retreat Center, founder and board member of Treutlen House for children, and founder and sustainer of The Kessler Reformation Collection at Emory University's Pitts Theological Library. Kessler has also sponsored six scholarship programs. In 2000, Kessler was awarded the Florida Master Entrepreneur of the Year by Ernst & Young. His personal interests include art, music and outdoor recreation.

The following more clearly defines the Chairman and CEO of The Kessler Enterprise, Inc.

## FACT SHEET

### *Richard C. Kessler, The Kessler Enterprise, Inc.*

**Richard C. Kessler:** Visionary entrepreneur, trailblazer in the field of hotel development and operations, active church leader, creative philanthropist, and impassioned collector of art and antiques.

Currently Chairman and CEO, The Kessler Enterprise, Inc.  
Former Chairman, President and CEO, Days Inn of America, Inc.  
Former Chairman of Lutheran Brotherhood

#### **The**

**Kessler Enterprise:** Founded in 1984, The Kessler Enterprise is comprised of several wholly owned subsidiaries consisting of development and operational companies. Some of these projects include **The Kessler Collection** – a portfolio of uniquely themed hotels and resorts, the 500-acre Silverwood Plantation residential community, the 1,000-acre Georgia North International Industrial Park, and commercial land developments.

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#### **Kessler Collection Hotels**

##### **Owned and Operated:**

Kessler's hotel operating company currently owns and operates:

- Holiday Inn Resort Orlando, The Castle** – International Drive, Orlando, FL  
Three plus start hotel, opened June 1995.
- Bohemian Hotel Celebration**, Celebration, FL (near Orlando) - Four star hotel and restaurant opened September 1999.
- Casa Monica Hotel**, St. Augustine, FL – Four star hotel and restaurant opened December 1999.
- Grand Bohemian Hotel Orlando**, Orlando, FL - Four star hotel and restaurant opened May 2001
- Beaver Creek Lodge**, Beaver Creek, CO - Four star condominium hotel opened December 2004
- Mansion on Forsyth Park**, Savannah, GA - Four star luxury hotel and restaurant opened April 2005
- El Monte Sagrado**, Taos, NM - Four star hotel and restaurant with addition opened October 2007
- Grand Bohemian Hotel Asheville**, Asheville, NC – Four star hotel and restaurant opened April 2009
- Bohemian Hotel Savannah Riverfront**, Savannah, GA – Four star hotel and restaurant opened July 2009
- Kessler Canyon**, DeBeque, CO – A wildlife retreat with luxuriously designed facilities set in 23,000 pristine acres opened September 2007
- Columbia Place**, Savannah, GA – A luxury condominium residential development in historic Savannah opened June 2007

***Rocks Modern Grill***, Beaver Creek, CO - Prototype restaurant opened in December 2004

***Forsyth Park Café*** – Opened February, 2010 in Savannah, GA Forsyth Park

**Future  
Developments:**

***Grand Bohemian Atlanta*** / Atlanta, GA

***Grand Bohemian Hotel*** St. Petersburg, FL

**Past  
Developments:**

***Days Inn Resort & Suites / Sheraton Safari Resort***, Orlando, FL – Developed as a themed hotel in 1995; sold December 1996

***Sheraton Studio City Hotel***, Orlando, FL – Renovated and opened June 1999; sold August 2007

***Kehoe House Bed & Breakfast***, Savannah, GA – Renovated and opened October 2003; sold June 2007

**The Kessler  
Collection:**

Kessler's original concept, The *Kessler* Collection, is a company engaged in the business of owning, operating and creating hotels, each with its own unique theme. The *Kessler* Collection shares a common commitment to thematic detailed design and a high level of guest service that provides an outstanding hospitality experience. All of the hotels benefit from The *Kessler* Collection marketing program, central reservation system and national sales, public relations offices, and technical services.

In April 2010, Kessler's four star hotels launched Marriott Hotels iconic brand know as The Autograph Collection which provides marketing and reservation services.

***A Diversified Entrepreneur:***

**Silverwood  
Plantation:**

A private, security-gated, 275-home community developed by The Kessler Enterprise in 1987, Silverwood Plantation was built around two lakes in Effingham County, just a short drive from Savannah's Historic District. The community includes an elegantly furnished clubhouse with fully equipped exercise room, sauna and tennis courts. There is also a gazebo, children's playground and playing field. The commercial area includes a well-designed shopping center with several commercial sites.

**Georgia North  
International  
Industrial Park:**

Developed by The Kessler Enterprise in 1988, the Georgia North International Industrial Park is a planned, mixed-use development with commercial and industrial zoning, 40 miles northwest of Atlanta and the Interstate 285 loop. Opened in 1987, the 1,000-acre park has been developed to the highest standards with a complete infrastructure including underground utilities, landscaped boulevards and a 30-acre lake. The park's center is marked by a thirty-foot original sculpture.

## ***An Interesting Personal History:***

- Birthplace:** Savannah, Georgia on May 28, 1946
- Heritage:** Kessler is descended from the Salzburgers, a group of Lutherans from Bavaria who came to America in 1732 seeking religious freedom.
- Education:** Bachelor and master degrees in Industrial Engineering/Operations Research from Georgia Institute of Technology
- Family:** Kessler is married to Martha Jane Wilson of Durham, N.C. Martha received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Agnes Scott College and a Master of Arts from Rollins College. The couple have two grown children, Mark and Laura, and three grandchildren. Mark graduated from Southern Methodist University with a degree in International Business and earned his Master's Degree in Hotel Administration from Cornell University. Laura graduated from Cornell University School of Hotel Administration, and she earned a MBA from Emory University.
- Early Career:** At the age of 23, Kessler became the right hand to real estate developer Cecil Day and help found Days Inn of America in August 1970. From 1972 to 1975, Kessler founded and led five real estate development and operational companies. In May 1975, at age 29, Kessler became President and CEO of Days Inns, and one year later, Chairman. The chain was sold in 1984 and Kessler began his own independent ventures.

## ***Prominent Philanthropic Endeavors:***

### **New Ebenezer Retreat & Conference Center:**

Kessler is the Founder and Chairman of the New Ebenezer Retreat and Conference Center in New Ebenezer, Ga. Founded in 1736, the township of New Ebenezer was settled by a group of Lutheran Salzburgers seeking a new beginning and a place of religious freedom. Much of the town was destroyed by the British during the Revolutionary War and later by Union soldiers in the Civil War. In 1972 Kessler spearheaded efforts to rebuild the essence of the town. New Ebenezer, has been reconstructed to resemble the original 1700's township, and today the center provides wholesome recreation and an opportunities for family togetherness in an upspoiled environment along the banks of the Savannah River. The new Ebenezer Retreat and Conference Center offers restful accommodations for 175 people and space for group meetings of up to 400 people opening summer of 1976. Guests can enjoy a wide variety of outdoor activities including tennis, swimming, canoeing, volleyball, basketball, and hiking. Kessler continues as Chairman some thirty years later. Some 25,000 people of all ages visit the retreat center each year. New Ebenezer website is [www.newebenezer.org](http://www.newebenezer.org).

**Treutlen House at  
New Ebenezer:**

Kessler spearheaded the founding of the Treutlen House at New Ebenezer in New Ebenezer, Georgia, 20 miles north of Savannah, Georgia. Opened in 2000 at the site of the first organized orphanage in America, Treutlen House provides care, housing, support, and guidance to abused children. Initially, the program's live-in facility houses 10 children with a long-range vision extending to serving many more boys and girls. Treutlen House website is [www.treutlenhouse.org](http://www.treutlenhouse.org).

**Kessler New  
Ebenezer Trust:**

Kessler established the Kessler New Ebenezer Trust in 1984 with funds in excess of \$1 million. The trust continues to support the conference center, the Treutlen House, its programming and related activities. Kessler serves as Chairman.

**Georgia Tech  
Plaza / The  
Kessler Campanile:**

In the early 90's, Kessler led the committee effort which designed and created the now prominent "Tech Plaza" in the heart of Georgia Tech's campus. He then commissioned the Kessler Campanile, a \$450,000 carillon created by Atlanta artist Richard Hill. The 80', stainless steel high tech tower is position in a 100" diameter fountain and an assortment of 100 different songs chime on the quarter hour.

During the 1996 Olympics, the set of NBC's "Today Show" was centered directly in front of the Campanile, providing international exposure. Today, the Kessler Campanile is used by Georgia Tech as their 21<sup>st</sup> Century Logo.

**The Kessler  
Reformation  
Collection:**

Pitts Theology Library, on the campus of Atlanta's Emory University, is the second-largest theological library in the United States with nearly 90,000 books in the rare book collection alone. Kessler chairs the Committee for the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection, an assembly of over 3,500 pieces of rare works, all dating pre-1570. Kessler founded the collection in November, 1987, and funded its growth in partnership with Emory University. Considered a national treasure, the collection boasts many one-of-a-kind pieces and is a valuable resource for churches and religious scholars. It holds the largest collection in the U.S. of 1,000 pieces of original writings of Martin Luther. The Kessler Reformation Collection website is [www.pitts.emory.edu/collections/kessler.cfm](http://www.pitts.emory.edu/collections/kessler.cfm).

**Awards &  
Activities:**

Florida Ernst & Young "Master Entrepreneur of the Year" Award, 2000  
Developers & Builders Alliance, "Developer of the Year" Award, 2006  
Honorary Ph.D., Newberry College  
Honorary Ph.D., Valparaiso University  
Effingham County's Treutlen Award for Outstanding Leadership  
Board of Directors, Concordia Language Village, 1996-2001  
Board of Directors, Lutheran Brotherhood – 1990 through 2001  
Chairman of the Board, Lutheran Brotherhood – 2000 through 2001  
Board of Directors, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, 2001 – 2005

**Awards &  
Activities (cont):**

New Ebenezer Christian Family Retreat and Conference Center  
Founder, Chairman of the Board, 35 years  
Founder, Chairman of Kessler New Ebenezer Trust Fund  
Youngest CEO of a major lodging chain, 1982  
Member, World Presidents' Organization  
Member, Young Presidents' Organization  
Member, Leadership Atlanta  
Member, Leadership Georgia  
Member, Leadership Florida  
International Business Fellow, 1994  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Donor, The Kessler Campanile  
Member, Industrial and Systems Engineering Advisory Board  
1982-85  
Academy of Distinguished Engineering Alumni, 1996  
Emory University  
Founder and Chairman, Reformation Collection, Pitts Theology Library  
Recipient of Dean's Medal for singular commitment and contribution  
Past Member, Committee of 100, Candler School of Theology  
Past Member, Emory Board of Visitors  
Oglethorpe University Board of Visitors, 1975-80  
President, Georgia Salzburger Society, 4 years  
Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Chairman, Long-term Strategy, Planning & Building Committee, 1993-  
1995  
Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary  
Member, Board of Directors, 7 years  
Recipient of President's Award for Leadership, 1994  
Past-Chairman, Long Range Planning Committee, 3 years  
Past-Chairman, Advisory Committee, Lutheran Theological Center of Atlanta  
Member, Bishop's Advisory Cabinet, Southeast Synod, Evangelical Lutheran  
Church of America  
Initiator, Founding Board member of Treutlen House at New Ebenezer for  
abused and neglected children  
Dr. Phillips Performing Arts Center, Board of Directors, 2007 - 2011

**Kessler  
Scholarships:**

The Kessler family has established the following scholarships for outstanding professionals and students:

Excellence in Teaching Award – PACE Academy, Atlanta, GA  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
4-H Club Leadership Award  
Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary  
University of Central Florida School of Hospitality  
Excellence in Teaching Art & Music, Orange County, FL