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PEOPLE: Caterer to head restaurant group

The New Jersey Restaurant Association announced that Jimmy Thornton, director of catering at The Grand Summit Hotel/Hunt Club Grill in Summit, Union County, has been named 2009 chairman of the board & association. Thornton previously served as vice president.

Thornton learned the restaurant industry from his parents, who owned several businesses in South Africa. He has worked at a variety of restaurants and hotels in South Africa, England and the United States. He will implement an NJRA "Table Talk" series in all of the state's 21 counties, where restaurant owners and policymakers will have the opportunity to discuss legislative, economic and restaurant topics.

A resident of East Brunswick, Thornton is married and the father of two children.
