Students from all over the world choose Sullivan University!

Vietnamese doctor values education he receives from culinary program

Jordan Dao is working at Winston's, Sullivan's on-campus restaurant, while he attends Sullivan. Born in Bolivia, Jordan grew up in a country with many political problems and hardships. “I decided to work on cruise ships because it was one of the ways to get out of Bulgaria and seek opportunities for a better life,” Jordan stated. “My other reason was to gain experience, travel and communicate with different people.”

After three years on the cruise ships, a family Jordan knew in Bulgaria became his sponsor, and he was able to return to Louisville.

“They helped me start my education at Sullivan University. My field of study is Business Accounting. I am currently enrolled in the Bachelor’s degree program and anticipate graduating in March. Then, I will enter Sullivan’s Graduate School to earn a Master’s degree.

“My advice to any current Sullivan student, or a prospective student, is to realize that education is one of the most important driving forces in our lives.”

“I believe that my destiny was to come here which makes me feel that I am in the best place.”

Bulgarian student “is in the best place”

First international students are working in Scotland

For the first time in its history, Sullivan’s National Center for Hospitality Studies has sent students overseas for an international internship. Five students from the Hotel-Restaurant Management program spent the entire Summer Quarter working in three different hotels in Stirling, Scotland.

“We were thrilled that this opportunity came together so quickly,” said Kerry Sommerville, Department Chair of the Hospitality Studies program. “Our interns have apparently taken these hotels by storm, really impressing the managers with their skills and their solid work ethic.”

The students work 40 hours per week as well as taking a full-time load of Sullivan University on line courses. The interns live in dormitory-style housing on Stirling University’s campus where they have library privileges as well as computer passwords from Sullivan so that they can maintain their required coursework.

Interns are working in different capacities

Two interns, Todd Stoesz and Tim Keilanger, are working at the Stirling University Conference Center in front-of-the-house positions; another, Owen Powell, is working with the Sous Chef at a nearby Hilton Resort; and two students, Ginna Wallace and Liz Corcoran, occupy culinary positions at the historic Stirling Highland Hotel. “The students have really gotten into the culture,” reports Bob Simpson, the contact person in Scotland, who is assisting the students. “They’ve visited some other cities, gone dancing with their colleagues, and during an in-service training session on wines, they’ve invited Todd Stoesz over, to realize that education is one of the most important driving forces in our lives.”

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Then, 2002

Christina arrived in Louisville, KY two years ago. Her first concern was leaving her family, but she knew how important it was to attain her dream. That dream was to become a Chef and work in the food industry. She has accomplished her goal, and is working very hard to advance further in her career.

Achieved great success

Christina is the Sous Chef at Glenmary Country Club, one of the most prestigious country clubs in Louisville. Christina tells us she never dreamed of being able to achieve this type of success right after graduation. Her love for her job, and fellow employees is second only to her affection for her family in Ecuador.

Sullivan has opened its doors to students from more than twenty countries. All of our students benefit from having classmates from various cultural backgrounds.

Interaction with others is just another part of the learning experience. When a career-motivated individual like Christina chooses Sullivan University over any other institution of higher learning in the world, we all benefit.

This fall, Christina will start working on her Bachelor’s degree in Hospitality Management. For Christina, it was a long way from Ecuador, but not so far to success.

Ecuador - a long way from home - but a short road to success

It’s a long way to Ecuador, but, it’s not too far for someone who has a serious passion for a solid career in the hospitality industry. María Cristina Cortes hails from Quito, Ecuador, and recently graduated from the Culinary Arts program at Sullivan University.

God Bless America

“Land of the free and the home of the brave!” These noble words became even more meaningful when I heard José Hernandez’s story.

José fled his native Cuba aboard a fragile life raft. His journey to freedom is very inspiring and he wrote a book about his escape from Havana to Key West, Florida. A copy of his book, The Final Odyssey, is available in Sullivan’s library.

“José has shown to the world that in America you can be all you want to be, as long as you make wise decisions and hold on to a dream. Obtaining an education become José’s number one dream.”

Maamry continued, “In Louisville to be near his family, José made the decision to enroll at Sullivan University to earn his Associate Degree in the Hotel-Restaurant Management program as well as a Baccalaureate in Hospitality Studies.”

José’s story is the kind of success that I am proud to share. José, has taught us a lesson about determination and bravery.

Dr. David Dao is a familiar and friendly face to culinary stu- dents and staff. But very few know his extraordinary story. Currently, Dr. Dao is taking a sabbatical from his busy medical practice in Elizabethtown where he cares for patients with respiratory problems to study Culinary Arts. Originally from Saigon City, Vietnam - this is where his story begins.

Forced to flee Vietnam

David attended medical school at Saigon University until 1974 when he entered the military as a teacher of medicine. Because of his superior grades, he never saw active duty during the Vietnam War. When the city of Saigon fell to the Communist forces, David was forced to flee by whatever means he could. Eventually David finished his medical training in California and in 1980 relocated to Indiana. He worked for a prison in Michigan City, but only stayed one year after he tried to strangle him with his own stethoscope!

David served a four-year internship and fellowship at the University of Louisville Medical School until 1986, when he had an opportunity to take over a practice in Elizabethtown.

Enrolled at Sullivan

Dr. Dao enrolled in Sullivan’s Culinary Arts program because he is passionate about food and preventing disease instead of always treating the symptoms. David says he newly realized the importance of sanitation, proper technique and nutrition to health. As a physician he wants to take what he has learned at Sullivan back to his medical practice and educate patients on the undeniable link between healthy food and good health. David has been gracious enough to spend some time with Chef Instructor Kate Payne in International Cuisine helping to refine our menu for the Vietnam unit. His observations ring true in terms of health and good food. Hopefully some of the young culinarians who are reading this will begin to consider the applications of their education outside the restaurant industry.

Vietnamese student in the world’s best place

My field of study is Business Administration and I came to Sullivan’s because I am passionate about food and preventing disease instead of always treating the symptoms. I believe that my destiny was to come here which makes me feel that I am in the best place.”

Sullivan University and gain all this knowledge is making an investment for life.”

JORDON KHAZIANNOV

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Both are currently working toward a dual degree in Hotel-Restaurant Management and Culinary Arts or has already finished that degree and is now earning a bachelor’s degree. “We needed to make this a requirement of participation because the employers requested students who are equally at home both front-and back-of-the-house,” said Kerry Sommerville. Owen Powell, the intern with Hilton, says, “my chef is making my work schedule so that it coordinates with his. He is taking me through his daily routine and personally showing me what the management does here.” Ginna Wallace, who is working in the kitchen of the Stirling Highland Hotel, says, “I’ve finally proven myself here. I’ve been asked to participate in the weekly ‘Haggis ceremony’ held nightly.”

The students will wrap up their work requirements in mid-September, and most of them plan to travel around Europe and the rest of the United Kingdom before returning to Louisville to begin their Fall Quarter studies. Students will debrief with Sommerville and other faculty in order to fine-tune the process for the next group who will follow in their footsteps.

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