Students tour (and hired!) at Caesar’s Indiana

Hotel-Restaurant Management students recently toured Caesar’s Casino and Resort in Indiana, getting a unique first-hand view of the mega-resort’s front and back-of-the-house operations. Caesar’s Director of Human Resources, Greg Powers, greeted the group before escorting them on a two-hour tour of the facilities.

“Caesar’s is a driving force in the local hospitality and tourism industry,” said Kerry Sommerville, Hospitality Studies Department Chair. “Many of our current students and graduates have continuously obtained career opportunities with Caesar’s since its very beginning.”

Luxurious accommodations

The group began their tour in the new 503-room luxury hotel that currently runs an 80% year-round occupancy, according to Powers. “We market to business and association group meetings, as well as to the high rollers,” he said. Students checked out a variety of guest room types, including a $1,500 per night suite.

“The meeting space was totally unbelievable,” said student, Aaron Baer. “It’s elegant, functional, and unique enough to set Caesar’s apart from their competition.”

Impressive dining facilities

Although the students were not allowed to tour the actual riverboat casino due to age restrictions that restricted some, they visited several of the facility’s food and beverage outlets, including the very large Villa Buffet, the gourmet restaurant and bar, Portico, and the entertainment lounge, Legends.

Students also were treated to a peek into the show lounge, The Colosseum, which attracts a wide variety of entertainment.

Employment opportunities

During the visit, Powers discussed internship and career opportunities available to the students at the resort, and at other Park Place Entertainment venues. “Today we are currently hiring an average of 20 new employees per day,” Powers said. “We have great employment opportunities in virtually every department including our new luxury hotel.”

Chef/Instructor begins second book!


“This book will focus on what chefs need to know about wine to be successful in the food service business,” said Schmid.

Chef Schmid’s first book, The Hospitality Manager’s Guide to Wine, Beers and Spirits, has been adopted as the official text for HRM 244, the Wines, Spirits & Beers class he teaches on campus. This first offering has also been adopted by colleges and universities in New York, Maryland, Nevada, Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Arkansas and Massachusetts, Syracuse University in New York and Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts in Las Vegas, Nevada.

“I was also surprised to see the international sales,” said Schmid, referring to marketing in Canada, Jamaica, and Singapore.

Back row, left to right, Greg Powers, Director of Human Resources, Caesar’s Indiana, Shane DeWeese, Wayne Guilliam, Abby Houston, Aaron Baer, Sarah Wrench, Kerry Sommerville, Department Chair, Albert Schmid, Chef/Instruction, Jeremy Holland and Andy Vansilke. Front, Brittany McCole, Carrie DeForest and Dawn Mccginley, Instructor.

In a wee bit: Hospitality internships to be in Scotland

Kerry Sommerville, Hospitality Studies Department Chair, recently returned from a six-day trip to Scotland where he met with Paul Quartzon, Sullivan University’s Europe campus director, and others to begin laying the groundwork for students who wish to complete their internships in a European setting.

Sommerville also toured numerous hotel properties, met with general managers and human resources directors, and inspected facilities that would eventually accommodate Sullivan’s student interns.

“What an incredible experience!” said Sommerville. “The Scots were extremely warm and inviting, and are very interested to take Sullivan student interns.”

Stirling, Scotland, less than 45 minutes from both Glasgow and Edinburgh, is the primary area in which the students would be working. Located in central Scotland, Stirling has about 45,000 inhabitants, is on central rail lines that connect all of Europe, and has beautiful scenery. The hotels that Sommerville toured vary in size and age, anywhere from a small, 100-room inn located within a short stroll of historic Sterling Castle to a large, century-old manor house now transformed into a modern golf resort and spa located near scenic Loch Lommond. Sommerville also toured the campus of Stirling University and the state-of-the-art hotel and conference center, one of the main facilities where Sullivan interns would be placed.

Great place for Sullivan interns

“Scotland would be ideal site for overseas internships,” said Sommerville. “The country has a thriving hospitality and tourism industry and is a popular destination for tourists from all over Europe.” Students would not have to overcome any language barriers; general managers Sommerville met indicated speaking fluent English – which other foreign student interns often struggle with – is a plus.

Planning now underway

“This is a fantastic opportunity for our students,” said Chef Walter Beers, Director of the National Center for Hospitality Studies. “We’re working with other department chairs to formulate a program that is viable as well as educational.” He added, “we will want to send our very best, and since we’d like to launch this in summer, there’s lots of planning and organizing to be done.”

Spring was in the air and on the tables!

As a class project, students taking CAM 252 Culinary Arts in Dining Service select a seasonal theme and, as a group, plan the menu, décor, tables’ presentation, invitations, the appropriate service style that goes with the theme and the execution of the entire event.

“I think this event opened up my eyes to the theme and, as a group, plan the taking

“In a wee bit: Hospitality internships to be in Scotland

Kerry Sommerville and Claire Fisher, Director of Human Resources at the Inchyria Grange Hotel near Stirling, Scotland, a possible intern site for Sullivan students, talk to students about life and work in Scotland. Stirling is a popular destination for tourists from all over Europe.”