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Hospitality students experience industry through hands-on involvement

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Save



Chef de Cuisine of fine dining outlet at The Cloister at Sea Island talks with Georgia Southern students.

Students seeking careers in the hospitality industry aren't just learning concepts in the classroom, but they are also prepared for the industry through hands-on experiences at Georgia Southern University.

The Hospitality Management program in the Parker College of Business prepares students for entry-level management positions in the restaurant and lodging industries while focusing on industry operations. Throughout the academic year, hospitality students travel throughout the Southeast to locations known for tourism to experience the behind-the-scenes operations of restaurants, hotels, pre-packaged food facilities and more.

Students have visited cities like New Orleans for an extended weekend, and most recently, the Inn at Sea Island on the Georgia coast where they learned about the industry by participating in

activities like tourists, but also through hands-on learning assignments.

In New Orleans, students were introduced to regional food, everyday life and the culture of the Louisiana bayou. While there, they visited museums, a cigar rolling shop, St. Louis Cathedral, casinos and some of the famous cemeteries. They also participated in a walking tour that showcased the city's street performing hot spots.

Through the trip, students gained experience within multiple areas of the industry, including different modes of transportation, different styles of hotels and lodging options, and various levels of food and beverage service. During the trip, the students were asked to analyze the service and food of the two most famous beignet restaurants in New Orleans, Café du Monde and Café Beignet.

While visiting the Inn at Sea Island, students toured the Lodge at Sea Island and attended a reception and meal with the managing director of Sea Island, Georgia. This gave students insight into how a five-star resort is managed and operated.

While in Sea Island, the hospitality students visited The Cloister hotel and learned about front-of-the-house and back-of-the-house operations. During The Cloister visit, students met with the Executive Committee of Sea Island and discussed hospitality issues with some of the most talented leaders in the hospitality/tourism industry.

Following The Cloister visit, the students toured King & Prince Seafood in Brunswick, Georgia, where students took a behind-the-scenes tour of the facility. The company processes millions of pounds of shrimp each month for restaurant companies like Panda Express, Captain D's and Popeyes, among others.

Students also gain hands-on experience in the industry by connecting with the Tourism Leadership Council in Savannah. Recently, students were invited to the 21st annual Tourism Awards & Scholarship Dinner. Sixteen awards were given to professionals in the industry who have made the tourism community a better place, and six area students, including Samantha Dalton, a recreation and tourism management major at Georgia Southern, received scholarships to further their studies in the tourism and hospitality fields.

“Being actively involved in the local tourism scene allows for excellent networking opportunities for our students to secure internships and full-time employment upon graduation,” said Charles Marvil, lecturer of hospitality management. “Not only is the program looking to expand to the Armstrong campus in Savannah, but the experiential learning activities taking place outside of the classroom abound.”

To learn more about Georgia Southern’s Hospitality Management program, visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu/parker/mgnt/undergraduate.