



University of Delaware's Advanced Learning Interactive Classroom A Boon to Hotel Management Students' Careers

New State-of-the-Art Classroom at School's Marriott Courtyard Hotel Delivers Real World Experience and Pathway to Industry Jobs

NEWARK, DE, FEBRUARY, 2016 – The University of Delaware's Department of Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management (HRIM) continues to enhance the experiential learning process of its hotel lodging module. The module uniquely combines exemplary classroom instruction with real-world experiences in the Marriott Courtyard Newark at the University of Delaware, a for-profit hotel open to the public, and the Vita Nova student-managed restaurant.

UD's 27-year-old HRIM program continues to be ranked as a top hospitality management program, with approximately 400 students enrolled in two undergraduate majors and 25 students taking graduate courses. The hotel recently recognized the Lodging Module's 1000th student during its ten years of award-winning service.

In June 2015, the program marked its quarter century of operation with the addition of the nation's most advanced interactive hospitality classroom learning environment, housed within the hotel's Marriott Hospitality and Tourism Center.

State-of-the-Art Technologies Drive Learning

The new learning facility includes the latest in advanced interactive learning technologies to enhance team-based learning and provide HRIM students with access to guest lecturers from across the U.S. and around the world.

Thanks to a \$559,000 contribution from The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation, a private family foundation, and additional financial and in-kind support from the hotel's operating

partner, Shaner Hotel Group, the new classroom has expanded learning opportunities within the country's first branded, for-profit, interactive hotel learning environment.

Officially referred to as the Advanced Learning Interactive Classroom Environment (ALICE, in tribute to Alice Marriott of the founding family), the 1,900 square-foot interactive classroom features the latest in

audiovisual technologies and flexible design elements to immerse students, instructors and guest lecturers in the HRIM curriculum. These include:

- ▣ Large, wall-mounted writing surfaces to allow for instructor and student collaboration on assignments;
- ▣ Seven flat-screen monitors, two high-definition video camera systems and satellite audio/video teleconferencing capabilities, enabling students to interact with guest lecturers from around the U.S. or across the world; and
- ▣ Flexible classroom configurations designed to accommodate small and large student workgroups.

According to HRIM Department Chairperson Sheryl Kline, the addition of the innovative, leading-edge classroom housing five HRIM Lodging Module courses enhances the education students receive as part of the semester-long program.

“The beauty of the classroom is its location within the hotel; The HRIM faculty teaches theory and coursework in the classroom, and the hotel’s management team teach the students who intern in all the departments at the hotel,” Kline said.

“The HRIM program has the capability to host speakers and classrooms from industry leaders and our international partner schools, and that brings a global perspective to the students’ hospitality education,” noted Hotel Director and longtime instructor, William Sullivan. “Our global guest lecturers have really helped expand our students’ thinking and skills on everything from hotel operations to conducting a class on wine tasting.”

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Hospitality employers regard the training student interns gain from working closely with hotel staff as invaluable. Plato Ghinos, president of Shaner Hotel Group and a strong supporter and advocate of UD’s hotel management school, said the HRIM curriculum’s stringent student requirements – 700 hours of work experience and 100 hours of community service – are critical elements of the students’ education.

“The students gain experience with our Marriott Courtyard hotel associates on everything from conducting hotel and restaurant operations and collaborating on feasibility studies for new hotels to actively participating on “green” programs with the Delaware Lodging Association,” Ghinos said. “I can’t think of a better training ground for the next generation of hotel management executives.”

Kline agreed, saying that the proof is in the pudding.

“Over the past 27 years, our alumni have become managers, entrepreneurs and leaders in the global hospitality industry. Our 95 percent placement rate is a testament to the quality education our students receive, and we’re very proud of our graduates’ success.”

About the University of Delaware’s HRIM Curriculum

The University of Delaware’s HRIM curriculum is a division of UD’s Alfred Lerner College of Business and Economics. The Vita Nova Restaurant and the Courtyard by Marriott at the University of Delaware offer students hands-on experience to advance their academic knowledge. Vita Nova is a student-operated laboratory setting featuring a 60-seat dining room, exhibition space and teaching and demonstration kitchens. The 126-room Courtyard by Marriott and its high-tech interactive learning classroom feature wireless computers, glass writing surfaces and audiovisual conferencing facilities. The curriculum offers

students on-the-job experience in food and beverage, sales, marketing, revenue management, front office operations and housekeeping. For more information on the program visit <http://lerner.udel.edu/departments/hrim>

About Shaner Hotel Group

Shaner Hotel Group is one of the foremost owner-operator companies in the hospitality industry with more than 50 hotel properties owned and managed across the U.S., Italy and the Bahamas. New properties are constantly evaluated as the Shaner Hotel Group continues a conservative, yet opportunistic approach to growth. Shaner is an approved management company and franchisee of Marriott International, Inc., Hilton Hotels Corporation, Intercontinental Hotels Group and ChoiceHotels. For more information about the company and its divisions visit www.shanercorp.com.

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