Leading Hotel Schools of the World Honored at Sixth Annual Hospitality Awards

The Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd., received the Best Partnership Operation award for its joint venture, Leading Hotel Schools of the World, during the sixth annual Hospitality Awards ceremony, which took place in Paris on Nov. 7, 2005.

Leading Hotel Schools of the World is a joint venture among Niagara University's nationally ranked College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, The Hotel School The Hague, and the 430 five-star Leading Hotels of the World. Member schools of the Leading Hotel Schools of the World, like Niagara's College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, focus on integrating practical industry applications into the classroom.

The Leading Hotel Schools of the World is a network of internationally renowned hotel schools providing cutting-edge educational opportunities for member hotels, as well as solutions to their employment needs through the placement of qualified interns and graduates. It also offers continuing education through on-site seminars, regional conferences and an e-learning platform with customized courses for chain and independent members.

Niagara University has provided educational opportunities for member hotels, as well as solutions to their employment needs through the placement of qualified interns and graduates. It also offers continuing education through on-site seminars, regional conferences and an e-learning platform with customized courses for chain and independent members.

The other finalists in the Best Partnership Operation division were Hotel Prince de Galles and Malmaison Hotels, Bars & Brasseries. Evaluations were based on the partnership concept and how it was instituted; the operation, assets and benefits of the partnership; how the partnership is applied in the student experience; and results such as graduate placement, student feedback, and added value.

Statler Foundation Supports Niagara Students

The Statler Foundation has awarded two Niagara University students in the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management a total of $40,000 in scholarships for the 2005-2006 academic year. Elena Oxford of Auburn and Lisa Perry of Sanborn will each receive $20,000.

“Statler Scholarship recipients Elena Oxford (second from left) and Lisa Perry (third from left) with Dr. Gary Praetzel, dean of the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management (left), and the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., Niagara University president.”

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Our college continued to make outstanding progress in 2005-06. Enrollment has continued its surge from fall 1999, increasing from 150 students to 350 students and making us the fastest growing major program in the country in hospitality and tourism. This growth will continue into fall 2006 but be limited by the university reaching capacity constraints in its dormitories and classrooms. Placement of students in the college has been nothing short of outstanding. Six students were hired this year by Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts. The Waldorf=Astoria continues to hire Niagara students. Marriott Corp. recruits on campus twice a year and hired a number of our students as did Carlson Hotels Worldwide, Hyatt Hotels, The Travel Team, and Red Lobster, to name a few. Twelve corporate offices recruit our students and 30 companies participate in the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management Career Fair. Many of our students received multiple job offers. Over the past seven years we have had a nearly 100 percent placement rate, with nearly 90 percent of our students working in the major. At the last career fair in February 2006, one student was offered a full-time job 12 months in advance of graduation, and another student was offered a job 18 months in advance of graduation.

Our practical industry applications focus and Code of Professionalism is reinforced through our annual Career Days program, sponsored by the college’s Hospitality and Tourism Alumni Association; and the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management Convocation, which honors leaders in the worldwide hospitality and tourism industry. This year’s Career Days program will be held on Oct. 6 and we invite alumni and industry executives to share their industry knowledge and career experiences with our students. Additional information will be forthcoming on this event as a team of students are working with two alumni to put together the program. The convocation will be held on Oct. 25 and it will be a special one as this is Niagara University’s 150th anniversary year. The college’s reception during the International Hotel/Motel and Restaurant Show will be on Sunday, Nov. 12. The College of Hospitality and Tourism Management Career Fair will be held on Feb. 12, 2007. All of this is in addition to the seven industry excursions we provide each year, our cruise course, Lake Como work-abroad program, and the involvement of 40 to 50 industry speakers on campus each year. Our curriculum has been rated the eighth best in the country, and putting our practical industry applications together with a program that has been termed “a model and creative one” by our accreditation body explains why the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management has become a leading national and international program in hospitality and tourism.

Thank you for your continued support of the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management. Please contact me about participating in any of our events or getting involved in the life of the college— it’s a great way to impact a life.

Statler, continued from page 1

country,” said Dr. Gary Praetzel, dean of the college. “We are thankful for this ongoing support that has allowed Niagara University to become a leading national and international program in hospitality and tourism.”

The Statler Foundation is a Buffalo-based philanthropic organization that supports the training and education of individuals in the hotel industry. The organization has given a total of $220,000 in scholarship support to Niagara University this school year.

The nationally ranked College of Hospitality and Tourism Management is the fourth college of its kind in the United States. It was awarded the Institutional Achievement Award in October 2002 by the International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators. This recognition is awarded only every two years. The College of Hospitality and Tourism Management is a national leader in study-abroad opportunities, offering a unique work-abroad program in Lake Como, Italy. The college, along with the Hotel School The Hague, and The Leading Hotels of the World, is a founding member of The Leading Hotels Schools of the World.

The two scholarships of $20,000 each for College of Hospitality and Tourism Management students Lena Oxford and Lisa Perry confirm again the decades old partnership between Niagara University and The Statler Foundation. The foundation in January 2005 provided the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management with a $75,000 computer grant. In 1999 the Statler Foundation awarded the college a comprehensive $1.525 million grant, the largest private foundation grant in the history of Niagara University.
Fifth Annual Hospitality and Tourism Convocation Honors Industry Leaders

Mark Gatley, a 1975 Niagara University graduate and former executive director of the Niagara Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau, was one of five people honored at the fifth annual College of Hospitality and Tourism Management convocation Nov. 2, 2005, in the university’s Alumni Chapel. This event is made possible through the generosity of the M. ist Corp., which has sponsored the convocation for all five years. Dr. Gary D. Praetzel, dean of the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, noted that the honorees are largely longstanding friends of the college with ongoing interaction with its students.

Gatley, currently the general manager of the Greater Fort Lauderdale Broward County Convention Center, received the Rabbi Porrath Visionary Award, an award given to an alumnus or close friend of the program who has provided extraordinary service to the college. Gatley is a founder and current chairman of the Niagara University College of Hospitality and Tourism Management Alumni Association.

Other honorees included:

Edward Friel, managing director of EFA Tourism and City Marketing Ltd., who received the honorary degree of doctor of commercial science. Friel, former chief executive of the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Valley Tourism Board, is widely considered the person most responsible for the economic revival in Glasgow, Scotland, through tourism after the city lost its manufacturing base.

The Londonderry, Northern Ireland, native is an international expert in place marketing, and has spent much of his consulting activities in making cities and destinations competitive.

Friel has received two other honorary degrees and on July 28, 2005, was invested in the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II for his work in promoting Scottish tourism.

Jay Witzel was honored with the Lifetime Hotelier Achievement Award. Witzel is the president of Carlson Hotels Worldwide, the ninth largest hotel company in the world, and is also the chief executive officer of Carlson Cruises Worldwide. Carlson Hotels Worldwide and Carlson Cruises Worldwide are part of the Carlson Companies, which boasts 190,000 people working in 140 countries under its brands (including Radisson, TGI Fridays, and Radisson Seven Seas Cruises). Witzel is noted for his depth of management expertise, including financial strategy, capital markets, operational structure and change management. Praetzel noted that the college has developed a special relationship with the Carlson Companies and that the relationship is built on the extraordinary quality and integrity of the people who comprise the Carlson Companies — people like Jay Witzel.

Peter Yesawich, chairman and CEO of Yesawich, Pepperdine, Brown and Russell, received the Tourism Industry Leadership Award. Yesawich serves as a featured columnist in several trade publications and has authored numerous articles on marketing and advertising strategy in both trade and professional journals. He is the co-author of the widely acclaimed National Travel Monitor research series on the travel habits, preferences and intentions of Americans. YPBR is the leading public relations agency specializing in serving travel and leisure clients.

Yesawich is an excellent role model for the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management students, according to Praetzel. “His presentation skills are second to none and he provides our students with the same type of data he gives corporate decision-makers, treating them like corporate executives,” he said.

The National Baseball Hall of Fame received the Sport Organization of the Year Award. Accepting the award was Jeff Idelson, vice president of communications and education for the museum. Opened in 1939, the National Baseball Hall of Fame, located in Cooperstown, N.Y., is an independent, nonprofit education institution dedicated to fostering an appreciation of the historical development of baseball and its impact on our culture. A major tourism attraction, the hall’s collections also honor those who have made outstanding contributions to the national pastime. Michael Gentile, assistant professor in the college, notes that the internship program offered by the National Baseball Hall of Fame is one of the most competitive programs in the country and arguably is one of the best internship programs available given the extra demands and accountability placed on the students.

Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management honored several industry leaders at its fifth annual convocation Nov. 2, 2005. Pictured (l-r) are Jeff Idelson, who accepted the Sport Organization of the Year Award on behalf of the National Baseball Hall of Fame; Mark Gatley, who received the Rabbi Porrath Visionary Award; Eddie Friel, who received an honorary doctor of commercial science degree; the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, Niagara University president; Dr. Gary Praetzel, dean of the college; Jay Witzel, who was honored with the Lifetime Hotelier Achievement Award; and Peter Yesawich, recipient of the Tourism Industry Leadership Award.
**Reasons to Attend NU’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management**

- Niagara offered the world’s first bachelor’s degree in tourism.
- Our college is a founding member of The Leading Hotel Schools of the World, an association of leading hotel schools worldwide that works with the 430 five-star Leading Hotels of the World.
- The college was the 2002 recipient of the Institutional Achievement Award of the International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators.
- We were the seventh program in the country to be accredited.
- Only three other hospitality and tourism programs have achieved college status.
- We are ranked in the top 20 hospitality and tourism programs in the country.
- Students can work abroad in Lake Como, Italy, and cruise aboard in the Caribbean.
- The college alumni association operates a mentoring program for our students, provides career panels, and secures employment and internship opportunities for our students.
- More than 20 leading national and international industry leaders speak to our students each year.
- The college honors national and international industry leaders at its annual convocation.
- Students gain valuable hands-on experience through their 800-hour, approved practical industry experience requirement.
- We have a 100 percent placement rate with 90 percent of our students placed in the hospitality/tourism industry.
- Average class size is 17 students.
- We offer a range of programs in lodging, foodservice management, tourism, recreation and sports management, and entrepreneurship.

**College Partners with Carlson Hotels Worldwide, Carlson Cruises Worldwide**

Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management has reached a three-year partnership agreement with Carlson Hotels Worldwide and Carlson Cruises Worldwide. The Carlson Companies have been critical to the college’s success through their assistance in developing its focus on practical industry applications, said Dr. Gary D. Praetzel, dean, noting that Curtis Nelson, president and COO of the Carlson Companies, “has always taken a great interest in education and the time that he and his executive team have provided our college is extraordinary.”

Under the agreement, Niagara University and the Carlson Companies will work together to further develop student-internship opportunities at Carlson’s hotel properties, as well as enhance the recruitment of NU hospitality and tourism graduates. Carlson executives will be more present on campus to provide additional real-world learning opportunities that will be integrated into the college’s curriculum and classroom through guest speakers, case studies, and other means.

The College Center for Hospitality Training and Research has developed numerous customized industry education and training programs and are anxious to work with Carlson’s vice president for human resources to meet the educational needs of Carlson employees and its franchisees, notes Dr. Deborah Curtis, director of the center. The Carlson Companies are a global leader in the marketing, travel, and hospitality industry. They have operations in 140 countries with 190,000 people working under their brands. Among the names in the Carlson family of brands and services are Regent International Hotels, Radisson Hotels and Resorts, Park Plaza Hotels and Resorts, Country Inns and Suites by Carlson, Park Inn Hotels, Radisson Seven Seas Cruises and T.G.I. Friday’s.

The agreement between the Carlson Companies and Niagara University’s practical applications-focused College of Hospitality and Tourism Management is one more example of the seamless relationship being developed between worldwide industry leaders and Niagara’s nationally ranked hospitality and tourism program. Praetzel noted that “integrity and character typify Carlson people and in my mind the best role models I have found are those working in the Carlson Companies.”

The College of Hospitality and Tourism Management offered the world’s first bachelor’s degree in tourism and was the seventh program accredited in the United States.

**Dan Murphy Inducted into Honor Society**

Dan Murphy (third from left), president of the New York State Hospitality and Tourism Association, was inducted into the Niagara University chapter of Eta Sigma Delta on April 25, 2006, at Niagara University. He is pictured here with Jadin Benack (left), president of the Niagara University Eta Sigma Delta chapter; Dr. Gary D. Praetzel (second from left), a member of the NYSHA&T board of directors and dean of the Niagara University College of Hospitality and Tourism Management; and Dr. Jan van Harsel, professor of hospitality and tourism management, one of the major educational providers for NYSHA&T, and moderator of Eta Sigma Delta. Murphy also served as the keynote speaker at the event. NYSHA&T is the state’s advocacy group for the hospitality and tourism industry and a major provider of educational services for the industry.
Bringing the World Together: Thank You Lake Como

Since Sept. 11, 2001, the world has become more polarized. Restrictions on travel have been implemented and more are on the way. The level of distrust between countries and the negative views that people harbor for fellow human beings across borders is perhaps unprecedented. Instead of people working together internationally for the common good, the world seems to be more separated than ever. Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, the University of Insubria, the Hospitality and Tourism Association of Lake Como, the Como Hoteliers Association, and the Como Chamber of Commerce implemented a program in 2004 that is bringing two parts of the world closer together.

In summer 2004, 10 students from the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management worked in luxury hotels in Lake Como, Italy. This was a revolutionary program: work abroad is exceptional due to the unusual challenges faced by students working abroad and the paperwork involved. In fact, there may be no other organized work-abroad program offered by a hospitality and tourism program in the country. Similarly, 10 students from the University of Insubria in Como studied in fall 2004 at NU. The exchange program continued in 2005 and students for 2006 are being selected.

The Niagara students complete, minimally, one year of Italian. They room and board at the hotels where they work, living with their co-workers. These students are truly on their own, working in a different country and speaking a different language. It takes tremendous courage to participate in this program, but the benefits are immeasurable: true immersion in a different culture; more tolerance and understanding of different people; learning respect for a different culture and its language; making friends halfway around the world; gaining confidence; and achieving a sense of accomplishment that is unmatched for a student.

The Lake Como hoteliers, their general managers, and their employees have been a second family for our students working abroad. Their commitment to the art of hospitality is unprecedented, making them extraordinary teachers – and taking the students far beyond the traditional internship. The commitment of the hotelier association, the Provincial Union of Commerce and Tourism, and the Chamber of Commerce made this program of international understanding possible. The hoteliers are noted below with those hotels hosting Niagara University students:

- Gianfranco Bucher, Grand Hotel Villa Serbelloni, Bellagio, www.villaserbelloni.com
- Paolo DeSantis, Grand Hotel di Como, Cernobbio, www.grandhotelodicomo.com
- Luca Leoni, Hotel du Lac, Bellagio, www.bellaggiohotelcomer.com
- Antonello Passera, Albergo Terminus, Como, www.albergoterminus.it; Villa Flori, Cernobbio, www.hotellavillaflori.it

Dr. Gary Paretz, dean of the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management (back row, left), and his wife (back row, right), are pictured with the 10 students from the University of Insubria in Italy, who studied at NU in fall 2005: (back row l-r) Cristina Guerrotto, Elena Galbiati, Giulia Piccoli, Valeria Quarta, Chiara Della Bosca, and Silvia Trombetta. (Front row l-r) Alexandra Grofova, Silvia Pesenti, Silvia Perniciaro, and Alessandro Farsoni.

We are grateful to Dott. Guido Capizzi of the Provincial Union of Commerce and Tourism in Como, who navigates the bureaucracy to ensure the smooth entry of the Niagara students into Italy. We are grateful to Giuseppe Colangelo of the University of Insubria, who unselfishly prepares the 10 students from Italy for entry into the United States and to study at Niagara University. We are also grateful to Steve Perillo, president of Perillo Tours, the largest package tour to Italy, for the Mario Perillo Scholarship fund that provides financial assistance to Niagara University students participating in the work-abroad program in Lake Como.

The 10 students from Italy have enriched the learning experience of countless Niagara University students. Their presence in the classroom changes the entire dynamic of the class, creating diversity that never previously existed. Two parts of the world are linked together through the principles of tourism planning and an examination of hospitality practices and procedures relevant to a particular culture. What we learn is that no one or no one society has all the right answers but that all of us benefit from learning from each other to make the world a better place for everyone. The 10 students from Italy have helped enrich our classrooms, student life on campus, and even the community through their involvement in local community events. We have learned much through them.
Imagine being a “fly on the wall” at a strategic planning meeting at Carlson Hotel headquarters in Minneapolis, conducted by Jay Witzel, president and CEO of Carlson Hotels Worldwide and Carlson Cruises Worldwide. Students in associate professor Steven Siegel’s strategic management class were able to simulate that experience on April 18 when Witzel himself conducted a seminar during which he exposed the students to the strategic planning process of the ninth largest hotel chain in the world.

Remarkably, Witzel did not merely discuss the process from a generic point of view, but provided concrete examples of factors and issues that Carlson considers in its current round of planning. Witzel’s candidness took the presentation well beyond the realm of the theoretical and provided the fortunate students attending with a real-world basis to compare to the classroom presentation in strategic management.

Witzel showed the students that in the real world, strategic planning is a series of trade-offs, where the interests of the employees and the customers, and the financial needs of the corporation must all be continually balanced. Witzel proved himself an engaging instructor, as he managed to introduce the students to a highly complex process, yet present it in a very comprehensible manner.

Perhaps the best part of Witzel’s appearance at the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management is that he enjoyed his time with us so much that we will have him back again next year.

At Journey’s End Refugee Services’ Annual Volunteer and Donor Appreciation Dinner on April 30, the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management was recognized as the Outstanding Community Partner for 2005. Robert Roggie, executive director of Journey’s End, made the presentation, noting the contributions made by the college’s students over the past five years under the direction of Steven H. Siegel, associate professor, and Scott Beahen, director of the college’s food service operations.

The college annually provides a Thanksgiving dinner for 200 to 250 new residents in this country. It is the first American Thanksgiving experienced by these families and they rejoice in the food that day and the newly won freedom they now experience in the United States. The refugees come from different parts of the world, escaping war and other forms of violence. The Niagara University students truly made these new residents welcome, providing them with a day that they will never forget. In addition, the Niagara students also take the families on excursions to places such as the Buffalo Zoo. The students in the past have also helped to improve the houses in which the new families live when they first join the Western New York community.

The annual dinner was filled with pictures of Niagara students cooking, decorating and setting up the room for the Thanksgiving dinner. It just demonstrates one more way in which Niagara students show that they have the “heart of a servant.” The college provided the food free of charge and donated leftover dinners to the Buffalo City Mission.

Students majoring in the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management tourism destination marketing concentration traveled to Toronto on April 7 to attend the International Travel and Leisure Show, Canada’s largest trade and consumer travel show. The students, accompanied by Dr. Jan van Harssel, professor in the college; and Pat Navarroli, secretary to the dean of the college, took their presentation on the brand new Terminal One at Pearson International Airport. This four-level state-of-the-art terminal is capable of handling 50 million passengers annually. The Greater Toronto Airport Authority welcomed the group with a canine safety demonstration and a two-hour visit to all corners of the new facility. Finally, students enjoyed a downtown sightseeing tour of Toronto, including stops at the CN Tower and the Eaton Centre. Covering two full city blocks, the Toronto Eaton Centre is a historic landmark, and is one of Canada’s best-known retail shopping destinations. The six-story glass-ceiling structure attracts approximately 60 million visitors annually to the downtown area.
Eleven students from Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management took a recent trip to The Carlyle Hotel in New York City. The Carlyle is a luxury, four-star, 179-room property in Manhattan. Situated in the wealthiest zip code in the country, the hotel is legendary in New York City and is known by many celebrities as a place where they can have the red carpet treatment along with some privacy in its tucked-away location. The three-day excursion, which took place from Dec. 18-20, was meant to give students a first-hand glimpse into a sales blitz, a big part of a sales manager’s job. The well-thought-out itinerary, planned in large part by NU alumna Mary M atson, included a site inspection, dinner with some of The Carlyle staff, and actual sales calls to past and prospective clients. This very unique experience was coupled with the hotel’s generosity in providing accommodations and meals free of charge to all the students.

On the last day, however, plans were turned upside down as the New York City metro strike began. Many of the workers from The Carlyle had to call in to work that day because they simply could not get there, leaving the hotel severely short-handed. The hotel decided to scrap the rest of the sales calls that were to be done that day and utilized the hospitality students they had at their disposal. The students were put to work in various positions, mainly housekeeping jobs.

Overall, it was both an excellent learning experience and an enjoyable mini-vacation. This trip was a new addition to the college’s repertoire of opportunities for students and it seems likely that it will be continued in the future due to the hard work of the students and their exemplary behavior in representing the college in addition to having a lot of fun. A big thank you goes out to The Carlyle for their unbelievable hospitality, especially Mary M atson, Patrick Kidd, Lance Castellano, and Siobhan O’Leary, who all co-hosted the event. The students were fortunate enough to see the best of both worlds: working like employees of the hotel and being treated royally like some of the highest-paying guests.

Students from the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management organized and hosted the first-ever silent auction to benefit the Fred and Gertrude England Hospitality Education Foundation. The event took place during the annual conference of the New York State Hospitality and Tourism Association on April 24 at the Adam’s Mark Hotel in Buffalo. Students, under the leadership of Nicole Travick (a senior in the hotel management program), solicited donations, published the auction catalog, and provided for a festive display of items. Organizing the student effort and coordinating work with NYSH & TA was Dr. Jan van Harssel, professor in the college and a familiar face to NYSH & TA members.

Van Harssel has served as one of the key instructors statewide for NYSH & TA as part of their education series. The auction event was scheduled just prior to the Stars of the Industry Gala and Awards Banquet, and delegates had the opportunity to bid on more than 70 items. Donated items included destination packages, season passes, sports memorabilia, subscriptions, consultancy services, and art work from throughout New York state and Canada. The event helped raise nearly $10,000 to support eligible students enrolled in hospitality programs in New York state. Debbie Trulli Cassale, events manager of NYSH & TA; association president Daniel Murphy; and the NYSH & TA board of directors acknowledged van Harssel and the students for their extraordinary efforts that far surpassed the expectations of NYSH & TA’s staff and everyone in attendance. Dr. Gary Praetzel, dean of the college, noted that “the amazing work of Dr. van Harssel and the students really makes you proud to be part of this college.”
College's Sport Management Major Gains State Approval

The sport management program in the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management took a big step forward in February when the New York State Department of Education approved the college’s request to elevate the program to major status, making it the third major offered by the college. This is the next step in the evolution of the program, which began in 2001 as a concentration within the tourism and recreation management major consisting of three sport courses and a tourism course.

To gain state approval, the program was expanded over the past three years to the point where students now have a total of 11 sport courses they can take along with their general education and college core requirements.

The decision to elevate the program was fast-tracked when it became apparent that sport management was a very popular choice of incoming freshmen. Through aggressive recruitment and consistent curriculum enhancements, the enrollment in the program has grown in five years to over 90 students in the major with approximately 30 additional students pursuing a minor in sport management. While the college was successful in attracting students to the concentration, it became apparent that to be competitive with other institutions offering sport management and to make our students competitive in the job market, the program needed to take a place as a stand-alone major.

D. Gary D. Praetzel, dean of the college, noted that “the extraordinary dedication and leadership of professor Michael Gentile made the sport management major possible. Mike is the consummate faculty member, always putting students first, even though it meant long extra hours for him. In my 27 years at Niagara University, I have never seen a new program develop faster than this one and it is due to Mike Gentile.”

Like all majors in the college, the sport management program carries with it an 800-hour practicum requirement. Faculty and staff within the college have worked with local and national sport organizations such as the Buffalo Bills, the Buffalo Sabres, the Mid-American Conference and Niagara University athletics to increase opportunities for students to gain industry experience. These efforts were also a major factor in the growth of the enrollment in the program. This value-added industry experience, coupled with the program’s new designation as a major, makes the college’s sport management students well positioned for employment, internships and graduate assistantships in the sport field.

To meet the requirements for major program approval before the Department of Education, the college was required to add an additional faculty member in the sport management area. Notwithstanding this requirement, the tremendous growth of the program would have mandated this addition of this position as well. With that, Dr. Dexter Davis was welcomed to the college’s faculty in August of 2005. His interest and expertise in the areas of sport marketing, leadership and organizational behavior coincided with a number of the new course offerings made by the college and helped to assure a smooth delivery of the expanded curriculum to our students.

With the approval of the major, the expansion of the faculty and the many sport industry opportunities developed for students, the sport management program at Niagara University is now one of the most comprehensive and competitive programs of its kind in our region.

Artusio Receives Dean’s Award

Douglas E. Artusio, chairman and CEO of Dellisart Lodging, received the Dean’s Award from Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management on Oct. 8, 2005. Artusio is a 1975 graduate of Niagara University’s nationally ranked hospitality and tourism program.

“I have long felt that by giving back to institutions of higher learning, we lay the necessary groundwork that later translates into a high level of professionalism and commitment to our industry,” Artusio said. “It’s an honor to be recognized by my alma mater. I hope that other professionals within the hospitality industry continue to contribute their time and expertise toward the development of the hoteliers of tomorrow.”

Artusio was honored for his personal involvement in university activities, including educating and interacting with students, developing internships, speaking in classes and participating in the college’s annual Alumni Career Days program.

“Doug’s willingness and desire to share his expertise with our students is unprecedented,” said Dr. Gary Praetzel, dean of the college. “I have never worked with anyone who has done so much to ensure an outstanding learning experience for our students.”

Alpharetta, Ga.-based Dellisart Lodging is an owner, acquirer, manager and developer of nationally branded, quality hotels throughout the United States. The company currently is an ownership partner and manages two Staybridge Suites in the Chicago suburban market. In late 2005 the company opened a Staybridge Suites in Houston’s “Energy Corridor.” This year, the company added a Wingate Inn and a management contract for a Staybridge Suites in Tallahassee, Fla. Dellisart Lodging is developing several new properties for a 2006 and 2007 opening, including the 206-room, 19-story Staybridge Suites in downtown Chicago. In late 2005, Dellisart reached an agreement to manage properties in China — a contract providing the potential for managing 60 properties within five years.
Robert Minazzi, a faculty member at the University of Insubria in Como, Italy, spent the first four weeks of the fall 2005 semester at Niagara University. Minazzi is completing her doctoral dissertation and used the visit to undertake research related to her dissertation. Minazzi met with faculty in the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management and spent considerable time with advisory council members Richard Schroen, general manager of the Buffalo Niagara Marriott; and Paul Verciglio, general manager of the Park Hyatt Toronto and many of his managers. Minazzi also took advantage of this opportunity to take curricular ideas back to the faculty in the tourism sciences department of the University of Insubria. Minazzi's visit helped to cement the relationship between the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management and the University of Insubria,” said Dr. Gary D. Praetzel, dean of the college, who also noted that Minazzi's presence was a major help in the smooth adjustment of the 10 Insubria hospitality and tourism students studying at Niagara University for the fall 2005 semester as part of the college's exchange program with that school.

“Spring Training” for Five Niagara University Students

Every year, with the regularity of migrating birds, Major League Baseball’s spring training draws young hopefuls to Florida and Arizona. These individuals are there, working hard, in hopes of cracking a major league roster. This year’s spring training drew five young hopefuls from Niagara University. However, these aren’t athletes trying to claim roster spots; they are students in the university’s sport management program, hoping to gain a competitive advantage on the business side of the sport industry.

Rather than spend their spring break along the beaches of Cancun or Daytona Beach or Fort Lauderdale, these students chose to spend a week at Roger Dean Stadium, the spring training home of the Florida Marlins and St. Louis Cardinals. Throughout the week, Niagara University students Aaron Brown, Renee Goergen, Andrea Khanzadian, Ashley Scanlon, and Jessica Turner had the opportunity to be involved in nearly every aspect of stadium operations. They were given the opportunity to lead various game-day promotions, run the video screen and sound board for both game information and sponsorship messages, as well as participate in on-field tasks such as attending to honorary batboys and anthem singers and assisting in providing security for former stars such as Reggie Jackson and Ron Guidry.

Roger Dean Stadium provided a unique opportunity for these students. As the home of two major league spring-training camps, there is at least one game every day throughout the spring training season. The Niagara students also had the opportunity to interact with some of baseball’s best young business executives. Rob Rebeneker, general manager of Roger Dean Stadium; Chris Easom, stadium operations director and general manager of the Palm Beach Cardinals; and Jennifer Brown, director of marketing; spent time with these students, answering questions and providing guidance as to how to claim that management roster spot each is trying to attain. The essence of this experience is captured in the following thought expressed by Renee Goergen: “The experience down in Jupiter at spring training was the best way to learn real job experience. It took the lessons we learned in the classroom and applied them to an actual working situation. It was the best way to learn how a facility and sports marketing work.”

Glover Receives American Hotel and Lodging Educational Foundation Scholarship

Jessica Glover, a student in NU’s nationally ranked College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, has been awarded a $3,000 scholarship from the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Foundation. Glover, a junior, is a native of Watkins Glen, N.Y.

“Jessica has shown outstanding leadership in the classroom and as an officer in the Niagara University Hospitality and Tourism Student Association,” said Dr. Gary D. Praetzel, dean of the college. In January, Glover was also presented with the college’s Code of Professionalism pin, reflecting outstanding professionalism in representing the college in the workplace and in the presence of industry leaders on campus.

In 2002, the American Hotel & Lodging Association consolidated its two affiliates, the American Hotel & Lodging Foundation and the Educational Institute of AH & LA, to form the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Foundation. The merged organization operates in two divisions: the foundation, headquartered in the Washington, D.C., offices of AH & LA; and the Educational Institute in Orlando, Fla., and Lansing, Mich. The foundation is the charitable giving, fund-raising, and endowed fund-management subsidiary of the American Hotel and Lodging Association.
My Summer at the Hotel Du Lac

By Kathleen MacDonald

The Hotel Du Lac, located in the small town of Bellagio, Italy, is one of the most exclusive resorts in all of Europe. Bellagio is nestled between the Swiss Alps and Lake Como. The small town was formed by a glacier that flowed down from the Alps and ran into the promontory, forcing the lake to split into two, creating the famous “Y” shape. Bellagio is located at the base of the promontory. The picturesque Hotel Du Lac is located in the center of town, in the heart of the tourist district. The 48-room luxury hotel is hard to miss with its beautiful exterior and visible charm.

Arturo Leoni grew up in Lenno, Italy, on the western shore of Lake Como, and had a dream as a young man to someday open his own hotel on Bellagio’s lakefront. Arturo’s plans were abruptly interrupted by World War II when he was held in a prison camp for six years. While interned, Arturo established lasting friendships with several of the prisoners, many of whom were famous hoteliers and restaurateurs. This kept his passion for the hospitality industry alive during the dark times. Arturo’s luck changed when, in 1954, he met June, an English tour guide, who would eventually become his wife. Arturo had talked frequently about his dream to one day live in Bellagio, known as “the pearl of Lake Como” for its beauty. After a holiday in Bellagio, June immediately shared her husband’s dream. Arturo and June heard about an old hotel that had gone on the market in Bellagio and the Leoni’s quickly capitalized on the opportunity to acquire the hotel. Arturo and June worked hard — and quickly — and were able to open the newly renovated hotel in the spring of 1956. Their warmth and elegance passed on to the staff and together the hotel provided — and continues to provide — an atmosphere that makes the constant flow of guests feel special.

The hotel is now owned and operated by Arturo and June’s son, Luca, and his wife, Jane. Luca’s mother still works daily at the hotel, providing her special warmth and caring concern to the guests. Together, Luca and Jane work diligently to maintain the example that Luca’s parents set. Since ownership has been passed down, Luca and Jane have continued the philosophy of keeping the Du Lac within the Italian tradition, but at the same time applying the qualities that appeal to international guests. Guests of the Du Lac describe it as charming and warm, qualities the Leoni family has clearly worked hard to preserve. Luca and Jane have expanded the family business by opening Hotel Bellagio, a boutique hotel, just steps away from the Du Lac. Also, The Sporting Club has been recently added as Luca has worked hard to meet the needs of his international guests.

The Leoni family continues to thrive on providing their guests with a lifestyle that makes them feel at home in what has to be the most beautiful place in the world. On the hotel’s Web site Luca states that, “We are a Lakeland family, and we have been hoteliers for generations: the pleasure of hospitality is in our blood.” Luca and Jane have three wonderful sons, Daniele, Francesco, and Federico, who all show immense interest in what one day will be their business to run.

I had the opportunity to work at the Du Lac this summer as part of the Lake Como work-abroad program offered through Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management. I never fathomed that there could be a place so beautiful. As the boat pulled into shore I couldn’t believe my eyes. There was one long strip of buildings with beautiful blooming trees that lined the edge of the lake. I was so excited to think that this was going to be the place I would call home for the next three months. The hotel is decorated beautifully with bright red hydrangeas accented by green and white striped awnings flowing in the afternoon summer breeze of Bellagio. The best part about the Du Lac is its location. The hotel is in the center of this quaint little town and directly across from the boat dock. The lake views are spectacular.

I immediately felt comfortable when meeting Luca and the rest of the Du Lac staff. They made me feel special right from the beginning. I worked in the hotel’s pastry department for the majority of the summer where I became acquainted with Greta, the head pastry chef. Greta showed me not only how to make the wonderful pastries of Italy, but she also instilled in me a sense of confidence that I will utilize for the rest of my life. Even though I was 11 hours from home, by the end of the summer, I had come to call Bellagio and the Du Lac my “second home” and I have only Niagara’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management to thank for this. Like the Hotel Du Lac, Niagara University is celebrating a milestone anniversary. The Du Lac has been in the Leoni family for 50 years and Niagara University is celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2006. Luca Leoni showed me passion and what it means to have hospitality in your blood. He taught me things that no textbook could ever teach.
Premier Group Creates Fund-Raising Opportunity

Premier Group president Burt Notarius in conjunction with Tom Kitson of Southern Wines and Spirits of Upstate New York, Tom Didio of Icon Estates, and Joe Salvatore of Salvatore’s Italian Gardens Restaurant, put together a Premier Group wine and dinner event that paired five courses with five Ruffino Wines. Even the hors d’oeuvres were paired with wines.

The beneficiary of this “Tuscan Treasures” event was the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management. Through the efforts of Kitson and Didio, all the wines were donated for this event, creating a fund-raising opportunity for the college. All the net proceeds, totaling nearly $5,000, were donated to the college. These proceeds, according to Dr. Gary D. Praetzel, dean of the college, “will help defray expenses associated with the college’s work-abroad program and be applied toward other expenses associated with the college’s practical industry applications focus.” Praetzel added that “it is our focus on practical industry applications that has differentiated our college from other programs, creating an almost seamless relationship with industry.”

Internationally known Italian wine specialist Alfredo Saurini of Icon Estates walked the dinner through an elegant dinner in an equally elegant setting, explaining why certain wines were paired with particular courses. The quality of the wines and the quality of the food and service provided by Salvatore’s Italian Gardens Restaurant kept many people remaining well after the program ended — wishing that the evening would not end.

The Premier Group is one of the 10 largest wines and spirits retailers in the country. The Premier Group works closely with the college in many ways, including team-teaching the college’s food and culture course, and having all Premier employees trained in customer service by the college’s Hospitality Training and Research Center.

Sport Students Attend Sport Marketing Association Annual Conference

Six Niagara University students in the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, accompanied by Dexter Davis, assistant professor in the college, attended the third annual Sport Marketing Association Conference in Tempe, Ariz. Nov. 10-12, 2005. SMA is a professional organization dedicated to integrating theory with practical application, bringing together academics, industry professionals, and students to expand the body of knowledge in sport marketing.

To that end, the conference included a full schedule of academic and industry presentations, panel discussions, and case study exercises as well as implementation of the first SMA Career Day, a full slate of professional development activities specifically dedicated to students. In addition to the academic sessions and Career Day, the Niagara students were treated to tours of Chase Field (formerly Bank One Ballpark), the home of the Arizona Diamondbacks; and Sun Devil Stadium, the home of the Arizona State University Sun Devils; the Arizona Cardinals and the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl.

The NU group had the chance to tour Sun Devil Stadium during the Sport Marketing Conference in Tempe, Ariz. Pictured at the stadium are (front row, l-r): Andy Chesebro, Renee Goergen, Dexter Davis, Andrea Khanzadian and Amanda Leaderer; (back row, l-r): Mike Buckley and Bob Neumann.

Do You Know Prospective Students?

Many alumni work in the hospitality, tourism and recreation industries. Do you know of any high school or college students working in your company who would be good candidates for management careers in these industries? Do you know of any community college or college students unsure of a career focus who would be a good fit for the industry’s abundant career opportunities?

If so, tell them that Niagara University’s curriculum offers:

- Bachelor of science degree in hotel and restaurant management with concentrations in foodservice management, hotel and restaurant planning and control, and restaurant entrepreneurship.
- Bachelor of science degree in tourism and recreation management with concentrations in tourism marketing and recreation and sports management.

For additional information, contact or return this form to:

Dr. Gary D. Praetzel, Dean
College of Hospitality and Tourism Management
Niagara University, NY 14109-2012
Phone: 716-286-8272
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gdp@niagara.edu
The Lodging Conference: A Student's Perspective

By Natasha Glusko

The Lodging Conference, held annually in Phoenix, provides industry leaders with an outstanding opportunity to congregate and discuss new trends and ideas within the hospitality and tourism industry. (One of the most prestigious conferences in the world, the Lodging Conference attracts major company presidents and CEOs.) This is a phenomenal experience for anyone interested in the lodging industry, whether already in the industry or looking to work in the field. From a student's perspective, the Lodging Conference exposed a great side of the hotel industry, one in which leaders, competitors and suppliers gathered together to help and support one another, offer advice, and most importantly, generate new business opportunities through networking. I was able to meet students from other universities, as well as important industry leaders, to exchange ideas and hear varying viewpoints on important issues facing the hospitality industry today. This was an extraordinary experience which has helped to solidify my love for the hospitality industry, and has helped to motivate me to make a difference in the lodging industry based on the examples of those leaders present at the 2005 Lodging Conference.

Niagara University at the Hotel Show in New York City

Niagara students attending the Hotel Show in New York City are pictured here before they toured the Waldorf-Astoria.

Pictured at right: Dr. Gary Praetzel, dean of the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, had the chance to catch up with Louis Quigliana, who organized the college's reception at the Waldorf-Astoria.

Pictured below: The College of Hospitality and Tourism Management's reception at the Waldorf=Astoria attracted a number of industry professionals. Among them, Jeff Higley (left), editor-in-chief of Hotel and Motel Management; and Tom Polski (center) and Nancy Johnson (right) from the Carlson Companies.

award, continued from page 1

communicated to the customer and how it works as a promotional tool for the brand; what results were generated for the partners; and the proposed development plans for the partnership.

The Hospitality Awards were created by MKG Group to distinguish the exemplary and innovative actions of businesses and key persons in the worldwide hotel industry. The awards rules and regulations are established and monitored by an advisory board consisting of two dozen major managers of the hotel industry and qualified persons.

The international jury, composed of 34 members, was presided over by Maurice Beaudoin, deputy general manager of Le Figaro Magazine.
College of Hospitality and Tourism Management Students Help Heart & Soul

Under the direction of Scott Beahen, director of the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management’s food service operations, the 12 students enrolled in MHR 343 Menu and Food Production provided the dinner for Heart and Soul’s recognition dinner on April 27. The students provided the dinner at the Niagara Falls food pantry’s dining room, transporting even the dishes to this off-campus location. The students did this to save on rental costs so that Heart and Soul could reap a greater profit on the dinner that supports its mission of feeding the poor. Approximately 125 individuals attended the fund-raising and recognition event. Beahen annually organizes this event to assist Heart and Soul and the college does not charge for the cost of the food. This is just another example of NU students making a difference in the community.


Zhou Presents Research at Travel Distribution Summit Europe

Dr. Zongqing Zhou, associate professor of hospitality and tourism management, has been invited to present a refereed research paper entitled “Is Human Touch Still the Golden Touch of the Travel Agents? Perspectives on the Transition From a Product-Oriented Business Model to a Marketing-Oriented Business Model” at the Travel Distribution Summit Europe to be held in London in June. The Travel Distribution Summit is the largest conference worldwide for industry leaders in travel marketing, pricing and distribution boasting over 2000 attendees, 100 speakers, 90 exhibitors, 12 seminars, and four executive sessions.

Since 1997 this annual conference has drawn top-level corporate executives in marketing, technology and pricing from the world’s most prestigious travel companies representing major airlines, hotels, online travel providers, tour operators, and travel agencies. For the first time, the 2006 summit will be adding the “Research Conference” as a stand-alone event, providing a unique opportunity for research professionals to share their insight with leading worldwide industry executives. According to conference organizers, “This conference is where leading researchers and analysts can present their cutting-edge papers to the leaders in travel.” This conference is a perfect fit for Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management—a program based on practical industry applications.

ITALY BOUND — Ten students from Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management left for Lake Como, Italy, to participate in the college’s unique 10-week work-abroad program. Front row (l-r): Casey Collins, Courtney Caley, Jennifer Arutunjan, Mark Henning, Aaron Lawler, and Dr. Gary Pradzo, dean of the college. Back row (l-r): Gina Petrocci, Priscilla Wood, Jessica Thiele, Darlene Jones, and Kathleen Mac Donald.
The mentor program, organized by the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management Alumni Association, is looking for additional members. Alumni, if you want to make a difference in a student’s life, sign up for this program! The time commitment is minimal; what you contribute is priceless. We need you! If you are interested, please return two copies of the following to the mentoring committee by Sept. 15, 2006:

1. This application form
2. Your corporate biography and resume
3. Your business card
4. A brief statement telling us your goals, aspirations, and hopes for the program and your partnership
5. Information related to what you do outside of work

Mail or e-mail to:
Gary D. Praetzel, Dean
College of Hospitality and Tourism Management
Niagara University, N.Y. 14109
gdp@niagara.edu
For more information, visit our Web site at www.niagara.edu/hospitality.

Please print

Year Graduated Niagara University: ___________________ Major: ___________________

Current Industry Category: (circle one)

- Hotel
- Group Tours and Attractions
- Sports, Incentive and Event Planning
- Meeting Planning
- Convention Centers/Bureaus/Facilities
- Restaurants/Catering

Name:___________________________________________
Title:___________________________________________
Company:_______________________________________
Business Address:________________________________

City:_________________________ State:_________ Zip:_________________________
Office Phone:____________________ Fax:____________________
E-mail Address (preferred method of communication):____________________________

For committee use only:

Home Address:____________________________________

City:_________________________ State:_________ Zip:_________________________
Phone:____________________ Fax:____________________
E-mail Address:_______________________________
Alumni Career Day — Oct. 6, 2006
All people working in the industry, alumnus or not, may participate in any/all of these Alumni Weekend events.
Friday, Oct. 6 • St. Vincent’s Hall, fourth floor
- Registration (7:30 a.m.), career panels, networking lunch, and many other events
- Networking lunch with students

College of Hospitality and Tourism Management Convocation — Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2006
Honorees:
Roger Dow, president and CEO, Travel Industry Association of America
Wolf Hengst, president, worldwide hotel operations, Four Seasons Hotel and Resorts
Bring guests to this impressive event to strengthen the college’s industry linkages.
- 4-5:15 p.m. Alumni Hall, Convocation (awards ceremony)
- 5:25-6:30 p.m. Reception, St. Vincent’s Hall, fourth floor

College of Hospitality and Tourism Management Waldorf=Astoria Reception — Sunday, Nov. 12, 2006
- 6-8 p.m. Alumni/Industry/Student Reception, Conrad Suite, fourth floor.
  Business attire. No charge.

Name: ____________________________________________________________
Company: ________________________________________________________
Job Title: _________________________________________________________
Address: _________________________________________________________
Phone: ___________________________________________________________
E-mail: ___________________________________________________________

Please return to:
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