

The Added Touch

Hotel and Restaurant Management Program

FROM THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR

It is my great pleasure to once again bring greetings from the Hotel and Restaurant Management Program at Auburn University and to invite you to read the latest installment of "The Added Touch" Newsletter. As with previous years there is much to report and I trust that you will enjoy the many creative and innovative developments that have been taking place with respect to our beloved HRMT program.



Beginning with faculty news please join me in welcoming our latest tenure track faculty member to campus. Dr. Imran Rahman has just joined us from Washington State University and will be teaching our Lodging Operations, Hospitality Law and Club Management classes at the undergraduate level and Applied Tourism Analysis at the graduate level. Imran's research specialization is sustainability and green practice in hotels with a particular emphasis on consumer perceptions of sustainable hotel practice and its influence upon buying behavior and visitation patterns. Imran is a native on Bangladesh and is a first rate cricket player. Please stop by, introduce yourselves and welcome him to campus when you have a chance. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Alecia Douglas who was recently tenured and promoted to the rank of Associate Professor and Dr. Baker Ayoun who was recently appointed as the June M. Henton Endowed Professor in the College of Human Sciences. These are considerable milestones for both faculty and a reflection of the commitment and service they have given to the HRMT program over recent years. Congratulations are also in order for Dr. Yee Ming Lee and Adjunct faculty member Gwen Lloyd Barker who successfully passed their Registered Dietician examinations. Last but not least Dr. David Martin became a father (God help us all), welcoming baby William Spencer Martin into our world on January 16, 2014 – welcome William.

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Programmatically, we have accomplished a lot over the last year. All undergraduate course changes were approved by the University Curriculum Committee and took effect over the last year. One notable exception which takes effect from this fall is the introduction of a mandatory "for credit" international study abroad requirement for all new and transfer students. As you know, we have been working hard to develop our international program options for students over recent years. The key challenge has been identifying international partners with comparable value systems and good quality study options. I am delighted to report that we can now offer a variety of options to students spanning Europe, South East Asia, the Middle East, South America, and Africa. In all cases, we have visited with the host organization and can testify to the quality of the program experience. I am delighted to report that I joined the first cohort of students to study at Stellenbosch University in the spring semester and this was an absolutely phenomenal experience. So freshmen and transfer students, please get with your academic advisors sooner rather than later to look into the options available to you and give thought to your program of study and how this requirement will be accommodated.

At the graduate study level, I am delighted to report that we have now been formally approved by the Alabama Commission for Higher Education to deliver two new formal options in HRMT at the Masters and Doctoral levels. I am also ecstatic to report that we received Board of Trustees and Commission approval to advance with the development and delivery of our new Graduate Certificate Program in Brewing Sciences. The program was officially launched on August 15, 2014 with a strategic offsite for all students at the Oskar Blues Brewery in Longmont, Colorado.

Another highlight over the last year was our annual Hospitality Gala; held on April 10 at the The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center. This year, we continued our tradition of excellence by honoring Niki Leondakis, Chief Executive Officer of Commune Hotels and Resorts.



Kimpton was named one of Fortune Magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" under her leadership. Niki was cited as one of the "100 Most Influential Women" by the San Francisco Business Times yearly from 2002 to 2010 (in 2011, she was inducted into its honor roll), recognized as one of "30 Women Power Players" by Nation's Restaurant News, and named one of the "Most Powerful Women in Travel" by Travel Agent Magazine. The recipient of industry awards too numerous to list, she has also devoted herself to Dress for Success, an international nonprofit providing interview suits and other career assistance to low-income women. A native of West Springfield, Massachusetts, Niki now lives with her husband in San Francisco. It was an absolute honor to present Niki with the Horst Schulze Award for Excellence in Hospitality. Please join me in congratulating Niki on this achievement and thank her for agreeing to serve as an ambassador for our program.

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As you will read later in the Newsletter, this year's event showcased the work of six renowned chefs; two of which are accomplished alumni of our very own program.

Chefs Shaun Hergatt, Jose Chesa and Dallas Marsteller teamed up with Auburn's Chefs Rob McDaniel, David Bancroft and Leonardo Maurrelli to put on yet another gastronomic extravaganza.

This year's event also showcased the wines of four internationally reknowned wine makers including Dominic & Amy Chappellet, Emmanuel Kimiji and Andrew Phipps. It is little wonder then that this year's event was another outstanding success raising over \$240,000 to help support continuing programming efforts for both faculty and students. As in previous years, I take my hat off to Mrs. Gwen Barker, Dr. Alecia Douglas, Mr. Hans van der Reijden and his team, Mr. Jason Gouge and all of the students, administrators, and volunteers for the work they put into planning and executing this event. Thank you all!

Of course there is a lot more to report, but I will leave this to the faculty and students of the program. I congratulate each and every one of you for your tireless efforts over the last year. I also take my hat off to our alumni, advisory board members, and donors for your continued support and belief in our mission. We have travelled a long way with our beloved HRMT program and with your continued support we have a long and exciting journey ahead of us.

In closing I wish you all another great year as part of the Auburn HRMT family and fingers crossed for another successful football season.

War Eagle!

Martin

HRMT Program

VISION:

The HRMT Vision is to be recognized globally as a leader in hospitality and tourism education and a Program of choice for students, faculty, and employers.

MISSION:

With its focus on instructional, research and outreach initiatives, the HRMT Program's mission is to educate exceptional leaders for the state of Alabama and global hospitality and tourism industries. We concentrate on service excellence, social and ethical responsibility and diversity in a practically oriented and intellectually challenging learning environment.

CANON:

The HRMT canon is to graduate students of unparalleled quality for the hospitality and tourism industries by delivering a unique educational experience.

UPDATES ABOUT FACULTY

Dr. Martin O'Neill assumed the presidency of ICHRIE in July. He will also be honored with a Honorary Doctorate by the North American Food Equipment Manufacturers Association at their national meeting in Anaheim, California in February 2015.

Dr. David Martin received the 2014 Outstanding Faculty Member award for the College of Human Sciences.

Dr. Alecia Douglas was recently promoted to Associate Professor. She recently completed a two-month internship with the Mobile Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) in Mobile, Alabama.

Dr. Baker Ayoun has been appointed as the June M. Henton Endowed Professor in the College of Human Sciences Hotel and Restaurant Management program.

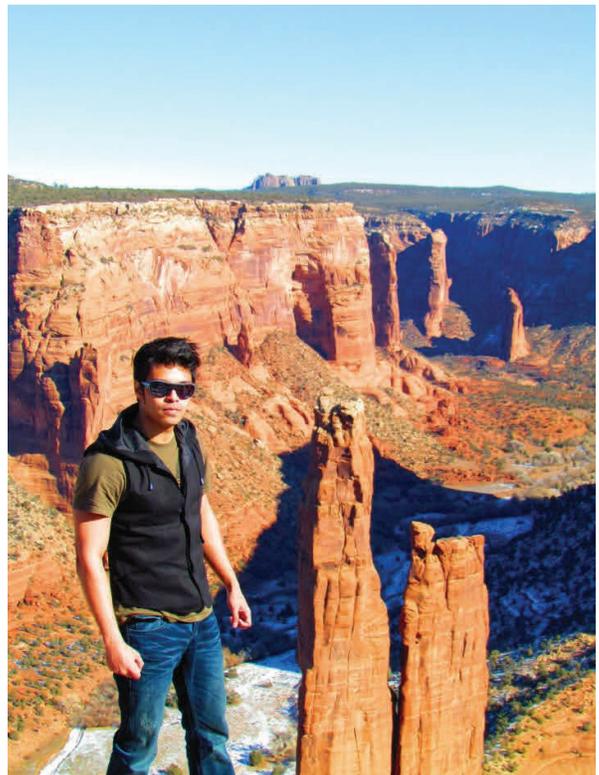
Dr. Yee Ming Lee completed her professional internship at a lodging facility this summer. She also successfully passed the Dietetic Registration exam in July.

Dr. Imran Rahman joined us from Washington State University. Dr. Imrahn is currently teaching Advanced Tourism Analysis.

GET TO KNOW DR. IMRAN RAHMAN

Dr. Imran Rahman...

- Is originally from Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- Is an avid traveler, cricket fan, and car enthusiast.
- Spent a semester at University of Hawaii, Hilo as part of the National Student Exchange Program.
- Worked at a Marriott property in Massachusetts for a year as a Night Auditor and Front-Desk Supervisor
- Was awarded the best graduate researcher from Washington State University's College of Business in 2013.



MEET THE AUHCC EXECUTIVE TEAM

Hans Van der Reijden, Managing Director, Hotel Operations & Educational Initiatives. Mr. Van der Reijden assists the Hospitality Gala class.

Donna M. Golden, SPHR, CHE, Director of Education & Human Resource. Ms. Golden teaches the Professional Development class.

John Hopkins, Director of Finance. Mr. Hopkins assists the Hospitality Practicum class in the area of finance.

Dave Merryman, Executive Assistant Manager, Room Division. Mr. Merryman assists the Practicum class in the area of rooms operations.

Adam Keeshan, Executive Assistant Manager, Food and Beverage. Mr. Keeshan assists the Practicum class in the area of food & beverage operations.

Fernando Cruz, Executive Chef. Chef Cruz assists the Food Production class.

Todd Scholl, Director of Sales & Marketing. Mr. Scholl assists the Hospitality Gala class.



Mr. van der Reijden



Ms. Golden



Mr. Hopkins



Mr. Merryman



Mr. Keeshan



Chef Cruz



Mr. Scholl

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

Auburn Tiger Study Abroad Program In Jordan

By Baker Ayoun

For the second consecutive year, the *CHS Abroad in Jordan* program has witnessed a great success. Five students went with Dr. Ayoun to Jordan during the Summer of 2014. For three weeks, students learned firsthand about the cultural, political, social, and economic diversity of this country and the broader Middle East region, and experienced the history, customs and hospitality of its people. The *CHS Abroad in Jordan* remains the only study abroad option at Auburn that is going to a country in the Middle East region.



By Gwen Barker

I have recently returned from a three week journey through the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, led by Dr. Baker Ayoun. We visited three of the six Roman Decapolis cities that are in Jordan - The Citadel in Amman, Jerash, and Umm Qais. These ancient cities are in varying stages of excavation with Umm Qais being the most recent find.

We visited one of the Seven Wonders of the World at Petra – an incredible city carved into the rock walls that surround the city. Two castles from Crusades times were also included on the tour – Ajlun Castle and Kerak Castle. Tours of the ancient cities and castles allowed us to see how people lived during those ancient time periods.



Auburn Tiger Study Abroad Program In Jordan

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The experience that brought history to life was the three nights that spent in the desert at actual Bedouin campsites – sleeping in tents, singing and dancing around the campfires, and cooking dinner in a pot buried in the hot desert sand. The time in the desert was enhanced by visiting Lawrence of Arabia's cave and taking a long ride on a camel.

Jordan is part of the Holy Land for Muslims, Christians, and Jews. This was also an important part of the three-week tour. We visited the Jordan River and the site where John the Baptist baptized Jesus, climbed Mount Nebo where Moses first saw the Promised Land, and visited the church at Mataba where the largest mosaic map of the Holy Land is still displayed where it was put together so long ago. These students were able to join the Mass performed by Pope Francis at the International Stadium in Amman.

We floated in the salty water of the Dead Sea, went Scuba diving in the beautiful Red Sea, and stuck our feet in the Jordan River. We ate fantastic food from one end of the country to the other and visited in the homes of welcoming families who provided cooking lessons, fantastic dinners, and hospitality. The friendly, open hospitality in Jordan is very close to the Auburn spirit.

Auburn spirit was an important part of the trip. Barely a day went by that someone wasn't wearing Auburn colors and showing Auburn pride. We got a big "War Eagle" at one of the historic sites and took pictures with the Auburn flag at a desert overlook. Everywhere is Auburn country and the Auburn abroad programs are allowing students to visit countries all around the world as part of their educational experience at Auburn University. War Eagle.



European Backpacking Trip

By David Martin

This past summer, 11 undergraduate students, one graduate student, and two faculty members lead the European Backpacking Trip.

It was a huge success and the following cities were visited: Amsterdam, Bruges, Brussels, Paris, Strasbourg, Munich, Prague, Salzburg, Vienna, Florence and Rome. Students interested in participating in the trip next summer should contact Dr. Martin.

By Haley Hurt

This summer I had the opportunity to go on the Europe Backpacking Trip. Along with 10 other students, a graduate student, and two professors. We travelled all over Europe to 11 different cities starting in Amsterdam and ending in Italy. We traveled to each city staying for two to four days with one student fully in charge. The semester before is when we had the chance to meet everyone, learn everything necessary for the trip, and learn how to plan every detail of the city each of us was given.

On the trip, though each of us was very focused on our city and making sure every detail was perfectly planned out, we all had the best experience. Traveling by train, going to large and small cities, and getting the chance to experience so many different cuisines, cultures, and the hospitality industry was more valuable than I could have ever thought. Not only did I get a chance to work on leadership, communication, and flexibility with the group; but, as an HRMT student, seeing so many perspectives of the tourism, lodging, and food & beverage industries was fascinating.

Between the educational experiences, friends, two influential professors, the food, and the sights, it was an all-around great summer.



Escargot in Paris



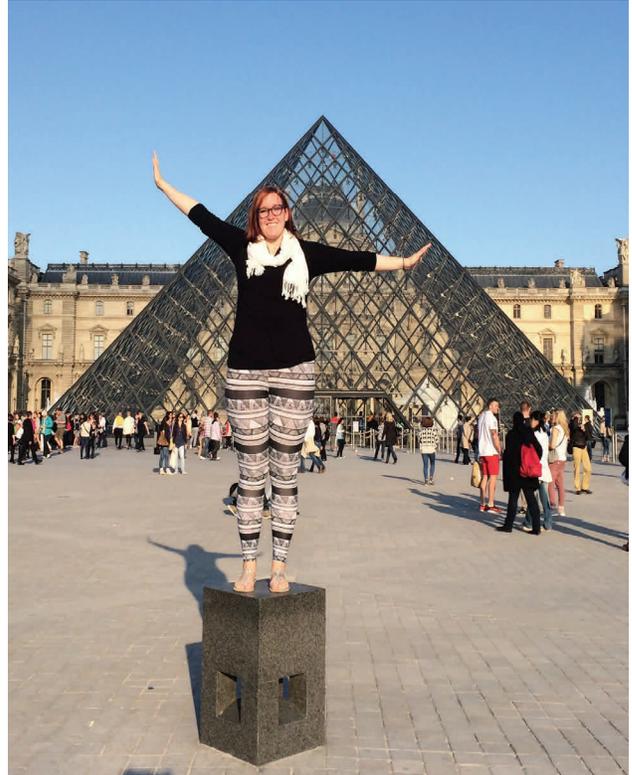
Piazza Navona in Rome

European Backpacking Trip

By Madison Blough

What are your expectations? Many people ask that question when you tell them you will be traveling to another country or, in our case, seven different countries in Europe. This summer Dr. Martin, Dr. O'Neil and Kyle Townsend took myself and 10 other students on a backpacking trip through Europe. We started in Amsterdam then traveled to Bruges, Brussels, Paris, Strasbourg, Munich, Prague, Vienna, Salzburg, Florence, and ended our trip in Rome. Each student was expected to plan two or three days in an assigned city.

The focus of our trip was culinary tourism, so in the pre-planning, we tried to find different traditional restaurants that represented each culture. Some of the highlights of the trip were the tours. In Bruges, we went on three tours: a brewery, chocolate museum, and a frites museum. One of the most amazing tours was the Florence Food and Wine Tour.



Another benefit of this study abroad program is that you get to tour castles and see the Eiffel Tower and the Vatican. How many people do you know can say they got to see the Pope speak? You also get to come home with amazing pictures of rose gardens in Vienna or pictures of you and your friends on a Sound of Music tour. The most amazing thing about this entire experience is how much I have changed and how my expectations were not only reached, but I discovered that I had more expectations than I thought. In the end, the reality was a million times better than the planning and building of expectations.

Study Abroad In South Africa

By Jessica Perryman



During the spring semester, I had the wonderful opportunity to travel to a small beach town of Port Alfred, South Africa, to study hospitality at Stenden South Africa with two other Auburn students. I took a couple classes and had the chance to work in their student-run hotel, MyPond. Over 10 weeks, I experienced a completely different way of learning, as well as a different way of living. Being able to encounter new cultures and meet so many new people was a blessing in and of itself.



While I was there, I had the opportunity to do adventurous things that I would not have been able to, had I not gone. I had the opportunity to pet lions and tigers, ride elephants, learn how to surf in Jeffreys Bay, go cage diving with Great White Sharks, skydive, kayak, and walk beside a giraffe. Though I was able to do so many "bucket list" activities, none of them came close to how much I enjoyed making the life-long friends I did at Stenden, and the relationships built with the people in the townships. I absolutely fell in love with the country, cultures, and people and hope to move back there in the future.



HRMT EVENTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Eta Sigma Delta (ESD) International Hospitality

By Alecia C. Douglas

This October, ESD will be initiating 14 new members to the Auburn Chapter of the honors society. New initiates will get to hear from this year's guest speaker, Dr. Martin O'Neill, the current president for the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (iCHRIE). iCHRIE is the only global organization that advocates for hospitality and tourism education at the tertiary level and is also the umbrella organization that provides guidance and support for the 100-plus chapters of the ESD Honors Society. After welcoming initiates into the Auburn Chapter, ESD President Mackenzie Howard and her current board members Marie Mitchell (Vice President), Calder Taylor (Secretary), and Danielle Cannady (Committee of 19 Representative) will travel with six other ESD members and Dr. Alecia Douglas (Faculty Advisor) to New York City on Nov. 6 – 10, 2014 to participate in the annual ESD breakfast and general meeting, as well as attend the annual International Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Show at the Jacob Javits Center. The event is the largest, most dynamic exhibition for the hospitality industry in the world. Students will participate in some of the seminars, meetings and vendor sessions, as well as a number of site visits and informational interviews with different leaders in the business.

Dr. Martin O'Neill answered questions from students during the HRMT Freshmen Orientation.

HRMT Freshmen Orientation

HRMT Freshmen Orientation was held on August 27 at the auditorium of The Hotel at Auburn University. The orientation facilitated the transition of new students by creating a sense of belonging coupled with social and intellectual integration into the HRMT program. A total of 59 freshmen participated in this orientation. Dr. Martin O'Neill, the department chair, opened the event by welcoming students and introducing the faculty. Mr. Hans van der Reijden, managing director of The Hotel at Auburn University, introduced each of his executive team members and also explained about the partnership between the HRMT program and the AU hotel. Next, Dr. David Martin addressed key information every HRMT freshmen should know, including internships, academic advising, and student organizations. Students were invited to a reception afterwards to interact with the faculty. "Beneficial" and "informational" were some words used by students as they described this event.



The 10th Annual Epicurean Tour of Northern California

By Alecia C. Douglas



On May 11 to 17, 14 HRMT undergraduate and graduate students participated in the 10th annual Epicurean Tour of Northern California. After being selected from a competitive pool of candidates, students were exposed to some of the finest wineries and vineyards, resorts and restaurants in the famed wine region over an intensive seven day study tour. As with previous years, the tour delivered on the promise of offering a variety of exceptional and unique experiences from exclusive tours and rich learning exercises to decadently catered meals. From “Vine” to “Dine”, the annual tour provided a firsthand view of all aspects critical in the production of wine and champagne through to pairing with the finest and freshest produce the region has to offer.

This engaging experience is made possible through the extensive planning and networking efforts of tour organizers, Mr. Hans Van Der Reijden and Mrs. Lisa Van Der Reijden, who have lead and coordinated a challenging array of activities in the program for ten solid years. Their passion and support has been back over the years by the generosity of many donors who share in the vision of providing life-altering learning experiences to the next generation of hospitality and tourism leaders. Without the continued support of all our wonderful donors this hallmark trip would simply not be possible.

Sites included in this year’s tour were the Carmel Valley Ranch, Talbott Vineyards, Opus One, Trinchero Family Estates, Auberge du Soleil, Quintessa, Beringer Estates, Culinary Institute of America, Far Niente, Bouchon Bistro, Bouchon Bakery and The French Laundry Gardens, Franciscan Estates, The Q Restaurant & Bar, Seguin Moreau, Domaine Carneros, Lynmar Estates, and the Torc Restaurant. Each venue was simply incomparable, outstanding in their own right and provided unique insights for this year’s participants who were actively engaged with professionals at the height of their careers.

This “classroom in the valley” experience was enriched with a ride through the vineyards of Talbott on a 1950s firetruck and guided tour with Winemaker Dan Karlsen, family style dining with Michael Silacci of Opus One, and lunch hosted by Agustin and Valeria Huneeus at Quintessa following an outdoor lecture overlooking the vineyards, a memorable dinner and tour at Far Niente with Hillary McGonigle, and a breakfast feast with Ursula Zopp and Bradley Reynolds, senior executives at Auberge du Soleil. The experience was not without several competitions where students, donors, administrative personnel, faculty and tour organizers competed in an engaging scavenger hunt at Carmel Valley Ranch, team building exercise at Franciscan, and the Aroma Wheel educational game at Trinchero.

Tour participants also heard from wine visionary Gary Pisoni of Pisoni Vineyards; Carol Chorbajian, the owner of CCM&E Destination Services; Janine Chiccourat, general manager of the Portola Hotel & Spa; Jeff Virnig, Winemaker at Robert Sinskey Vineyards; Emmanuel Kemiji, Master Sommelier and Proprietor of Miura Vineyards and Clos Pissarra.



World Leisure Congress 2014 News

By Patience Marsh

The City of Mobile made a global debut by hosting an international conference where academic professionals, policymakers, and business leaders in the industry of leisure, tourism, and recreation gathered for the first time in the United States. The World Leisure Organization, an international nonprofit, held its biannual World Leisure Congress 2014 conference Sept. 7-12, at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center in Mobile, Alabama.

The World Leisure Congress 2014 was an event promoting the research and development of building social, cultural, economic and sustainable communities and nations, which contribute to the health and wellness of its residents. With participants spanning 44 different countries, the conference featured respected world leaders such as the former president of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, and the 18th Surgeon General of the United States, Dr. Regina M. Benjamin.



Patience Marsh, a HRMT senior was one of the attendees of World Leisure Congress 2014

Several of the other keynote speakers and presenters who spoke during the event were Andres Duany, founder of the Congress for the New Urbanism; Jo Bonner, former Alabama Congressman and Vice Chancellor for Government Relationship and Economic Development; Roger Dow, president and chief executive officer of the U.S. Travel Association; Celine Cousteau, founder and executive director of CauseCentric Productions; Anthony Vanky, researcher and partner strategist at the MIT Senseable-City Lab; Muffy Davis and April Holmes, gold medalists in the Paralympic Games; Edward Hall, from the Bureau of Indian Affairs Department of Interior; Daniel Levine, director of The Avant-Guide Institute and Global Editor of WikiTrend.org; and Rowan Simons, president of Greater China for Guinness World Records Limited.

The World Leisure Organization (WLO) was founded in 1952 as an international, non-governmental association of various individuals and organizations supporting leisure as integral to improving quality of life. The WLO supports the creation of a global civil society and promotes the research and development of social, cultural, economic, and sustainable environments that contribute to the well-being of individuals, communities and nations. The 20-member governing board has international representation with specialties in tourism, parks and recreation services, the arts and culture, sports and exercise, theme and entertainment centers, children and youth, leisure education, environmental studies, gerontology, and health promotion and wellness. Every two years, the WLO convenes the World Leisure Congress to share academic findings and learn from one another. The World Leisure Congress 2016 will be held in Durban, South Africa.

World Leisure Congress 2014 News

By Alana Dillette

This year, the World Leisure Congress (WLC) was held in the United States for the first time in its history. Attracting academic scholars, industry professionals, and international speakers from over 40 countries, the conference provided a multi-disciplinary outlook on topics ranging from tourism development to exploring the human condition. As a doctoral student focusing on Hospitality and Tourism Management, WLC provided an atmosphere different than any other conference I have attended thus far.



Each morning, all conference attendees gathered to engage with keynote speakers representing a wide range of organizations and topics including sports, economic development, tourism, travel trends, health, wellness, and education. Following these keynote presentations, attendees were given ample opportunities to meet individually and network with these professionals. Engaging in this opportunity expanded my network immensely and aided in my growing interest for working with other disciplines and with the industry directly. All presenters and keynote speakers were very willing and open in this environment to engage in discussion.



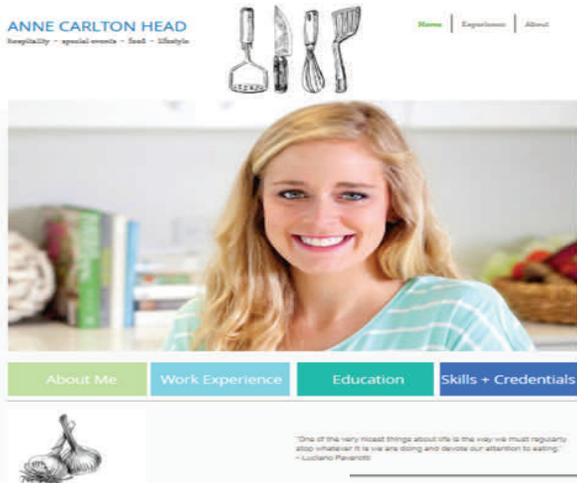
Alana Dillette, a HRMT doctoral student, presented at the World Leisure Congress 2014.

Presentations at the conference also covered a wide range of fields and topics. Notable to me was the growing interest in health and wellness. Across numerous disciplines including sociology, psychology, kinesiology, tourism, community development and sport management, health and wellness made its appearance. My presentation at the conference focused on cross-cultural understanding as a result of volunteer tourism. Within my seminar were numerous scholars representing multiple disciplines and countries. Presenting to this audience provided me with valuable feedback and suggestions from a standpoint very different than I am accustomed to. The World Leisure Congress was nothing less than an eye opening opportunity aiding in the advancement of my career as a hospitality and tourism researcher and educator. I am thankful to have had this experience at my fingertips and am eager to create lasting professional relationships as a result of attending WLC.

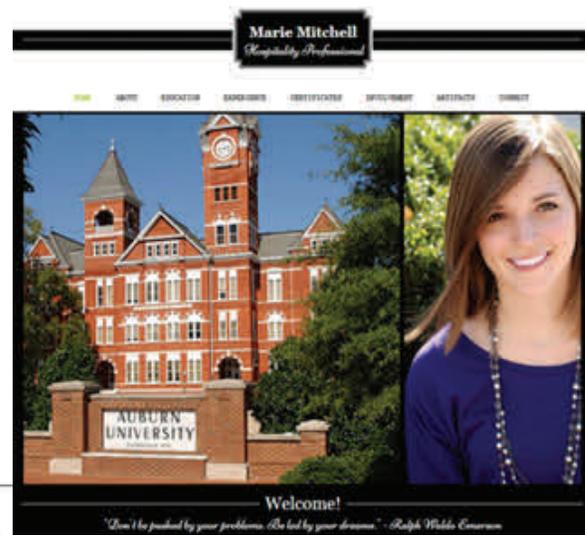
HRMT Seniors Recognized at The Outstanding ePortfolio Award Luncheon

By Alecia C. Douglas

On April 30 three HRMT seniors Anne Carlton Head (Class of 2014 and ESD Member), Patience Marsh (ESD Member), and Marie Mitchell (ESD Member) were nominated and selected among 18 finalists in the first Outstanding ePortfolio Award Luncheon hosted by Auburn University Provost Timothy Boosinger. In the first year of this project, finalists represented seven of the 15 colleges on Auburn's campus. Marsh received one of five honorable mention awards for her superior portfolio. The ePortfolio Project is a new strategic initiative that promotes student learning through the creation of an integrative portfolio where academic and professional experiences and learning are communicated in a reflective, visual way for potential employers and graduate school recruiters. Students design their ePortfolios as part of the requirements for the Hospitality Information Technology class each spring semester. To view the ePortfolios websites of the HRMT finalist, click on their names or pictures below.



[Anne Carlton Head](#)



[Marie Mitchell](#)



[Patience Marsh](#)

[Honorable Mention
Award Recipient](#)

HRMT Scholarship News

Six HRMT students were awarded a total of \$8,000 in scholarship monies from the American Hotel and Lodging Education Foundation and the Alabama Travel Council. Pictured here with Dr. Alecia Douglas and Hans van der Reijden are scholarship recipients Meagan Campbell and Elyse Jokich. All recipients were honored at a luncheon hosted the Alabama Travel Council at the Alabama Governor's Conference on Tourism at The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center on July 21, 2014.



STR Certifications

Excitingly, 54 students (96%) enrolled in the HRMT 4500 Strategic Hospitality Management for the Spring semester 2014 have earned the industry-based STAR Certification in Hotel Industry Analytics. According to STR, *"Achieving this distinction announces that these students have a place among the best graduates in their profession and opens the doors to future career opportunities."*

FEATURED STUDENT

By Haley McCarrell

Each year, 10 universities are invited to select one hospitality student to participate in the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Foundation's annual Lodging Conference. This year, Auburn University has been invited to participate, and we are proud to present senior Haley McCarrell, as our representative. The conference will take place Oct. 20-23 at the Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa in Phoenix. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage in a number of educational sessions and "think tanks" that focus on current industry issues and trends. Students are able to get an in-depth look at some of the common issues hotel firms face, from development to finances to operations. Not only does the Lodging Conference provide an incredible learning experience, it allows these students a fantastic opportunity to network with presidents, CEOs, and other industry leaders.

Some of the companies that will be represented at the conference include Best Western International, Hilton Worldwide, Hyatt Hotels Corporation, IHG, Marriott International, and Wyndham Hotel Group. The 2014 AH&LEF Lodging Conference will prove to be a life-changing experience, and Haley is very excited to engage with many of the trailblazers in the hospitality industry.



Graduate Student Updates and Achievements

During the past year, HRMT graduate students have accomplished much. Many have presented extensively at national and international conferences, published articles in peer-reviewed journals, reviewed manuscripts for journals and conferences, and received several internal and external awards.

About half of the doctoral students were teaching assistants last year, with several of them teaching HRMT undergraduate courses autonomously. They continue to be ranked very favorably by their students.

The HRMT graduate programs welcome new students starting this Fall. Dalal Alkordi, Patti Northcutt, and Erol Sozen have been admitted into the PhD program, while Cheng Wang, Yujia Wang, Angela Cochran, and Marcos Herrera have been admitted into the Master's program. We welcome these students and look forward to the expertise and diversity they bring to our graduate programs.

In addition, Kyle Townsend traveled to Brazil to present a paper that he co-authored with Dr. Martin at the International Sport and Society Conference.

In the first offering of the new doctoral graduate class, Advanced Hospitality Management Research and Applications, in Fall 2013, four students were successful in submitting their course work for stand-up and poster presentations at the recently concluded annual ICHRIE Summer Conference in San Diego. The students were Jennifer Calhoun, whose poster presentation focused on applying the concept of the learning organization in the context of hospitality and tourism business models; Sara Ghezzi, who investigated the food safety violations in the US food truck; and Alana Dillette and Kyle Townsend, who collaborated on a study of the impacts of sport tourism. The course taught by Dr. Alecia Douglas will be next offered in Fall 2015.



HOSPITALITY GALA

By Gwen Barker

The Hospitality Gala is the signature event for the HRMT program to raise funds to support the undergraduate, masters and doctoral degrees. The 2014 event on April 10 at The Hotel at Auburn University successfully raised \$240,000 through live and silent auctions and ticket sales.

The evening started with a cocktail reception, during which guests enjoyed conversations with internationally renowned chefs and winemakers while savoring various wines and appetizers. A silent auction was held concurrently, followed by a four-course plated dinner from Chef Shaun Hergatt, Chef Jose Chesa, Chef Rob McDaniel, Chef Dallas Marsteller, Chef David Bancroft, and Chef Leonardo Maurelli. Their highly sophisticated and enticing dishes were the true reflection of their culinary specialization.

The live auction was a highlight of the evening. A total of 11 fantastic items were showcased, including tour packages to some of the most unique and famous tourist attractions in the world. One of the country's most renowned hoteliers was recognized with the Horst Schulze Award for Excellence in Hospitality, Ms. Niki Leondakis, Chief Executive Officer of Commune Hotels and Resorts.



The success of this event would not be possible without the generous contributions from friends of the HRMT program and the many local, national and international companies who continue to support this annual event. We also credit much of the success to the hard work of the faculty and students enrolled in the Catering and Event Management class, who involved themselves in all facets of the event including set up, registration, guest services, overseeing both the live and silent auctions, and the overall execution of the event.

The continue success of The Hospitality Gala can also be directly linked to the strong partnership that the Department on Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Management has with the Capella Hotel Group at the Auburn University Hotel and Conference Center. The hotel team under the guidance of partner and general manager Hans van der Reijden gives generously of their time and talent to teach the students how to create and execute this elaborate event. The students are fortunate to learn from professionals working at the hotel in all aspects of the process from event planning and vendor selection to the operational details of the event night itself including the one of a kind opportunity to work with the visiting chefs and winemakers. The Hospitality Gala is definitely the beneficiary of the Capella Group's luxurious locations and talented chefs. Each year several of the trips and visiting chefs are from Capella Hotels. The department is fortunate to have this dynamic partnership.



BREWING SCIENCE PROGRAM UPDATES

Auburn University's inaugural Brewing Science and Operations class took to the Colorado mountains this August for the program's formal launch. Students and faculty attended a three-day strategic offsite at the home of industry partner, Oskar Blues Brewing, and enjoyed what is termed the Oskar Blues Immersion experience.

The event was a huge success for students, faculty and partners from Oskar Brewing who had the opportunity to introduce students to their many and varied production and service sites throughout the region and their fundamental company values, mission and vision which of course to mirror to those of the College of Human Sciences – namely enhancing the quality of life of others.



Four branches of the U.S. Armed Forces as represented in this year's class. Pictured, from left, are Capt. Thomas Vaught, Marines; Petty Officer 3rd Class (Retired) Paul Hurley, Navy; Staff Sgt. Jake Duffy, Air Force; Auburn's Dr. Martin O'Neill, kneeling; and Lt. Col. (Retired) Eric Endries, Army.

The program has been in planning mode for three years and was finally approved by the Auburn Board of Trustees and the Alabama Commission on Higher Education in spring 2013. Faculty have been in curriculum production mode ever since and are now live with what is a unique distance education product and student learning management system – SCHOOX. This first class has a total of 17 students drawn from all parts of the country and different background. All students have a passion for brewing at either the leisure or commercial level, and all want to advance their

knowledge on the brewing process and the potential of craft brewing as a secondary career option. The program is offered as a Graduate Certificate in Brewing Science and Operations and requires that students complete a total of six distance education courses – one of which is an industrial practicum that is taken at a commercial brewery. The program looks forward to realizing Auburn's long term objectives to develop a full Masters degree in Brewing Science.



(Left) AU Brew student Zach (Chef) Laborde at the Oskar Blues' Hops Farm, Longmont, Colorado.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Whip Morrison Triplett



The Triplett family

A 1992 graduate of Auburn University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Hotel and Restaurant Management, Whip Morrison Triplett has more than 30 years of hospitality experience. He started his hospitality career in 1983 when he took a job as a dishwasher at a large volume catfish house in his hometown of Anniston, Alabama. In 1984, as a high school sophomore, he was part of the opening team at The Victoria Inn - an adaptive reuse of an 1887 historic mansion in Anniston. After high school, he continued to work in various positions at the Victoria while attending Jacksonville State University until he transferred to Auburn in 1988. Once at Auburn, Whip was hired as part of the opening team at The Hotel at Auburn University Hotel and Dixon Conference Center where, in 1989, he met his wife Stephanie (Ehart) Triplett '90.

After graduating from Auburn, Whip accepted a position at the Perdido Beach Hilton in Orange Beach, Alabama. Whip and Stephanie later moved to Asheville, North Carolina, where they worked for the nationally recognized Grove Park Inn with fellow HRMT alumnus, Lee Thornton '89.

Over the next several years, Whip moved around the Southeast holding executive positions with the Columbus Hilton as rooms executive, the Hilton at University Place in Charlotte, North Carolina as assistant general manager and the Hilton at Lake Lanier Islands as rooms executive. In 1997, he was hired as the opening general manager for the Hilton Garden Inn in Alpharetta, Georgia, only the fourth Hilton Garden Inn in the nation at the time. Whip went on to be part of the opening team for the fifth and sixth Hilton Garden Inns to open in the system nationwide.

Whip currently serves as executive vice president for North Point Hospitality Group, joining the company in August 2001. In that capacity, he oversees the daily operation of the company, including hotel operations for all North Point owned- and managed- hotels, construction of current projects, and due diligence of potential hotel development opportunities. North Point Hospitality Group is an award winning hotel owner, developer and operator of brand defining hotels throughout the Southeast with franchise partners like Hilton and Marriott. They currently own nine hotels with two more under construction.

Whip serves on the HRMT Advisory Board, a responsibility he takes seriously. With a clear commitment to the Auburn Family, he and his wife recently established the Whip M. & Stephanie S. Triplett Endowed Scholarship in the Hotel and Restaurant Management. Both Whip and Stephanie self-funded their education at Auburn and they both know what a big difference even a small scholarship can make in the life of an HRMT student. Whip acknowledges that he was not an exemplary student - often struggling to maintain a balance between a 50 hour week and a full course load at Auburn - but he and Stephanie consider themselves blessed by both their time at Auburn and in the industry. It is their hope that, through their scholarship, they can be a blessing to a student as well.

NEWS FROM OUR SERVICE EXCELLENCE LABORATORY

THE HOTEL AT AUBURN UNIVERSITY AND DIXON CONFERENCE CENTER

The Hotel at Auburn University & Dixon Conference Center is located on campus and just a short walk from the excitement of downtown Auburn. It has 225 guestrooms and eleven suites which offer guests a sense of true Southern Hospitality. The Hotel at Auburn University is one of the independent hotels managed by The Capella Hotel Group, based out of Atlanta, GA, and serves as a laboratory for our Hospitality Management students in all operational areas.

Capella Hotel Group has partnered with Auburn University in developing a world leading curriculum for the university's undergraduate and graduate programs in Hospitality Management. This unique partnership has allowed the hotel executive management team and HRMT faculty to work hand-in-hand in team teaching courses such as; Practicum, Beverage Appreciation and Food Production which are all conducted in the hotel in order to provide a real world setting versus a classroom setting.

In order to ensure our students are taught in a world class environment, several improvements and renovations will have been completed by the end of 2014. In the summer of 2014 the hotel switched over to Opera, the most widely used property management system globally. In November and December the hotel will undergo a full renovation of the lobby, front desk and the elevators, a project which was spearheaded by a senior level class in Interior Design within the College of Human Sciences. This project provided these students an opportunity to work with Hospitality Designers from F.A. Hunter & Associates out of Atlanta and see their final design implemented.

In 2015, construction will start on a Porte Cochere which will significantly enhance the arrival experience and process.



The Conference Center at the hotel, which amounts to 22,000 SF of meeting space, will go under a full renovation in the summer of 2015 to ensure we continue to compete for meetings and conferences on a state level.

Watch our Chef and co-faculty member, Chef Fernando Cruz, on the 13th Season of Hell's Kitchen every Wednesday on FOX. Chef Cruz joined the hotel in December and has taken the Food Production Class to new levels.



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NEWS FROM



CAPELLA™
HOTEL GROUP



“Lobby Lounge” of Solis, Nanjing.

Capella Hotel Group celebrated the openings of its two facilities, Capella Marigot Bay Resort and Marina and Han Yue Lou, a Solís Managed Hotel.

Han Yue Lou Hotel Nanjing, a Solís managed hotel, opened on March 22 offering 319 rooms of which 124 are suites, a diverse selection of dining and entertainment concepts, a world-class spa, a fitness center that features an indoor heated lap pool and 25,000 square feet of ultra-modern meetings and events space. The hotel will be a premier location for guests and visitors as it is connected to the Yurun International Plaza complex, which offers dining, entertainment, retail outlets, and luxury serviced apartments.

The luxury hotel features interior design by the award-winning firm, BAMO of San Francisco, complemented by innovative restaurant designs by SPIN from Japan.

“We’re pleased to have the opportunity to open this world-class hotel in one of China’s most historic and important cities,” said Horst Schulze, Chairman and CEO of Capella Hotel Group, the parent company of Solís Hotels and Resorts.

Adjacent to the resort, Capella Marina at Marigot Bay is Saint Lucia’s premier berthing destination for luxury, mega yachts from around the world. The Marina Village is open year-round and offers a collection of upscale shops and boutiques along with a bank, gourmet supermarket, and new restaurant. The 124-room property features the following:

World-Class Service. Capella Hotels and Resorts brings its devotion to genuinely caring hospitality and deeply personal travel experiences to the west coast of Saint Lucia.

Signature Activities. Saint Lucia’s pristine sea and mountains provide the perfect backdrop for Capella’s curated Signature Activities to enhance their guests’ island experience.

Exploratory Cuisine. Gracious service and creative cuisine may be enjoyed in a variety of settings throughout the resort, from its signature restaurant high above the waters of Marigot Bay to a marina café, swim-up pool bar and raw bar and a distillery-inspired lounge for sampling the Caribbean’s premier rums and cigars.



Capella Marigot Bay



College of Human Sciences

Auburn University HRMT Program

The Added Touch
HRMT Newsletter edited by:
Yee Ming Lee, Ph.D., R.D.
Assistant Professor
Department of Nutrition, Dietetics, and
Hospitality Management
College of Human Sciences
Auburn University
Email: ymllee@auburn.edu

For questions or enquiries about the
HRMT Program, please contact:
Ms. Tanya Stringer
Administrative Support Assistant
Department of Nutrition, Dietetics, and
Hospitality Management
328 Spidle Hall
Auburn, AL 36849
Phone: 334-844-2211
Fax: 334-844-3268

Please visit our website at: <http://www.humsci.auburn.edu/hrmt/>

