PTI STUDENTS GAIN BUSINESS EXPERIENCE
WITH FAMILIARIZATION TRIPS IN HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT MAJORS

39 Students Bound for San Francisco: November 9 – 13

PITTSBURGH --- Students enrolled in the Hospitality Management Administration program at Pittsburgh Technical Institute gain a world of practical experience offered through the college’s popular “FAM” trips. Familiarization trips are a common industry practice for travel agencies and hospitality professionals to visit various destinations and research hotels, restaurants, and major attractions so that they are better able to sell a destination and offer first-hand information to customers.

39 PTI students will learn about the skills of the trade as they head to San Francisco this week. According to Master Instructor Mevalee Spain, they will be expected to “sell” the city when they return....for a grade.

Students will follow an itinerary that they’ve personally designed. Prior to going on the FAM trip, they must develop an itinerary that will guide them to focus on everything that the destination has to offer in terms of transportation, top tourist attractions, hotels, dining, cultural attractions and neighborhoods.

Spain and Mark Bellemare, PTI Community Service Coordinator will accompany the students to San Francisco. Bellemare is responsible for the planning the trip and helps students develop an itinerary. Bellemare also assists students with fundraising activities to help offset the expense of the trip.

Other recent destinations for PTI’s student FAM trips have been Toronto, Orlando, San Antonio, Atlanta, San Diego and Charleston, SC.
“The bottom line objective is that students learn best through the immersive experience of visiting a destination rather than learning about it through books and publications,” said Ms. Spain. “It’s truly a hands-on experience and it’s effective academically.”

Upon return from a FAM trip, students are required to present their findings at a trade show attended by industry professionals, college staff and faculty, fellow students and family members.

Spain evaluates students on a variety of key deliverables to ensure that students have met the academic purpose of their trip. Depending on their area of concentration, students may have particular objectives. Students enrolled in the restaurant concentration are responsible for designing a menu for trade show and must design a reception menu. Hotel students assist in the meeting and event aspect of the show, by designing the layout of the gallery, lounge and flow. “No matter what the concentration, it’s real-world, hands-on experience that cannot be duplicated in a classroom,” said Spain.

Students enrolled in PTI’s Hospitality Management Administration program can choose to specialize in a concentration of Hotel and Casino Management, Restaurant Management, or Travel and Tourism Management.

About Pittsburgh Technical Institute
Offering career-focused education since 1946, Pittsburgh Technical Institute is a two-year college with two locations in Western Pennsylvania: a 180-acre campus in North Fayette, west of Pittsburgh, and a center at the Regional Learning Alliance, north of the City in Cranberry. PTI offers degree and certificate programs in areas such as Building Technology, Business, Criminal Justice, Design, Healthcare, Nursing, and Information Technology.

PTI students can take advantage of online course offerings, on-campus residence halls, student activities, intramural programs and community service programs. PTI is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

For more information, call 1-800-784-9675, or visit http://www.pti.edu/.

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