

Florida International University Graduates First Class in China with Hospitality Degree at the First U.S. School of Hospitality and Tourism Management

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Twenty-nine students are graduating on May 5, 2008 from Florida International University's School of Hospitality and Tourism Management program in China, located in Tianjin, the third largest city in China and the seaport of Beijing.

The program, a joint venture between the government and FIU, is lauded as the first of its kind in China, and FIU's School of Hospitality and Tourism Management is the first American university for this venture.

The School of Hospitality and Tourism Management currently has 770 students enrolled in its first four years, with its graduates entertaining offers from companies, including Marriott, Hyatt, Hilton, Mandarin Oriental Miami, and the Loews Miami Beach Hotel. Of the 29 graduating students, eight will be attending the school's Miami campus to earn a masters degree in Hospitality Management. For the fall semester, 1000 students are currently enrolled.

In addition, over 600 of its currently enrolled students are planning to work in various positions on the Beijing Olympic Committee as members of the team charged with managing the 500,000 plus visitors expected to visit Beijing for the Olympic Games.

The \$50 million, 80 acre University Center was fully funded by the Chinese government and sits on 80 acres of land in Tianjin, 75 miles from Beijing, the site of the Olympics. The program is pivotal in the education of Chinese students in Western-based hospitality practices. The campus facilities include a 20 story dormitory tower, which can house 1000 students, as well as teaching kitchens, computer centers and practice dining rooms. The Center has a capacity to teach 2000 students.

Dr. Joseph West, dean of FIU's School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, and his team have worked closely with Chinese officials for over five years on both the design of the Center and the curriculum. The School's position as one of the nation's top ranked hospitality programs was a key factor in the bid process. 'Our international student body, diversified curriculum and dedication to educational excellence within the global hospitality program all contributed to the selection of FIU,' stated Dean West. 'For China, and for us, this is a pivotal strategic partnership that will help to shape the future of the rapidly evolving Chinese hospitality industry, as well as the future of our students, both here and abroad.'

For the fall 2007 semester, the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management selected 12 students from its Miami campus to study at the Tianjin program. All classes are taught in English, and are taught both by Tianjin-based Chinese professors (selected and trained by FIU) as well as visiting professors from the Miami campus. The offering of this program is the first of its kind for an American hospitality program, and is a key draw for both undergraduate and graduate hospitality students.

Florida International University School of Hospitality and Tourism Management is one of the highest ranked hospitality and tourism programs in the United States. The school offers Bachelor of Science, Master of Science and Executive Master of Science degrees (available on campus and via distance learning), as well as Certificate Programs. FIU is located on 200 acres on Biscayne Bay in Miami, and is recognized for its industry-experienced faculty and acclaimed alumni, outstanding teaching, demonstration and research facilities, information systems laboratory and a proven job placement record. The University is also the co-host of the world acclaimed South Beach Wine & Food Festival.

For more information on Florida International University School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, please call 305-919-4500 or visit [www.hospitality.fiu.edu](http://www.hospitality.fiu.edu).

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