

# HOSPITALITY EDUCATION

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Hospitality Education

## EDUCATION

### Industry Partnership

The new-year began with renewed energy and engagement with many our partners. Tourism meetings and agendas covered mutual concerns for the County like: beach nourishment, flood insurance impacts, public transportation, thoughtful urban development, airport expansions, new air service and opportunities for the entire bay area. Calendars filled with requests to organize familiarization tours (FAMs) so that our associates could share in our enthusiasm for the mostly positive direction we seem to heading.

One of the FAMs that I organized covered the entire Pinellas County, with dozen of stops at major attractions and most of our charismatic communities. My group consisted of three very inquisitive university students from France, who just arrived and would be interning for the Clearwater Beach Chamber. Part of their agenda being here, is to learn about the tourism based economy, help in a project that benefits Chamber members, as well as be Welcome Center representatives. So having a better sense of the entire County is conducive to their overall experience, which is why we have been doing these for the last couple of years.

Another on-going FAM partnership is with the Tampa Airport Volunteers. Bay Area knowledge is extremely helpful to them as they greet hundreds of thousands of visitors a year. All of the tours I organize with them are more localized so they can really absorb the information. Starting off the year and before it got too busy (or hot), we covered Fort DeSoto and the southern beaches. Our tour began at Tampa Bay Watch as they are valued partners in keeping our waters clean and healthy. We were given a wonderful walking tour of the grounds and all the programs they are involved in as stewards of the environment; followed by a presentation about the abundant nature and wildlife connected to the beach area. Hopping on a bus, we had a guided presentation by two naturalists that covered all of Fort DeSoto, its history, migratory birds, shells and the amenities available. We then left the park and went to Pass-a-Grille beach area, ending with a boat ride out to Shell Island. Millions enjoy our beaches but very few have the opportunity to hear a comprehensive view of what makes them so special.

After two years of planning and gathering information that would be inclusive and equitable to 24 communities; we had the ribbon cutting for the VSPC exhibit at Stavros Institute and Finance Park. "Tourism Matters" is the overarching theme, while encouraging 8<sup>th</sup> graders (and their families) to get outside, be stewards of the environment and take advantage of all the fantastic opportunities we have in Pinellas County. One wall is a map and collage of 40 Places in Pinellas, another wall is dedicated to fun water by the numbers, like "400 Species of fish found in our area waters" "587 miles of Coastline", "42 man-made reefs", "600 years for fishing line to dissolve", and so on. Another wall has a list from A to Z of people making money in tourism. Finance Park is to help students learn how to budget money and understand the decisions they

make determines what they have available as disposable income, aka – Fun. I planned this exhibit to show them there are plenty of fun and activities in their own back yard for as much or little money as they have available; yet still enjoying what millions of people travel to partake in each year.

### **Value of Tourism Presentations**

Long Center for the Aging

### **HOSPITALITY**

#### **VSPC Representation**

- Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber (TBBCoC), Candidate Forum
- TBBCoC Board of Directors monthly meeting
- TBBCoC Annual Dinner
- Chicago Adventure Travel Show on behalf of the Leisure Travel Dept
- TDC
- St Petersburg Chamber of Commerce Tourism Meeting
- Good Burger
- Women in Tourism
- Leadership St. Pete
- Central Pinellas Economic Focus on 2014
- Don CeSar, mural project with Tampa Bay Watch and Pinellas Education Foundation
- Big C Mayors Meeting
- Clearwater Regional Chamber Tourism Meeting
- Salvador Dali Celebrate the Arts and Andy Warhol exhibit opening
- St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce Tourism Meeting

#### **Professional Development**

Webinar Simpleview functionality