

HOSPITALITY EDUCATION

FY 2010 Plan (proposal)

Prepared By: Rhonda Sanborn
Hospitality Education Director

GOAL

Provide forty educational tourism awareness programs to community, civic, and neighborhood organizations to increase knowledge and understanding of the value of tourism within the community.

STRATEGIES:

Continue to research supporting facts for presentation materials and develop new and interactive approach relative to the audience.

Create collateral that highlights positive tourism facts as a leave behind piece for community presentations. For example: a calendar that has a picture representing a different community each month and one tourism fact that impacts that community.

As a means to help the community better understand the trickle down effect of the tourism tax impact in our destination, I would like to co-sponsor a campaign that stamps a paid invoice (linked directly or indirectly to tourism) with the message that reads something like, “brought to you by tourism”.

Maximize the Visit Florida campaign, “Share the Sunshine” by producing postcards with the VSPC Ambassador images and circulating at community presentations. Encourage residents to send postcards to friends and relatives inviting them to visit again.

Search for more diverse and wider audiences in Pinellas County to promote the value of tourism and benefits to the community. Reach out to industry service providers, corporate neighbors, Farmers Markets, attractions, major events and business partners of the Chambers.

Promote local events and festivals to residents as well as inform them of the positive impact to our community and how they play a vital role as ambassadors of our destination.

Present the Hospitality Education Department as the vehicle for raising community awareness and evangelizing the symbiotic role of tourism.

GOAL

Cultivate and engage a minimum of five Chamber partnerships which creates a reciprocal relationship that adds value to all stakeholders.

STRATEGIES:

Take advantage of eNews and other industry Internet communication resources to market the availability of educational tourism awareness programs for our partners or their network of members, clients, guests and volunteers.

Promote value for stakeholders by offering workshops and info sessions on current best practices that will help them stay competitive. Partner with 'Action Coaching' for training workshops that will be offered every other month throughout the county.

Collaborate on cross-county partnerships to offer Education opportunities that increase professionalism of members, motivate staff, nourish employee retention, or aid skill development.

Endorse the unique and authentic aspects of the destination through familiarization tours that inspire us to share why we are proud to live in these communities.

Strengthen partnerships with all of the Chambers as part of destination knowledge awareness. Coordinate and implement education-based and experience oriented tours, workshops, museum visits, and site visits for guests, residents, students and colleagues as relevant to each area.

Foster and strengthen relationships with area parks, cultural and environmental centers, aquariums, museums, etc. that enhance the visitor's experience and overall authentic image of the county's entire tourism industry.

Promote programs that encourage our community to discover their own back yard and other areas of the county. Go where the locals go; be a tourist for the weekend; familiarization tours to cultural/ historical/ environmental/ quirky unique downtowns/ back roads / gardens & outdoor spaces /sporting venues / beach hideaways/ night life for all ages. Been There, but Haven't Done That!

Seek non-traditional partnerships to increase awareness and scope of destination diplomats. Some examples might include civic and association officers, community leaders, destination management staff, meeting planners or remote hospitality partners.

Foster Green awareness alliances in Pinellas and help disseminate information to those who may not have access to all the resources. Help promote all aspects of

Green Lodging certifications, Green meetings, and innovative ecotourism workshops for guests or staff. Encourage participation, knowledge sharing and pride in a community that cares about the environment.

Create opportunities to join forces with locally sponsored events that attract a combination of tourists and residents so that we can provide relevant destination information as well as enrich the experience and communicate the value to residents.

Pull resources with existing agencies in order to expand programming opportunities. Partnerships in consideration: PSTA, Progress Energy, SW Florida Water Management, UF Extension and the Florida Attractions Assoc.

GOAL

Assist and drive the development of print materials and inspirational slogan that visually displays the impact of tourism and hospitality. Enhance collateral materials for presentations.

STRATEGIES:

Work with advertising agency to create a slogan that is catchy, easy to remember, to the point, works as a leave behind and makes the hospitality community proud to be part of the HIP crowd (Hospitality Industry Partners).

Research the economic viability of implementing a hospitality card that gives discounts to locals in the HIP network. This would include discounting to area attractions, public transportation, restaurants, clubs, retail, park access and so on.

Strategize with Ad Agency on rollout of a hospitality training program with messaging that shows a local appreciation of the tourism industry – suggested acronym HOT.

- High on Tourism
- Hot for Tourist
- Happy over Tourism

Work in cooperation with the Agency in the development of collateral pieces that educates the public on the value of tourism to Pinellas with facts, also showing the benefits, ROI and destination highlights.

GOAL

Invest in frontline customer contacts by offering twelve educational opportunities that blend professional development skills with destination awareness and exceptional service messaging.

STRATEGIES:

Work in tandem with industry organizations and communities to offer customized training for employees who have direct visitor interaction on a regular and ongoing basis. Programs would be offered at different times and locations to capture a wider audience and designed to polish skills in service orientation or sales leads, or industry awareness such as energy conservation and hurricane preparedness.

Provide quarterly professional development sessions for VSPC staff to keep us motivated, energized and competitive in the market place.

Develop a “Road Show” interactive presentation, in partnership with local communities and other interested parties, for use in presenting to audiences less likely to be able to attend traditional training workshops such as taxi drivers.

Encourage and promote alternative training methodologies like webinars that are already available to maximize the number and reach of training opportunities throughout the county.

Identify, develop and promote new educational partnerships around “Edutourism”, programs in which local partners travel to a location to have a learning experience directly related to the location.

GOAL

Develop, expand and or coordinate ten awareness programs that enhance the experience of hospitality industry college students in and to Pinellas County.

STRATEGIES:

Continue to promote the hospitality/tourism industry as a valued profession through presentations, resource centers and expanded outreach to younger audiences such as Jr. Achievement and the Great American Teach-in. Encourage at least ten more hospitality professionals to participate in these programs.

Explore the feasibility of sponsoring a ‘Value of Tourism’ storefront sponsorship at the Stavros Institute and Finance Park reaching over 17,000 students annually.

Share professional networking opportunities such as SKAL or Women in Tourism and encourage mentoring prospects with students to local industry contacts and tourism partnerships.

Arrange requested site visits from college/university department heads or host an open house seminar, to introduce and familiarize this audience with local

industry, the destination, venues and potential employment opportunities that promote as well as improve student-intern interest.

Participate in New Student Orientations, Career Days and respond to guest speaker requests.

Partner with students and Foreign Service Institute to capitalize on visiting dignitaries' international perspectives and knowledge. Coordinate speaking opportunities when feasible.

In cooperation with local educational institutions, enhance the cultural awareness and exposure of quality experiences with the Florida tourism industry to students. If not only as future employees, but also as prospective return visitors and foreign ambassadors to the destination.