Marriott Foundation selects SDSU’s School of Hospitality and Tourism Management for Marriott China Hospitality Education Initiative (CHEI)

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San Diego San Diego State University’s School of Hospitality and Tourism Management has been selected as the academic adviser to the Marriott China Hospitality Education Initiative (CHEI), which enhances the hospitality education of Chinese youths, preparing them for careers in China’s booming travel and tourism industry.

The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation has committed $6.5 million over five years to support China’s youth through the Marriott CHEI program and anticipates impacting up to 20,000 students annually in 50 schools within five years. The ultimate goal of the initiative is to help growing numbers of young Chinese, many from rural areas, climb career ladders in the hospitality industry.

Customized for China

“We are customizing the program based on input from the industry and the impressive vocational schools and universities in China, and we hope to be part of a community of hospitality educators,” said Carl H. Winston, Director of SDSU’s School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, and CHEI’s Executive Director.

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The Marriott Foundation selected SDSU as the academic adviser because of its successful hospitality and tourism management program and its work with Chinese schools, industry experts and government officials — regionally and nationally — to develop programs that are uniquely Chinese.

The collaboration has identified various needs that Marriott CHEI intends to address, including:
- Professional development opportunities for students, ranging from internships and work experiences to site tours and guest speakers with experience in the industry.
- Studies that include conversational English specific to the hospitality industry.
- Faculty development including exchanges with universities in the United States and internships at hotels in China.
- Development of unique content that will augment existing curricula.
- An annual “teaching conference” to bring together leaders in hospitality education to share best practices.

Supporting innovative hospitality

The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation, a private family foundation, has been a supporter of innovative hospitality programs within colleges and universities across the United States for more than 20 years. As the hospitality industry becomes increasingly global, the foundation’s efforts have expanded to parts of the world where it can have the greatest impact. China provides just such an opportunity.

...CHEI (cont’d)

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