THE GLOBETROTTING HOTELIER: THE KAYE CHON STORY
Poised for Growth

This year has been an exciting time to be in downtown Atlanta and among the new growth within the hospitality industry. We’ve already seen several major attractions, tourist destinations and hotel rooms added to the landscape of downtown. These new opportunities offer more employment options for our students and alumni as the hospitality industry continues to expand.

As we look to 2015, the School of Hospitality is poised for new and exciting opportunities. Our undergraduate program is thriving as we offer relevant, hands-on learning experiences to our students. Several examples of these learning opportunities can be found in the following pages.

Our second graduate student cohort has begun its journey towards a master of global hospitality management. When they complete their degree requirements next July, these students will join Robinson’s global alumni network of more than 80,000 graduates.

I am pleased to announce several new additions to our program – an endowed faculty position in franchise entrepreneurship (page 10), a new online graduate degree and the Bharat Shah Leadership Speaker Series (page 25) – that will enrich our curriculum and prepare global leaders for the hospitality industry of tomorrow.

Guided by our strategic plan, the Robinson College of Business, under the leadership of Dean Richard D. Phillips, is ready to embark on its second century. With a clear focus on student success, international initiatives and improved research and teaching facilities, the value of a Georgia State education will increase in 2015 and beyond.

I hope you will aid in our continued growth – in student enrollment, in our alumni network, in our facilities and in our industry involvement.

Help us grow as we continue to develop the next generation of hospitality leaders. We welcome your suggestions and involvement in planning our exciting future.

Sincerely,

Debby Cannon, Ph.D.
Director, Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Administration
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FROM THE DIRECTOR

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HOSPITALITY NEWS • Fall/Winter 2014 hospitality.robinson.gsu.edu

IT’S BEEN AN EXCITING YEAR FOR ATLANTA AND THE MOMENTUM IN OUR CITY CONTINUES TO BUILD. Last year we welcomed a record 45 million visitors, a 36 percent increase in just five years. These visitors spent $13 billion and contributed to more than 230,000 jobs for metro Atlanta residents. We have the potential to hit 55 million visitors by the end of the decade. With more visitors comes the demand for more attractions, restaurants and retail.

Throughout our rich history, Atlanta has been a city of builders and dreamers. Ideas that were just dreams a few years ago have become reality this year. Atlanta has seen more than $1.5 billion in new hospitality development open this year, with much of the development focused downtown, including two brand-new attractions.

Civil rights leaders gathered on June 23 for the opening of the Center for Civil and Human Rights. The center uniquely bridges the history of the American civil rights movement to contemporary human rights issues, sparking dialogue around the possibilities for the future.

The papers of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. are the centerpiece, with exhibits, speakers and immersive programming rotating throughout the year.

The center joins the ranks of the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum, the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site and The King Center as places where visitors can explore the history of the American civil rights movement and human rights issues.

Across from Centennial Olympic Park, the College Football Hall of Fame and Chick-fil-A Fan Experience opened its doors in August. The shrine to college football offers interactive exhibits that entertain visitors. Georgia State fans can register an “All-Access Pass” with their favorite college football team for personalized content at the hall’s interactive exhibits. The hall features historic and contemporary artifacts, multimedia displays and an ultra-high-definition theatre.

Later this fall, the Atlanta Streetcar will connect all of our attractions around Centennial Olympic Park and the Martin Luther King historic district, running through the heart of the Georgia State campus. This modern transportation system will provide an exciting new way for visitors, residents and Georgia State students to travel downtown.

These new attractions will continue to drive more visitors to the city, enhancing demand for additional hotel rooms, especially downtown. Several hotel projects are underway. Starwood recently opened its first Aloft Hotel in Georgia following a $25 million renovation of the former Days Inn Atlanta Downtown. Construction has begun on a new Hyatt House hotel near the Georgia Aquarium. Legacy Property Group is to begin construction on a Homewood Suites by Hilton this spring in the Luckie Marietta District and a 200-room Hotel Indigo is planned downtown at 230 Peachtree.

Mayor Reed and the Atlanta City Council have also created a unique opportunity for development in and around Underground Atlanta. Post Properties submitted a proposal earlier in the year for a 407-unit apartment project on Centennial Olympic Park Drive and Baker Street.

This year is the beginning to the renewed resurgence downtown. As we look to 2017, we’ll welcome the opening of two new stadiums for the Atlanta Falcons and the Atlanta Braves. Both plans will inject the surrounding areas with new development. Plans are also under consideration for a new high-rise hotel on Northside Drive, adjacent to the Georgia World Congress Center.

Atlanta never rests on its laurels. A new generation of dreamers and builders will take the city into its next decade of growth.

By William Pate
President and CEO of the Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau
MOVING FORWARD

ATLANTA HAS ONCE AGAIN REACHED A MILESTONE MOMENT that is sure to have a lasting impact on the community. The development of the Atlanta Streetcar and its associated connections with the Atlanta BeltLine and other long-term regional transit initiatives will have a profound impact on the City of Atlanta. A city long hamstrung by underperforming roadways and limited transit services is making major strides with 21st century connectivity. The modern streetcar has proven to be a more sustainable and viable alternative to buses, with less noise and fewer emissions. The streetcar service will complement existing MARTA rail service by providing convenient trips along the streetcar corridor and will be compatible with the Breeze card system.

The modern Atlanta Streetcar represents the first step in the dawning of a new era for transit—one that will begin to transform how visitors and locals get around downtown. Ultimately, the Atlanta Streetcar will become part of a whole new system of local and regional transportation. Phase One will offer connectivity to the city center for MARTA, the Atlanta BeltLine and other transit options, and additional phases will expand that service even further. The Atlanta Streetcar will make access easier within the city, and it will also function as a metaphorical link between the city’s rich history with rail transportation and its evolution into a robust centerpiece of the New South and 21st century connectivity.

Visit streetcar.atlantaga.gov for more information.
Meet the Dean.

Get to know Richard D. Phillips, dean of the Robinson College of Business at Georgia State University.

Dr. Richard D. Phillips is the Dean of the Robinson College of Business at Georgia State University and the C.V. Starr Professor of Risk Management and Insurance. From 2012-14 he was the associate dean for academic initiatives and innovation, and from 2006-12 Phillips was the Kenneth Black Jr. Chairman of the Department of Risk Management and Insurance. Phillips began his academic career at Georgia State in 1994 after completing his Ph.D. in managerial economics from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Phillips' research interests are the impact of risk on corporate decision-making, the functioning of insurance markets and the role of credit ratings in the economy. He has published in academic and policy journals, including the Journal of Financial Economics, the Journal of Risk and Insurance, the Journal of Banking and Finance, Journal of Financial Services Research, the Journal of Law and Economics, the Journal of Insurance Regulation and the North American Actuarial Journal, among others.

Phillips has served as a consultant to numerous commercial and governmental organizations, including AIG, Allstate, ING, AXA, Deutsche Bank, Goldman Sachs, Tillinghast, Aon Capital Markets, the Casualty Actuarial Society, the Society of Actuaries and the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. He is a member of the board of directors for the Munich American Reassurance Company and is chairman of the board for Risk Index Partners LLC. Within the community he is the chairman of the board for Swift School, a non-profit school in Roswell, Ga., dedicated to educating students with dyslexia and other language-related learning differences.

Phillips is a member of the American Finance Association as well as the American Risk and Insurance Association, where he also serves on the board of directors, and is a past president of the Risk Theory Society. Phillips is co-editor of the Journal of Risk and Insurance, and he serves as an ad hoc referee for several other academic journals.

Phillips' doctor's and master's degree are in managerial science and applied economics from the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated with honors from the University of Minnesota with a bachelor's degree in mathematics.
By all appearances, Aziz Hashim had achieved the American dream by the time he was 21 years old. His family immigrated to London from Pakistan when he was six, then came to the United States when he was 13. At 14, he began working nights and weekends at his uncle’s Burger King in Los Angeles to pay for his college education. He advanced from washing dishes and mopping floors to cashier, then to manager. After graduating with a degree in electrical engineering from the University of California, Irvine, Hashim landed a job at Rockwell International, one of the premier American manufacturers at the time.

“If most immigrants stories, that’s the happy ending,” said Hashim. “But within three months of getting that job, I resigned and decided to go into business for myself. I didn’t know exactly what was in my immediate future, but whatever it was, I wanted to ‘own it,’ which is my personal business philosophy.”

This need to “own it” speaks not only to his entrepreneurial need to gain financial independence by owning his own business through franchising, which Hashim believes is the best way to go into business for yourself, but also to his mission of helping others by giving them the chance to own and operate franchised brands.

After leaving Rockwell International, Hashim moved to Atlanta and decided his best chance for success would be in the restaurant business, an industry he knew all too well. While strolling the streets of downtown Atlanta in 1995, he discovered there were no Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurants in the area. “I decided to cold-call KFC Corporation and ask for a license,” he said. “Fortunately for me, while KFC was not franchising in Atlanta, they were willing to make an exception if I could open a unit before the 1996 Centennial Olympic Summer Games, as KFC had no presence in downtown Atlanta. Being young and naïve (and broke), I said, ‘Sure I can!’”

With eight years of quick-service restaurant experience and a negative net worth, he found a site at 61 Broad Street near Georgia State that was an ideal location for a KFC. He incorporated the company, National Restaurant Development, now called NRD Holdings, and began a career in franchising.

“My first restaurant opened in 1994 and my wife, Fatnahnaz, and I worked from a make-shift office in the basement of the restaurant, living off credit cards and raising our one-year-old daughter while growing the business to become one of the top 200 franchise restaurant operators with locations across the U.S. and eventually internationally,” Hashim said.

With the success of downtown’s first KFC, the Hashims opened a Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, Subway and Moe’s Southwest Grill locations on Broad Street over the next three years.

“Our success was very much tied to Georgia State University,” Hashim said. “Not only did we rely on students as customers, but also as part-time staff members.”

As president and CEO of NRD Holdings, the first franchisee-sponsored and managed equity fund, and chairman and CEO of Impact Investments, which focuses on ventures on the African continent, Hashim now owns more than 60 quick-service restaurant concepts, including Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen and Rally’s, employing more than 700 people.

In 2013, Hashim was invited to serve on the advisory board of the J. Mack Robinson College of Business where he again saw a need not yet met at Georgia State.

“The Aziz and Farahnaz Hashim Faculty Position in Franchise Entrepreneurship provides the School of Hospitality with the resources to expand the graduate and undergraduate curriculum to encompass this fast-growing business model. “We’re honored to sponsor this faculty position, which is a result of our long-standing relationship with the university,” said Hashim. “A commitment to education and life-long learning and an opportunity to advance entrepreneurship through franchising, which has the potential to bring financial independence and economic growth to others, as it has for our family.”

“Together with my wife, we have endowed a faculty position in franchise entrepreneurship at Georgia State to educate the next generation of industry leaders about franchise entrepreneurship,” said Hashim. “Within the quick-service restaurant category, there’s a lack of formal training and it’s my hope that through this endowment the School of Hospitality will help fill this void.”
The Disney College Program, offered at Walt Disney World Resort in Florida and Disneyland Resort in California, offers students the opportunity to spend 12 weeks working in the park. Georgia State hospitality students have been employed in a wide range of jobs around the parks. During the paid internship, Disney houses students in fully furnished apartments with other interns. The program offers classes throughout the semester in hospitality management, corporate communications, leadership, human resource management and other disciplines.

The application process includes an online questionnaire and a phone interview so recruiters can get a feel for the applicant and see if he or she is Disney material. The Disney College Program website describes the ideal intern as a polished worker who is always willing to help out when needed.

BY JON ROSS
It’s All About the Attitude

From Disney to politics, Hanna Hope (B.B.A., ’13) knows maintaining professionalism and keeping a cheerful demeanor—no matter the hospitality challenge—will get her far. Hope honed her hospitality skills while spending a semester as an intern in the Disney College Program. Hope first applied for the internship to “test the waters” before becoming a hospitality major. She soon found she fit right into the merchandise guest services department of Disney’s Polynesian Village Resort in the Magic Kingdom, and said her time at Disney made her decide to go the hospitality route.

“My favorite part of my job, as cheesy as it sounds, was making the magic by creating special memories for guests, and enthusiastically engaging with my fellow cast members to raise morale and increase guest satisfaction,” she said. She recently used the skills she developed at Georgia State and Disney to politics, where she worked at Michelle Nunn’s Senate campaign.

According to the Disney website, “Often the seemingly little things that detract from our guests’ enjoyment—chewing gum, having poor posture, using a cellular phone or frowning. All of this adds up to one of the biggest ways you can tackle pretty much any kind of person I’ve ever held, or the one with the most responsibility, but that experience is what interviewers always ask about first because Disney is such a well-known and highly respected company,” Hope said.

Solving Problems

Jessica Levy, a hospitality minor who graduated in 2014, spent the fall semester of her senior year working at the park. The program appealed to her; she said, because she had always loved Disney, and she also wanted to meet new people while working in a welcoming environment.

Levy emphasized the uniqueness of the Disney experience for guests and employees.

“No matter how old I got, I was always sucked into the magic of it all. You can’t help but love a place that allows people of any age to feel like a kid again,” she said, adding that interacting with excitable kids was always one of the best parts of her days.

While the internship centers on having fun with your work and creating a memorable experience for park guests, Levy learned this can be difficult. Interns are expected to become expert problem solvers.

“You never say ‘no’ or ‘I don’t know’ to a guest,” she recalled. “No matter what the problem or request, a cast member can always find a solution.”

Intern to Full-time

Racy Luna (B.B.A., ’10) was a junior when she switched from an accounting major to hospitality after first hearing about the Disney College Program.

For Luna, the internship was more about career discovery. She was uncertain about a hospitality career path, and she figured an immersive Disney experience would show her what was in store for her after college.

She returned to Disney after graduating from college, working first at an attraction inside one of the theme parks and then moving into merchandise and food production on Main Street, USA in the Magic Kingdom. While there, she received kitchen training, and this allowed her to apply skills she first learned in food production class at Georgia State.

“The hospitality program at Georgia State is thorough and diverse,” she said. “Having taken classes ranging from Professor [Deborah] Robbe’s events and trade shows class to Dr. [Debby] Cannon’s human resources course, I feel prepared to work in different segments of hospitality.”

Main Street will certainly not be the final stop for Luna, who has found her degree gets her noticed at Disney.

“After learning that I have a degree in hospitality administration, managers have encouraged me to apply for other roles that may be more challenging,” she said. “I’m happy where I’m working right now, but it’s good to know I have a lot of opportunities to move around and up with the company.”

Wherever she works, though, she’ll remember what first brought her to Disney. She applied for the Disney College Program because of her love of Disney movies and television shows, which the said lifted her up when she was feeling sad or lonely.

“I wanted to be a part of such an influential company that can help people do that escape reality for a bit and just be happy,” she said. “No matter what role I’m in, whether I’m working in the gift shop or operating an attraction, I have the ability to make a sad day become great or a great day become even better for our guests.”
THE GLOBETROTTING HOTELIER: 
THE KAYE CHON STORY

Georgia State alumnus Dr. Kaye Chon is a regular guest at Hotel ICON, but he’s not there as a tourist. He’s checking up on his students.

BY DOUG GILLET
ONE OF THE TOP PLACES TO STAY IN HONG KONG, Hotel ICON has won many awards for its luxury accommodations and restaurants, and its lobby features one of the largest vertical gardens in the world.

On any given day, 15 percent of ICON’s workforce is made of students in training to run a luxury hotel in one of the world’s busiest cities. The hotel is an extension of Hong Kong Polytechnic University’s School of Hotel and Tourism Management, of which Dr. Kaye Chon is the dean.

Chon has won awards for teaching and innovation in the field of tourism and hospitality. He includes a 2003 award from Georgia State’s Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Administration recognizing him as the most outstanding alumnus in the school’s first 30 years. Three decades after earning his bachelor’s degree, Chon is still grateful to Georgia State for helping to start his career, and he’s building bridges between Georgia State and Hong Kong Polytechnic to create similar opportunities for students on both sides of the world.

A BIRD, A PLANE AND THE START OF A WORLDWIDE JOURNEY

Seagulls live on every continent on Earth and may migrate thousands of miles as the seasons change. Given where Chon’s career has taken him, it’s fitting that a seagull gave that career its inspiration.


OF A WORLDWIDE JOURNEY

Charles Chon’s 30-year career shows obstacles to come to the United States, the diplomatic corps or becoming a professor of Hotel and Tourism Management, giving little thought to another international move. But when Hong Kong Polytechnic offered him a job, he knew Asia was rapidly developing into “a center of excellence for education with a growing hospitality and tourism industry.” He wanted to be in the middle of it.

Chon joined Hong Kong Polytechnic as a department head in 2000 and became dean in 2011.

Like those at Georgia State, Chon says, Hong Kong Polytechnic’s students benefit greatly from being at an international crossroads.

“In recent years, the center of gravity of the world’s tourism and hospitality industry has moved to Asia as the result of a huge development of industry,” he says. “The School of Hotel and Tourism Management at Hong Kong Polytechnic is now one of the largest schools of this kind in the world, enrolling 2,200 students with 65 international faculty drawn from 20 countries.”

Being more than 6,000 miles away, though, hasn’t caused Chon to forget about Georgia State. If anything, his connection to his alma mater has grown stronger over the past decade. In addition to donating to the Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Administration, Chon has had regular visits with Georgia State President Mark P. Becker in Hong Kong and Atlanta.

The most recent visit came in May 2014, when a contingent of Georgia State administrators on a two-week tour of China dined at the Above & Beyond restaurant on Hotel ICON’s 28th floor.

One topic of conversation during dinner was the new partnership between Georgia State’s School of Hospitality and Hong Kong Polytechnic’s.

“Today’s world is connected and globalized,” Chon says. “It’s important for students to learn and develop global perspectives, especially if they want to be in the hospitality industry. Our two institutions will be able to exchange students and pursue other joint collaborative projects, including collaborative research between faculty.”

“Kaye Chon’s leadership has helped Hong Kong’s PolyU become one of the most innovative and exciting academic centers for hospitality and tourism management,” says President Becker. “Kaye is a visionary who is reshaping the hotel industry by asking fundamental questions and challenging established paradigms. He’s a true thought leader, both for academia and for the hotel industry. This new partnership between our two universities provides experiential opportunities I hope will inspire Georgia State students to follow Kaye’s path of becoming a global leader in hospitality and tourism.”

Today’s globally connected culture has left Chon less time for his personal adventures.

“I wish to visit more of the small South Pacific island states,” he says. “I’ve done French Polynesia, Fiji, Saipan, Samoa, etcetera, but there are other islands I want to see.”

Some of my students are coloring a map of the world to trace my travels, and up to now I’ve seen 97 countries. I’m positive that I’ll exceed my lifetime goal of traveling to 100 countries very soon. The problem is that I don’t have time to travel,” Chon says. “To be more exact, I travel frequently, but usually to the same places for business. And I don’t have the time to travel for leisure so I can add more countries to my list.”
Airbnb provides curious explorers looking for non-traditional travel experiences easy access to communities around the world where locals accept strangers into their homes. Exploration comes with risk, so the farther travelers get from traditional lodging, the greater their opportunities to experience the unknown. Members of the growing Airbnb community embrace these challenges.

Since opening in 2008, Airbnb has connected more than 17 million guests with hosts. Guests have booked stays in homes ranging from apartments and cottages to sailboats, yurts, tree houses and castles in more than 34,000 cities in 190 countries. The concept of home sharing is far from novel, but Airbnb has created a disruption to tourism industry norms, proving attractive to travelers seeking an experience different from what hotels and other lodging companies offer.

While some travelers prefer the pampering of an upscale hotel suite, many are settling into the homes of local residents, who also happen to be complete strangers, for an intimate view of their unfamiliar surroundings.

Know Before You Go.

Senior lecturer and hospitality attorney Diana S. Barber notes the biggest difference between Airbnb and traditional hotels is that Airbnb is primarily an organizer and coordinator, not a lodging company. Airbnb isn’t responsible for providing a safe environment for guests, and guests book at their own risk.

Strangers, Welcome.
but in very different ways. Uncertainty and core competency can lead to firm success, and competency. Research findings show environmental between external characteristics and internal resources the context of companies that build and maintain harmony competitive advantage and financial performance within environmental uncertainty, franchisor core competency, and the resources to provide a profitable, ethical and sustainable approach to medical tourism. The article is a discussion piece to enhance the emergence of healthcare tourism as a viable economic sector, along with the unethical and unsustainable practices that come with it. The article is a discussion piece to enhance the resources to provide a profitable, ethical and sustainable approach to medical tourism.

An Ethical Work Climate and Its Consequences Among Foodservice Franchise Employees (in press; Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research).

This study examines the effect of ethical values and an ethical work climate on organizational trust and organizational commitment, which in turn influences turnover. Data obtained from 276 foodservice franchised companies in Korea suggest an ethical work climate mediates the relationship between ethical values and organizational trust.

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ALUMNI NEWS

Dear fellow alumni:

As the School of Hospitality at Georgia State continues to grow, we want to continue to build the alumni network of hospitality professionals within metro Atlanta and beyond. With more than 1,700 graduates over the last 41 years, we seek ways to engage our fellow alumni with social and networking opportunities throughout the year.

We invite you to get involved with your alma mater by attending a Third Thursday event or one of the hospitality social events hosted by the Hospitality Alumni Network. Membership in the Georgia State Alumni Association keeps you connected with the university and the School of Hospitality through the various professional development events each year.

You’re invited to join the Hospitality Alumni Network, share your personal and professional successes with us, get involved and stay connected to Georgia State.

Hospitably Yours,

Rachel Bell, class of 2010
Hospitality Alumni Network
Co-President
Trevor Boylan, class of 2010
Hospitality Alumni Network
Co-President

Class Updates

If you would like to share your own news, achievements, accomplishments and photos or update your contact information, send an e-mail to hospitalityalumni@gsu.edu to be published in our next issue.

Tom Mallory, class of 1986, is the southeastern campus recruiting manager for BDO USA; a professional services firm providing assurance, tax, financial advisory and consulting services to a wide range of publicly traded and privately held companies. Mallory recruits for regional offices throughout the Southeast, including south Florida, Georgia, Tennessee and the Carolinas.

Christa Evans, CCM, class of 1993, is CEO and general manager of Hope Valley Country Club in Raleigh, N.C.

Autumn Simerson, class of 2004, is now a division revenue manager with Drury Hotels in the St. Louis area.

Ross Bruce, class of 2009, is director of revenue management at W Atlanta Midtown.

Allan Rieffler, class of 2009, is the restaurant manager at Lakeway Resort & Spa in Atlanta.

Wil Bates, CMP, class of 2010, is now a meeting and events planner with Georgia Pacific LLC.

Trevor Boylan, class of 2010, is the market manager for Expedia Travel Services in Atlanta covering Savannah, Charleston and Hilton Head Island. Boylan also serves as co-president of the Hospitality Alumni Network.

Travis Delgado, class of 2010, earned his MBA in 2013 and is business manager for Georgia Regents University.

Leanne Durham, class of 2010, is front desk agent at The Westin Riverfront Resort & Spa in Denver.

Joy Jeon, class of 2010, is a sales reporting analyst at Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide.

Sarah Landerfelt, class of 2010, received her certified specialist of wine designation through the Society of Wine Educators. Landerfelt is an on-premise manager with United Distributors Inc.

Jacob LeBlanc, class of 2010, is the director of guest experience at Melia Hotels International in Nassau Beach.

Michael Oberender, class of 2010, is a sales specialist with Marriott International’s Southeast Group Sales Division.

Peony Tsui, class of 2010, is the events manager at The Hong Kong Jockey Club in Hong Kong.

Jessica Weintraub Hodges, class of 2010, is assistant director of university events management at Georgia State.

Brian Whalen, class of 2010, is the project manager for sponsor and tradeshow management at Enterprise Events Group in San Francisco.

Daniel Wilbanks, class of 2010, is a retail manager with Aramark at the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga.

Erica Abello, class of 2011, is a meeting coordinator at JLA Consulting in Atlanta.

Isabell Castrejon, class of 2011, is the manager at Longhorn Steakhouse, a Darden Restaurant concept in Atlanta.

Harmony Higgins, class of 2011, is a restaurant manager at Longhorn Steakhouse in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Brian Krawczyk, class of 2011, is the bartlines general manager at Omni Hotels in Nashville, Tenn.

Ryan T. Lindgren, class of 2011, is an analyst with Watermark Capital Partners in the Greater Chicago area.

Blavin Patel, class of 2011, completed a master of science degree in luxury hospitality and event management at the International University of Monaco and is now with the marketing division of Porsche Cars North America.

Matthew Wingo, class of 2011, is responsible for on-premise sales at United Distributors in Atlanta.

Chris Bonnett, class of 2012, is a registration services agent for The Westin Buckhead in Atlanta.

Esther Yi, class of 2013, is the marketing and public relations coordinator for the Marrietta Visitors Bureau.

Samantha Charles, class of 2014, is a supervisor at the Marrriott Renaissance Midtown in Atlanta.

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