

February 2, 2015 (Vol. 1, Issue 14)

For many people, there is nothing quite as satisfying as checking into a fine hotel and being pampered for a few days. Excellent dining, fine amenities and having someone to turn your bed down and place a mint on the pillow are the definition of perfection. But making sure that patrons can enjoy all of these things calls for a tremendous amount of work on behalf of the hotel staff. Last Friday (January 30) several students in the Human Services Academy got to see first hand the day-to-day operations of a large full-service hotel when they visited the Capitol Plaza Hotel & Convention Center.

Michele Burrows, Director of Sales, served as tour guide and guest teacher. Mrs. Burrows noted that she wasn't much older than these freshmen when she got the bug to work in some kind of hospitality management: "When I was in high school we had an opportunity to go to North Miami, Florida, for tourism school. That piqued my interest. I saw that there were many opportunities including cruise lines, hotels, airlines, and many other areas. It was a very intense training, but I loved it."

Now Mrs. Burrows is sharing her knowledge of the business with young people who are beginning to explore their career paths: "We try to give a full view of what types of careers are part of hospitality management, from sales to accounting to engineering. For those interested in the culinary fields they learn the roles of the many chefs and cooks who make a kitchen run smoothly and produce fine meals."

Students visited virtually all parts of the hotel starting with the rooms and suites. They learned that there are set procedures for cleaning rooms including everything from proper use of chemical cleansers to how to make the beds. Later in the tour they visited the massive laundry area as well as the engineering area that handles all of the plumbing and electric for the facility.



Simonsen student C.C. Jamison was impressed by the operation, "There's a lot of work that goes into hotel management. You have to be focused and on time."

Students also learned that people skills are vital. Rob Vaughan helps coordinate many of the events at the hotel. Mr. Vaughan stated, "To be successful in this business, you have to be a people person. If you like dealing with people? Well, that's just the greatest thing about working in a place like this."

Dennis Bahm, Executive Chef, agreed, "You need to be friends with everybody and you have to go in there and get it done."

Students in the Academies are exploring career paths, and within each path they must have the core skills to be successful and these include the soft skills of personal interaction as well as the hard skills of applying math and science to their field of study.

Chef Bahm emphasized the math element: “As far as cooking recipes and cooking for volume – you could be cooking for four people or four hundred. You have to do the math first just to know how much food to order. You’re ordering by the ounce, the pound and the case. Then you have to multiply the ingredients depending on the number you are serving.”



Bahm also impressed the need to love what you do and experiment: “You’ve got to have a good food attitude and know about food. Play with food. You have to like food – you can’t just like broccoli, you have to like and try everything at least once. You need to cook it different ways.”

These students are all part of the Introduction to Human Services class. They know that they are interested in working with people in some way, but aren’t all sure what that will be.

Charlie Wehmeyer is leaning towards being a teacher, but the visit to the hotel kitchen intrigues him. “I could see some real interest in culinary arts. I do like food a lot!”

The Human Service Academy, like all seven of the Academies @ Jefferson City High School, serves to foster a greater understanding of a broad career pathway. The tour of the Capitol Plaza Hotel and Convention Center helped them understand that there are many fields worth investigating as they work to be college and career ready.

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The *Capitol Plaza Hotel and Convention Center* is once of more than 70 **Academy Business Partners**. We are grateful to all of our business partners for helping students better understand the world that awaits them after graduation.

*To learn about the Academy Business Program, contact Business Partner Coordinators Karen Brickey (573) 659-3048 or Debbie Strobe, (573) 659-3246.*

*To learn more about The Academies @ Jefferson City High School visit [www.jcschools.us](http://www.jcschools.us) and look under Quick Links.*



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