



**COLLEGE**  
*of*  
**the** **DESERT**

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## **Hospitality Industry Partners with College of the Desert to Launch New Customized Skills Training for Employees**

**PALM DESERT** — More than 20 participants spent the day last week at the Hyatt Regency Indian Wells learning basic customer service and skills required to succeed as a banquet server. Participants in the training were current employees from local resorts, high school students seeking employment, local job seekers and temp agency workers. Upon successful completion of the day-long training, participants completed a written and practical exam; those earning a passing score will receive a certification reflecting their capability to be hired as a banquet server.

“The Hospitality Banquet Server Training seeks to develop skills in the local workforce that we need our associates to possess,” said Michael Bills, PHR Director of Human Resources, JW Marriott Desert Springs Palm Desert. “Working with the PaCE program at College of the Desert, we’ve also been able to train our own employees to deliver the instruction and specific skills training we need to meet our needs.”

The training is a joint partnership between College of the Desert, the Greater Palm Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau and members of the local hospitality industry. The program, guided and delivered by working members from throughout the Coachella Valley hospitality sector, includes customized skills training, specialized certificate courses and blended hands-on, career-based learning. Bringing industry leaders into the classroom in a consistent integrated way gives program participants a good grounding of the expectations in the workplace. The training introduces participants to basic skills and increases opportunities for work experience.

“The program is perfect for temporary employment agencies to prepare workers for their hospitality industry clients as well as for individuals looking to gain skills and confidence to be able to adequately meet basic expectations of local resorts and caterers,” said Pamela Hunter, Executive Director of Institutional Advancement at COD.

The training will be offered seasonally to coincide with the industry annual need for an increased number of workers. For more information or to request specific, customized training for your business, contact Veronica Izurieta at (760) 862-1367 at COD PaCE.

## **Photos courtesy of College of the Desert (captions below):**

### **Photo 1:**

Pam Miller, Lead Banquet Captain at the JW Marriott Desert Springs, kicks off the inaugural banquet training session in a new Coachella Valley Hospitality Workforce Training program designed to enhance skills, increase quality and promote advancement for employees in the hospitality industry.

### **Photos 2:**

Trainers Cecilia Aguirre (Hyatt Regency Indian Wells) and Gary Mitchell (JW Marriott Desert Springs) review standards of a banquet table setting.

### **Photos 3:**

COD graduate and Cal Poly student Larissa Delatorre refines her tray handling skills for her job at the JW Marriott Desert Springs.

### **About College of the Desert:**

Established in 1958, College of the Desert (COD), located in Palm Desert, is an accredited community college serving eastern Riverside County, California. The College leads the region in providing quality, higher education, technical training and lifelong learning opportunities, in response to the dynamic needs of our diverse community. The College serves more than 18,000 students each year and is the number one source of transfer students to California State University, San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus. For more information, visit [www.collegeofthedesert.edu](http://www.collegeofthedesert.edu).

### **About PaCE:**

College of the Desert's Partnership and Community Education (PaCE) program provides outstanding professional development, workforce training, and personal enrichment opportunities that contribute to the success and vitality of our partners, clients and learners. We engage the expertise of subject matter experts to provide cost-efficient, skills-based training solutions for businesses and individuals. PaCE encompasses training and certification programs, personal enrichment programs, and serves as a testing location for industry licensing.

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