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Contact: Mike Singer

(760) 341-2883, ext. 78107

msinger@csusb.edu



CSUSB Palm Desert Campus hosts gala to celebrate and support its hospitality management program

PALM DESERT, Calif. – The Palm Desert Campus of Cal State San Bernardino hosted a special gala at The Westin Rancho Mirage Golf Resort & Spa on March 5 to celebrate and support its hospitality management program.

“New York, New York” was a festive evening of iconic New York City foods, classic cocktails and music that showcased program developments, introduced hospitality program students and featured student DJs from PDC’s Paws Radio.

The Coachella Valley has a \$7.5 billion hospitality and tourism industry. Unfortunately, there is a shortage of qualified applicants for managerial positions. To tackle this issue, the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus launched a world-class hospitality management program that is attracting the best students from the Coachella Valley and beyond.

“It’s really an amazing opportunity that our hospitality management students have here in Palm Desert to contribute to the local industry, the local economy and get feedback and input from local stakeholders,” said Rafik Mohamed, provost and vice president for academic affairs at CSUSB. “We have a deep dedication at CSUSB and the Palm Desert Campus to the success of our students through high-impact approaches to student learning, we are committed to their active engagement in the vitality of the region and we are committed to

closely collaborating with members of our external community to create educational and professional opportunities for students across the Coachella Valley,” he said.

“To the donors and supporters of the hospitality management program, thanks to you I was able to encounter transformational experiences that really opened my mind and actually made me plan out what I really wanted in my life,” said Baldomero Felix-Felix, a PDC alumnus who successfully secured a position at the Ritz-Carlton Rancho Mirage after graduating from CSUSB in 2022. “We students are hungry and we have a desire to unlock hidden abilities, talents and skills to make Greater Palm Springs one of the most recognized places in the world.”

“The gala is a component of the curriculum and learning activity in the Meetings and Event Planning course,” said Joe Tormey, director of the hospitality management program at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus.

“Students assist in planning a large-scale event that generates financial support for their education, study abroad opportunities and the marketing of the program,” he said. “The gala affords students the opportunity for experiential learning and serves as a platform to celebrate their accomplishments and acknowledge the outstanding support from sponsors, donors and the community.”

All proceeds from the event will support CSUSB’s hospitality management program.

Event sponsors included Visit Greater Palm Springs and CSUSB’s Jack H. Brown College of Business and Public Administration as Platinum sponsors; San Manuel Band of Mission Indians/Yaamava Resort & Casino at San Manuel and The Westin Rancho Mirage Golf Resort & Spa as Gold sponsors; Marriott Vacations Worldwide as a Silver sponsor; and Desert Champions, The Ritz-Carlton, Hyatt Regency Indian Wells Resort & Spa, Renaissance Esmeralda Resort & Spa Indian Wells, JW Marriott Desert Springs Palm Desert and the Oak View Group as Bronze sponsors.

For more information about the hospitality management program, visit the [CSUSB Hospitality Management](#) webpage.

About PDC: The CSUSB Palm Desert Campus offers bachelor’s and master’s degrees, a doctorate in educational leadership, teaching credentials and certificates. Serving more than 2,200 students, it is the Coachella Valley’s four-year public university and plays a vital role in educating and training the region’s growing population.

For more information about the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus, contact Mike Singer in the Office of Strategic Communication at msinger@csusb.edu or (760) 341-2883, ext. 78107, or visit the PDC website at www.csusb.edu/pdc.