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GCC SSHS tourism faculty gear up for internship

This Thursday, they're leaving the classroom for hotel row.

On August 16, nine academic and Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers from the Simon Sanchez High School Tourism Academy will work at the Hyatt Regency Guam for a day. They are participating in a one-day summer internship to provide them with maximum exposure to the Hyatt's operations – both front- and back-of-the-house – so that they can have a thorough understanding of the hotel's current operational priorities, challenges, and strategies.

"In turn, this will allow us to gain valuable knowledge that we can use in the classroom to instruct students with current information," said Marivic (Vicky) Schrage, SSHS Lead Academy Teacher.

The internship ensures that CTE teachers' technical knowledge and skills are current, according to Schrage. "It will also help academic teachers make connections between their content, skill taught, and the expectations of the workplace," she said.

"Ultimately, the goal of the Tourism Academy team, consisting of math, language arts, science, culinary, and lodging management teachers, is to develop a fully integrated academic and CTE curricula, incorporating real-life problem-based activities where students can apply academics in relevant ways; create engaging activities that stimulate higher levels of thinking in students, making student learning rigorous and relevant," Schrage said.

Established in 2010, the Tourism Academy at Simon Sanchez High School is a program of Guam Community College in partnership with Guam Department of Education. Spearheaded by GCC tourism instructors Schrage and Eric Chong, the tourism academy program is a commitment to GCC's mission, "to be a leader in career and technical workforce development by providing the highest quality of education and job training in Micronesia."

Students enrolled in the Tourism Academy program are recruited based on their career interest in the tourism and hospitality field and attend a three-year program of integrated curriculum of language arts, math, science, and tourism and hospitality courses. For Academic Year 2011-2012, a total of 133 students were enrolled in the SSHS Tourism Academy. A team of teachers consisting of academic and CTE teachers join the program by choice and work as a team to create rigorous and relevant instructions and ensure student success, according to Schrage.

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