

MDC HOSPITALITY STUDENTS MEET EXPERTS AT NABHOOD

By Isabel L. Fernandez, Hospitality Management

The National Association of Black Hotel Owners, Operators and Developers (NABHOOD) held its 13th annual international African American Hotel Ownership and Multicultural Tourism Summit and Trade Show in Doral from July 22nd through July 25th.

Miami Dade College's Hospitality Management Program was a sponsor of the "Panel of Industry Leaders and Hospitality Experts" which took place at the Doral Resort and Spa on Saturday, July 25th.

Shelly Fano, Director of MDC's Hospitality Management Program, commented on the importance of participating in this event. "It gives us the opportunity to work with a national organization that will provide scholarships for students needing financial assistance. While I have personally participated in the conference for many years, this is the first year that the College has participated."

Students from the program attended the event which featured more than ten industry experts from throughout the world. These experts discussed how education, internships, work experience and graduate studies can help students move up the corporate ladder and lead to success in the industry.



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*Hank Thomas, President
Global Development*

Hank Thomas, president of Global Development, defined success. "Success is achieved with the three D's and the three P's: desire, determination, discipline, persistence, perseverance and patience." He advised students to "never argue for your limitations because you will get to keep them."

Additional advice came from Henry Patel, President of King Motels. Patel cautioned students that in seizing the moment, they may not be maximizing their education. He stressed the importance of role models and knowing what people in the real world are doing by networking with them. Patel told students to "have a passion for what you do and then pick your career. Then, stick to your goal. Tough times don't last but tough people do."

Curtis Dean, Vice-President of Roberts Hotel Group, gave his five secrets to success. "Keep your identity, value your culture, seek spiritual guidance, focus on goals, and listen to the wisdom of those who came before you."

Following the panel discussion, Miami Dade College students joined other hospitality students from throughout the United States and the Caribbean for a speed-dating style mentoring session. Students met with industry professionals in small groups for 20-minute intervals, then rotated to the next station of experts.



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*Zaphyra Francois
Miami Dade College Student*

"I enjoyed the people and the speakers. I received a lot of information about the profession," said Zaphyra Francois, a sophomore in Miami Dade College's Hospitality Management Program. "There was a lot of networking. The people were very warm and helpful and gave you a lot of good advice."

The day ended with a student hospitality luncheon where students had the opportunity to share their thoughts on the impact that the summit had in determining their career goals.

Additional information regarding NABHOOD can be found at www.nabhood.com.