INDIANA UNIVERSITY KOKOMO

News Release

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New IU Kokomo degree offers careers in the fast-growing hospitality and tourism industry

KOKOMO, Ind. — The Indiana Commission for Higher Education Thursday (February 14) approved a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Tourism degree program for Indiana University Kokomo — allowing graduates to tap into the growing travel and tourism industry.

Graduates of this School of Business degree program will be future leaders and planners for convention centers, hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies.

Interim Chancellor Susan Sciame-Giesecke is excited about the new opportunity available to students.

“This degree offers a new career direction for our students that we haven’t offered before,” she said. “IU Kokomo continues its momentum of providing quality IU degrees that meet the needs of the region.”

The Indiana Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in December 2012 that the leisure and hospitality industry accounts for about 290,000 jobs statewide, and the trend is for increasing growth. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the industry has the greatest potential for growth of any industry in the world, accounting for 8 percent of all jobs.

“Hospitality and tourism are intensely people driven,” said Erv Boschmann, interim dean of the School of Business. “You have to be able to understand your market, price your services, market your services, and communicate with your staff and customers. You have to know the basic skills of business, and our students will be well-prepared for these challenges.”

Cities and towns in north central Indiana have realized the importance of tourism, and are working to promote themselves to tourists and visitors. This presents

opportunities for internships and jobs for hospitality and tourism graduates, who will be prepared to enter at the management level and advance in their fields.

“We think this is a great opportunity for the students we serve, and the communities we serve,” said Kathy Parkison, interim vice chancellor for academic affairs. “Indiana is developing a great reputation for hospitality since successfully hosting the Super Bowl, and there is more convention business coming our way. This new degree offers our students a chance for careers in this fast-growing field.”

In addition to learning industry-specific skills, students in hospitality and tourism will take a core of business and communications classes, which are necessary to succeed in the industry.

Campus leaders will hire a new faculty member for the program, and plan for classes to begin in the fall 2013 semester. Parkison anticipates it will be a popular choice among students.

“We have a lot of students who have asked for this,” she said. “We have many who want to be event planners. It is a demand in our region, and a demand among our students.”

Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.

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