Sunway makes Hospitality real

College moves to set up travel agency to boost on campus training facilities

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JUST how real can practical training get? Well, at Sunway College, students and teachers travelling will soon be able to make their travel arrangements at its School of Hospitality and Tourism Management’s travel agency.

The agency will be staffed by students from the school undergoing practical training in the workings of the travel industry. It is the best way to give the students practical experience, said the school’s head Mae Tan, who added that the students will also conduct tours and other activities related to the travel industry.

At present, the School operates a restaurant which is also staffed by students from the hospitality programme.

In addition to that, students are also sent on practical attachment to one of the several properties belonging to the Sunway Group of Companies.

Tan said practical training will ensure that graduating students are right at home when they start work and do not need any additional training.

The hospitality and tourism industry do attract a lot of interest from students, said Tan, but the biggest problem was convincing parents that it was a good choice. “Many parents still have the misconception that those who take up a course in hospitality will have a career limited to the hotel industry,” she said.

“Some also think that a hospitality course is for those who are not academically inclined and therefore need a course that is very skill-oriented.”

Tan said this was not true. She said the hospitality and tourism industries were thriving, multi-billion ringgit industries which always offered good career prospects.

She said the career opportunities for graduates of the hospitality and tourism school were as wide as those for others. “The hospitality industry is a well developed sector and graduates of hospitality courses have built successful careers in a wide range of fields ranging from hotel management to finance.”

She said the qualification awarded at the end of the course was a foundation on which the graduates could build any career they wanted to as there were many specialisations within the industry and outside.

While many have stayed within the industry to rise through the ranks, others have set up their own businesses or ventured into other areas such as travel and tourism, events and promotions.

She said the worldwide recognition of the qualification also meant that it was easy for its holders to work overseas.

The college offers a 16-month Certificate in Hotel and Restaurant Operations and the two-year Diploma in Hospitality and Tourism Management. The Diploma course trains students for supervisory and management positions in the Hotel and Tourism industry.

Tan said students who go to Sunway will learn in a purpose-built campus equipped with all necessary training facilities such as three state-of-the-art kitchens, a life-sized mock-up housekeeping suite and a computerised front office system.

Entry requirements for the courses are SPM, O-Levels, Senior Middle 3 or equivalent. Fluency in English Language is essential for all programmes.

The next intake for both the Certificate and Diploma programme is April 23. For more information, call 03-7358622 or fax 03-7358633.