SUPPORTING OUR STUDENTS

Houston, January 3, 2010 – It’s easier to succeed when you have support, especially in a tough job market. At UH, students get a head start on the competition by getting work experience under their belt before graduation, and University Services helps give them that edge. Not only do jobs foster the student’s work ethic and professional development, student workers can also be quite the asset to the business itself.

“Hiring students for our department not only gives us insight into the thoughts and experiences of our students, but it provides them with a work environment in which they can develop skills that will be necessary when they join the work force after college. Plus, they are a lot of fun to have around,” said Maria Honey, University Services Marketing Manager.

University Services has a student marketing team of 14 that help the marketing staff with various tasks, from shooting video or pictures for the web to designing the colorful signs at events. You can frequently see student representatives set up across campus for tabling promotions for Green UH and UH Parking and Transportation, or distributing Cougar Cards during orientations. Also, the student marketing team is the backbone for events such as Green UH day, Recycle Mania Olympics and the Earth Day festivities, even building the oversized games made of recycled materials themselves.

Kathy Tran, Business Administrator for Parking and Transportation hired 9 student workers this year. She described them as “bright and motivated.”

“It might be their first job and it will help them with their career. By hiring a motivated student, it will ensure that the work will be completed faster and managers will spend less time supervising,” Tran said.

At the dining facilities across campus, student workers are a big part of this year’s success. UH Dining Services has hired significantly more student workers this year due to their partnership with Career Services as well as their involvement with student groups on campus. Kaitlin Accardi, Aramark Higher Education Human Resources Manager praises the ability of her student workers to keep their everyday business running strong.

“Students benefit our business because students can relate with their peers! Students are the backbone of driving our business as well as operating it,” she said."
Many businesses have found that by bringing students onto their staff brings a fresh level of customer service and satisfaction to their business. Students know how their peers feel about services across campus.

“Having student employees serve our customers and offer us feedback is a key component of our business,” said Felix Robinson, General Manager for UH Bookstores, who employs 110 students throughout the year. He said they are perfect for his business model because they can work between classes and know what customers are looking for.

Retail locations across campus provide a convenient location for students to earn extra money as well. McAlister’s Deli and Tealicious at the Welcome Center consistently have student workers representing their business.

“Students are a great asset to our store. They bring a tremendous amount of energy and generate ideas for the workplace,” said Leeann Nguyen, Tealicious manager. “Since our associates are also consumers who spend their time and money on campus, it is important for us to appeal to these students.”

Isai Llanes hires many Hotel and Restaurant Management majors who need a place to start their career. He said they show a lot of drive and loyalty to his store and the university.

“This is their restaurant and their university. They will be the ones to wear Cougar Pride shirts,” Llanes said.

Nguyen said she also likes the idea of helping the students make it through college and offering a start to their career aspirations.

“Since many students need a source of income to either finance their education or for extra spending money, it makes me feel great that I can help them in the same aspect that they are helping me as well,” she said.

University Services does its best to ensure students a fulfilling and enriching college experience and has found offering employment is another way to show support and encouragement.

“Studies show that the reason many students leave college is due to work – either needing to work to afford a college education or because work interferes with their classes and studying,” said Emily Messa, Assistant Vice President for University Services. “When our students work on campus, they are more apt to stay on campus longer, live on campus, study on campus and take advantage of the great recreational facilities that we have at UH. Then they are by nature more engaged students and will be more likely to finish up their degree in a faster time frame. As a department, our goal is to graduate students in four years and we take this mission seriously, which is why we are diligent about hiring and utilizing a student workforce.”
About the University of Houston

The University of Houston is a comprehensive national research institution serving the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. UH serves more than 38,500 students in the nation’s fourth-largest city, located in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region of the country.