



MDC's Center for Service Excellence Changing Customer Service One Business at a Time, Reporting Major Strides



Miami, April 13, 2009 - Launched six months ago at the annual meeting of the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) in Miami Beach, **Miami Dade College's (MDC) Center for Service Excellence (CSE)** is making great strides especially in helping businesses succeed in tough economic times.

In partnership with the GMCVB, the CSE provides important training to all employee levels in organizations from entry to senior management. Courses, seminars and certificate programs include Introduction to Customer Service Excellence, Conversational Spanish for the Service Industry, Coaching for Service Excellence, Recovering from Negative Encounters, Changing the Customer Service Culture and many other dynamic and innovative classes and symposia. **In fact, to date, the CSE has held a variety of sessions providing training for more than 1,000 participants from dozens of organizations.**

Advisory Committee

In recent important developments, the CSE held the **first meeting of its Advisory Committee** on Apr. 2. Comprised of senior management from across the region's business community who will provide guidance to the Center and College leadership, [Dickie Davis](#), director of Terminal Operations and Customer Service at Miami International Airport, was elected chair and Robert Lacle, general manager of the Doubletree Grand Hotel, was elected **vice chair**. Other members include:

- Rolando Aedo, senior vice president for marketing - Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Michael Aller, director of tourism and convention, chief of protocol – City of Miami Beach
- Ramon Antelo, president – SKAL International, general manager – Hilton Bentley Hotel
- Rick Beasley, executive director – South Florida Workforce
- Julie Grimes, owner – Doubletree Grand Hotel
- Andy Ingraham, president – National Association of Black Hotel Owners, Operators, and Developers
- Barry Johnson, president – Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
- Connie Laguna – executive director – South Florida Center for Financial Training housed at MDC
- Liliam Lopez, president – South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Nubielena Medina-Gomez, chair – Doral Business Council
- Richard Millard, development director – Tecton Hospitality

- Jorge Peña, president – West Kendall Business Association
- Patricia Rosello, CEO, Baptist Outpatient Services
- Maria Sastre, president – Maria Sastre and Associates
- Mary Scott Russell, president – Chamber South
- Robert Thomas, product innovation manager – Burger King

Next Steps

The CSE plans to make a big impact on the upcoming Miami International **Pow Wow** May 16 – 20, 2009, the region's most important tourism event, where more than 1,500 international and domestic buyers of tourism products and services from over 70 countries, 400 travel journalists from across the globe and 2,500+ U.S. Travel executives will participate. The Center will provide training for the many volunteers and staff from Miami-Dade County working the event to ensure it is a great success. The CSE will also soon be launching certification programs for customer service professions including Front Desk, Bell Attendant and Concierge for the hotel industry and Restaurant and Bar Customer Service Management for the restaurant industry.

History and Background

Last year, after many discussions with members of the business community, the Center for Service Excellence was created within the College's School of Community Education. It began with a meeting with potential partner organizations that immediately wanted to join the College in effectuating a culture of change in the community, which would take customer service to a new level - **service excellence**. The objective remains to **make Miami the international standard for service excellence leadership**. Founding partners included:

- The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
- The West Kendall Business Association
- Chamber South
- The Association of Black Hotel Owners, Operators and Developers
- The Doral Business Council
- The South Florida Center for Financial Training
- The Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau
- And, Doubletree Grand Hotel, which asked the CSE to train all the employees and businesses within its property to create the pilot program for the Center

For more information on Miami Dade College's Center for Service Excellence, please call 305-237-EXCEL.

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<http://www.mdc.edu/main/news/articles/2009/04/service.asp>