

Professional Development Grant Final Report

The National Restaurant Show (NRA) 20-22 May, 2017
McCormick Convention Center
Chicago, Illinois, USA

Dr. Siriporn McDowall

Parks, Recreation and Hospitality Administration

College of Engineering and Applied Sciences

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smcdowall@atu.edu

Restatement of Professional Development Grant

The Professional Development Grant I applied and received for was to attend the National Restaurant Show (NRA) in Chicago from 20-22 May, 2017. With this grant, I was able to accompany students majoring in Hospitality Administration to attend the NRA Show. The other faculty member travelling with me was a senior faculty member (Dr. Seung Suk Lee). The NRA Show is the largest annual gathering of the restaurant, foodservice and hospitality industry. The NRA show provides an opportunity for educators and students in the Hospitality Management program to see and experience new technology available in the foodservice, learn from the experts about the newest trends and technology, and network among peers. Every year there are more than 50,000 attendees attending this Show.

Brief review of the research procedure utilized

This grant helped pay for my trip to attend the NRA show in Chicago. This trip has been planned and organized throughout the year every year. Last year, we (Dr. Seung Suk Lee, Dr. Dong-Soo Lee, and I) hosted fundraising events three times (January, March, and November) to cater the meals to the annual Dardanelle Chamber of Commerce Banquet, St. Joseph Catholic School (Casino Night), and The Russellville Arts Center Annual Fundraising Event. We raised certain amount of money but it was not enough to cover expenses to bring six students to present their research paper in Las Vegas and six students to attend the NRA Show in Chicago. The funding from this grant made our effort come true.

Summary of Findings, Outcomes, or Experiences

Attending this NRA Show provided me an opportunity to apply state-of-the art information and knowledge (event set up, booths, marketing techniques) to classes I teach (Introduction to Hospitality Management and Introduction to Event Management). Moreover, this Show helped

me to continue to sharpen my knowledge and skills to better present the most current information to students. This, in turn, enhances students' learning.

Conclusion and Recommendations

I gained valuable learning experience by attending some educational sessions and networking with some companies' sales representatives. The most valuable experience of all was being with my colleague and students. My hard-work of doing the fundraising was well paid off when I saw students felt excited when they saw booths set up and saw a huge crowd of people attending this event. This was some students' first trip on the plane or out-of-state. They had a chance to interact with their peers in an informal environments and knew us out-of-the class room settings. I felt proud to see every student was responsible for this trip, they listened and show respect to us. They showed up to the Show and were fascinated with the program and the size of the crowd.

I really appreciate that I received this grant. It confirms to me that university cares about us and students. Attending the Show helped all that are involved in students' learning. I hope that we continue to receive support from this grant.