



August 2011

Dear Friends,

We have exciting news to report for this Summer issue!

### **MEC Immersion Experience**

Share their journey as TISOH welcomed 23 students from Puebla, Mexico who traveled to Las Vegas for a 2 week immersion experience as part of their Meeting and Event Catering course.

### **TISOH Director recognized and Instructor wins at NACE National Conference**

Have you wondered what a National Conference for event professionals is like? Crazy fun! Check out the video to experience the event for yourself. Celebrate the achievements of Tim and Michele as they bring home multiple awards!

### **Alumni Business Spotlight: Green Orchid Events**

We are proud to highlight Green Orchid Events, a premier wedding and event planning company owned and operated by TISOH alum and Advisory Board Member, Juliet Douglas. Juliet added Angelica McDonnell, another TISOH alum, to the team and they have been leading the Vegas wedding scene ever since.

### **Alumni Spotlight Interview: Regina Wedelstedt**

This month, we point our spotlight on Regina, alum of the Wedding Coordination and Design certificate course. Be inspired by Gina's career journey and experience at TISOH!

### **TISOH.com Website Refresh**

Have you visited your school website lately? We have had a major facelift and are so pleased with all the positive comments!

***For anyone interested in taking more TISOH classes, the next session begins September 12!***

Stay in touch everyone and enjoy the warm weather!

Sincerely,

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## **New TISOH website!**



Timothy M. Lam, MIBS, MS, CHT  
Executive Director



Let us know what you think of our brand new look!

Find us on Facebook

Follow us on

## *TISOH welcomed MEC students from Mexico for 2 week Immersion Experience*



Touching down at McCarran International Airport, a group of 23 students and their instructor, Yamel Moises Garza, arrived from Puebla, Mexico to be a part of TISOH'S **Meeting & Event Catering Certificate** course. These students spent the past several weeks learning online from **Patti Shock CPCE** and looked forward to seeing their book knowledge come alive. With much excitement in the air, instructor **Michele Polci CMP, CPCE** delivered her afternoon talk on meal functions.

The next day was packed full of fun starting with learning about beverage functions followed by an indulging luncheon buffet at the Rio. This incredible day continued with a back of the house site tour of the Rio featuring behind-the-scenes at the World Series of Poker. The evening ended with a bang watching the Human Nature show. The rest of the week was spent with instructors, Patti, Michele and **Cheryl Sgovio CPCE**, flying sky-high into lectures about room setups, décor, event staffing, low cost events, and on and off-premise catering. They topped off their first week with a reception at the Blue Martini with hospitality professionals and a three course dinner at Charlie Palmer Steak at Four Seasons. Over the weekend, the students ventured out on a mini road trip to witness one of the Seven Wonders of the World: the Grand Canyon.



**Next session of the Meeting and Event Catering classroom course starts October 7**

[Click here to learn more!](#)

In their second week, the students took off the runway with back of the house tours at Bally's, Paris, Hard Rock Café and the Cosmopolitan, all in one action-packed day! Despite tired feet, each day after class, the students laced up their shoes and continued to shop and explore what the Las Vegas Strip had to offer. The group also had the opportunity to go on an eye opening site tour and see the inner workings of the MGM Resorts Events. On the last day of classes, the students took their final exams and gave their final presentations. They even surprised everyone at TISOH with personalized gifts and baskets of assorted dulces from Mexico. That night, they all celebrated and partied at Tao Nightclub until the sun rose.

On the final day, TISOH welcomed these enthusiastic individuals to the alumni family during the graduation luncheon held at Maggiano's Little Italy. After a beautifully prepared lunch, **Donnell Bayot M.Ed., CHE** impressed everyone by delivering his speech in Spanish, and each graduate was presented with their pineapple pin and certificate. Now equipped with their passports to success, TISOH bid the group farewell and watched them take off to their gates in the La Quinta shuttle one last time.

Are you an [Out-of-State](#) or [International Student](#)?

If the answer is yes, consider a classroom program and experience

**Las Vegas, the Hospitality Capital of the World!**

[\(Housing options available\)](#)



TISOH: The Las Vegas Experience

## *TISOH Director recognized & Instructor wins at NACE 2011 National Conference*



From July 24 to 27, the **National Association of Catering Executives** held their annual national conference at the Silver Legacy Casino & Hotel in Reno, Nevada. The Las Vegas Chapter of **NACE** is a strong supporter of TISOH and co-sponsors the **Meeting & Event Catering** certificate and the **Art of Food and Beverage** certificate courses.

TISOH was honored as the Supporting Organization of the Year in 2010 by the Las Vegas Chapter of NACE. We are proud to have been well represented at this important conference where event and catering professionals come together to celebrate, learn, and advance their profession and industry.

### **Official NACE Experience Video Recap**

Want to find out what it is like to attend an exciting national conference, produced **by** event professionals **for** event professionals?



**NACE Experience 2011**  
*Courtesy of Evoke Creative Group*

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**Congratulations to  
Michele Polci CMP, CPCE, Tim Lam MIBS, MS, CHT,  
& Lisa Lynn Backus CMP, CPCE**

**Special congratulations to Rissa Merkle Gunderson (TISOH alum)**  
for her nomination as **Student Member of the Year!**

This is a national level recognition of her leadership and achievement while serving in 2010 as Student Chapter President of Las Vegas NACE.



**Michele Polci, CMP, CPCE**

is the Director of Citywide Catering Sales for Caesars Entertainment in Las Vegas, overseeing the sales effort for all catered events across one million square feet of banquet and event space in all eight Las Vegas properties. Michele is a past-president of the Las Vegas Chapter of NACE and is presently the Historian and Parliamentarian. On the national level, Michele serves on the NACE Certification Committee. She is also a faculty member of the Department of Catering at TISOH.

**George Zell Spirit of NACE Award**  
**Award for Best On-Premise Event with a Budget of Less than \$25K**  
**Award for Best On-Premise Event with a Budget of More than \$75K**  
**Volunteer Excellence Award**

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**Tim Lam MIBS, MS, CHT**

is the Executive Director of TISOH and the Programs Chair for the Las Vegas Chapter of NACE. On the national level, Tim serves on the NACE Education Strategy Committee. At this conference, Tim was named to the prestigious **President's List!**

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**Lisa Lynn Backus CMP, CPCE**

is the Catering & Convention Services Manager at Caesars Entertainment, Inc. Like Michele, Lisa Lynn is a Past President of the Las Vegas Chapter of NACE. She also serves on the National Board of NACE. Lisa Lynn brings her more than 20 years of event experience into the TISOH classroom. Lisa Lynn, a past recipient of the Spirit of NACE award, received her **Volunteer Excellence Award**. On the national level, Lisa Lynn also serves on the NACE Certification Committee.



Interested in learning more about the [Las Vegas Chapter of NACE?](#)

Take advantage of your TISOH student status! Admission to **next Wednesday's event** at Red Rock Casino and Resort is just \$30. [Click here to register today.](#)

## Alumni Business Spotlight: Green Orchid Events



**Being a wedding planner is more than just attending delicious menu tastings and playing with pretty linen and flowers. In fact, that's only a really small portion of what we do. What I love about planning weddings is that we get to take their vision and bring everything to life. I love seeing everything come together on the day of the event. The planning is hard work and involves working with so many personalities, discussing and talking through logistic and timing issues, and staying organized with all of the hundreds of little details.**

*I love working with couples from all over the globe to put together a custom tailored event for their special occasion. **Being a wedding planner in Las Vegas is so rewarding and also so much fun because couples tend to want to take more risks when planning their wedding here.** We see everything from traditional and elegant weddings to weddings that are completely out of the box and outrageous.*

*Social media has been HUGE in our success as a company. I'm often in consultations where potential clients are loyal readers of our blog and refer to different subjects we're previously discussed on our blog. We're also big into Twitter and it allows us to connect with other wedding professionals all over the country. I have a few brides on Twitter and I get to really learn about their personalities by connecting and conversing with them via Twitter.*

**Juliet Douglas**  
Owner and Lead Consultant

## Green Orchid Events

[Click the banner below for one of the best wedding blogs in the country!](#)



### About Green Orchid Events

Green Orchid Events is a full-service event planning company specializing in weddings. We offer a modern approach to event planning and pride ourselves in the highest level of personalized and prompt service and fine attention to detail. We are passionate about all things event related from culinary arts to colorful and tasty cocktails to entertainment, floral design, and photography.

Founded in 2007, Green Orchid Events has been featured in Wedding Chicks, Rock N' Roll Bride, Spectacular Bride, Elizabeth Anne Designs, Utterly Engaged, 944 Magazine, The Best Wedding Sites magazine, just to name a few!



### Juliet's Bio

Juliet is the owner and lead wedding consultant of Green Orchid Events. Having been a singer and musician for most of her life, she enjoys good live music in all genres from classical to hard rock. Her other loves include chocolate hazelnut gelato, trying new restaurants, hot tea, and spending time with family and friends.

Juliet has a Bachelor of Science degree in Hotel Administration from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas with a concentration in Special Events and Entertainment. She has also graduated and obtained a **Wedding Coordination and Design Certificate from the International School of Hospitality**. Juliet has worked in various positions in some of the finest establishments in Las Vegas in the hospitality and food and beverage industries.

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### Angelica's Bio

A 2007 graduate of the **Wedding Coordination & Design** program at the **International School of Hospitality**, Angelica joined Green Orchid Events in the summer of 2008 as a wedding day coordinator and party planner.

Angelica is mildly obsessed with Hello Kitty and loves the fall season. She loves Z Gallerie and Pier One Imports and visits these stores frequently for inspiration on colors and decor. She enjoys reading books by her favorite authors Nicholas Sparks and Emily Griffin. If she had her choice, she'd probably eat Mexican food every night. Her Starbucks drink of choice is a Caramel Macchiato.

To top it all off, Angelica's love for children will show as she has the patience to handle your crying 4 year old flower girl with grace.



## *Alumni Spotlight - Interview with Gina Wedelstedt*



TISOH is proud to highlight **Gina Wedelstedt**, alum of the **Wedding Coordination and Design** FASTtrack Certificate Program.

### **1. What attracted you to the wedding profession?**

I always knew I wanted to be in the special events industry. In 2008 I started interning for an event planning company in Los Angeles called Event Eleven. I worked on a lot of big name events. Working on my first wedding in Malibu made me realize how much I loved working with brides and

helping them on their special day. I decided I wanted to become certified, found TISOH online and moved out to Vegas for 5 weeks.

**2. Tell us about your TISOH experience. What course(s) did you take? What aspect was the most rewarding?**

I took the wedding coordination and design course. TISOH was an amazing experience! Most rewarding was learning hands on from the top wedding professionals in the business.

**3. What do your professional responsibilities entail? What is the best part of your career?**

I process all the new turnovers from our sales department and assign the turnovers to an event manager or coordinator. I actualize all of our events and input the info into the corporate Marriott website. I create banquet event orders for my groups/wedding and help with the on property planning process. The best part is getting to help people celebrate life. Life is so short, I love helping people make memories and help make their dreams a reality.

**4. If you were to give advice to someone looking to become a wedding planner, what would it be?**

Definitely learn as much as you can and gain as much experience as possible.

**5. What lessons did you learn from TISOH that you will always keep with you?**

I learned so much about cultural weddings and traditions and that its so important to make connections and network!

**6. What do you find most challenging about your profession? Most rewarding?**

I think the most challenging thing about being an event coordinator is that anything can go wrong. You plan for months and then the best man goes missing or a vendor doesn't show up. You have to expect the unexpected and always have a plan B. Most rewarding would have to be seeing my bride and groom happy on one of the most important days of their life.

**7. Do you have any comments you would like to share about your course at TISOH and your career?**

Michael Tesstagrossa was one of my teachers and now we are coworkers. He knows so much about weddings and the industry. It is really nice to be able to ask him questions and to still have his support. The staff at TISOH is amazing!

**8. In one word, how would you describe your experience with TISOH?**

Life-Changing. After graduating from TISOH, I moved to Las Vegas and I'm working as an event coordinator!

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