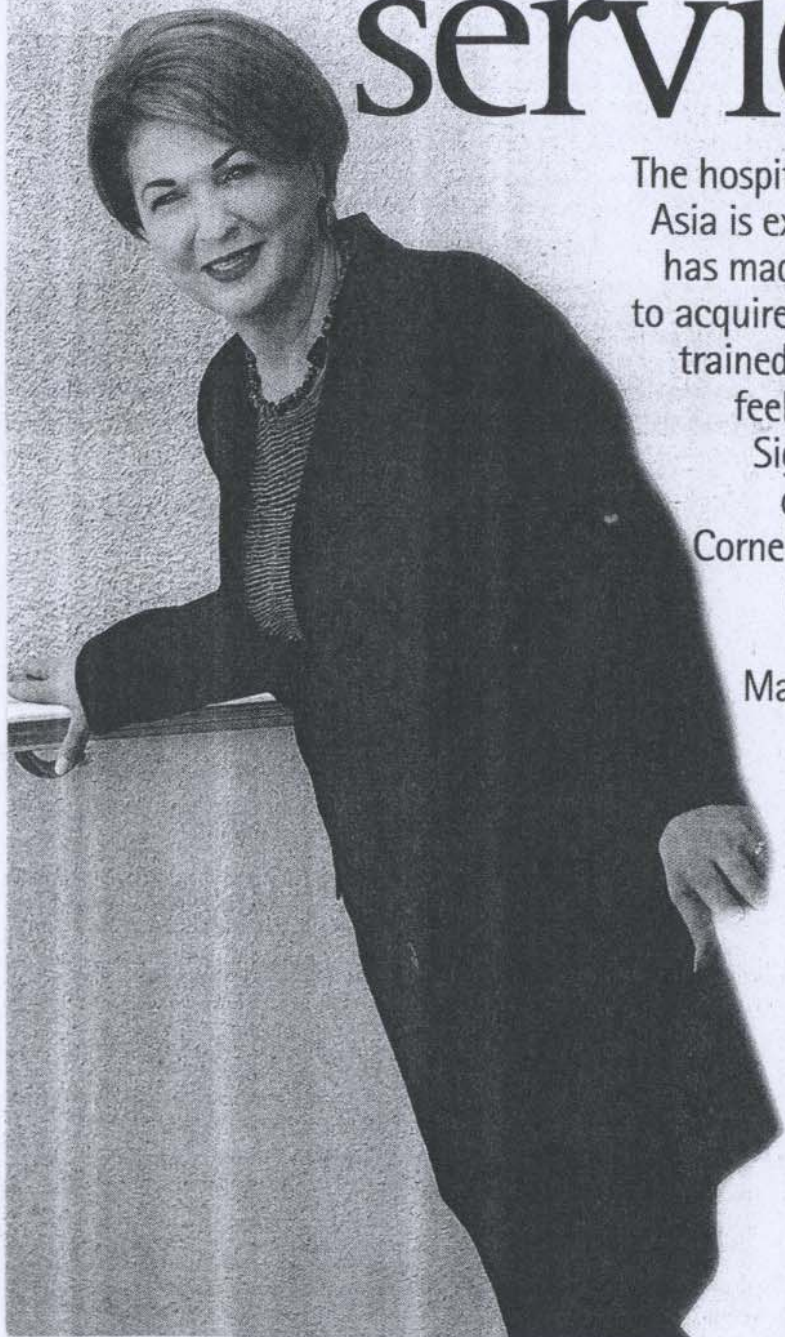


# At your service

The hospitality boom Asia is experiencing has made it crucial to acquire and retain trained managers, feels Prof Judy Siguaw (left), dean of the Cornell-Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management.



WITH the greenlight given to the integrated resorts (IRs), plans to rejuvenate Orchard Road, the transformation of Boat Quay into a 24-hour precinct and five new hotel developments over the next three years in Singapore, the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) wants to triple tourism receipts to \$30 billion and create 100,000 new jobs in 10 years.

One in 10 of these jobs will be a professional and managerial position, and the local hospitality industry looks poised for a recruitment boom.

But does Singapore have the manpower resources and expertise to deliver the perfect hospitality experience? As Mr James Tan, STB's director of resource development, pointed out to *Recruit*: "Having a competent and able tourism workforce conversant in the industry's best practices is vital for Singapore to achieve this vision."

Two schools want to help mould the future captains of the hospitality industry. They are the Cornell-Nanyang Institute of Hospitality Management (CNI) and Universitas 21 Global (U21G) which, together with the University of Nottingham, is offering a master's programme.

## Mastering hospitality

Jointly established by the prestigious Cornell University School of Hotel Administration and the Nanyang Technological University (NTU) Nanyang Business School in Singapore, CNI will offer an intensive 12-month joint degree in Master of Management in Hospitality (MMH) from mid-2006.

Professor Judy Siguaw, dean of CNI, feels that acquiring and retaining trained human capital is a crucial issue, given the hos-

pitality boom Asia is experiencing. The rapid growth has exacerbated the need for hospitality managers who are expected not just to understand hospitality operations, but be able to develop strategic ideas to help their organisation to leapfrog the competition.

The lack of these talents is also the reason why Singapore and Asia are often criticised for falling short of world-class hospitality standards set by global cities such as New York and London, reckoned Prof Siguaw.

"One major hotel company has reported a need for 200 senior managers over the next few years. As a result, such companies note that they are being forced to promote employees faster than normal and hire people not as qualified as they want," she said.

She added: "Americans recognised the hospitality industry as a great career some time ago. The industry is one of the largest in the world, with MNCs employing thousands. As a result, general managers and top corporate executives in Asia are often expatriates. Asians need specialised managerial education to reach these echelons."

"In today's business world, having professional, well-educated, strategic thinkers as managers can make the difference between a successful and a failed business.

"In some parts of Asia, working in the hospitality industry is still frowned upon. Considering the growth potential in the region, the high-calibre employment positions and the tremendous need for qualified managers, this is one misconception that needs to change immediately," she said.

CNI's MMH programme is targeted at middle and senior

management talent in the hospitality industry in both Singapore and Asia.

The curriculum for CNI is identical to that of Cornell's Ithaca campus, but CNI offers an innovative twist — students will spend six months each in Singapore and Ithaca, New York.

Prof Siguaw noted: "A very important aspect of the MMH programme is industry networking, an ideal opportunity for people who want to make mid-career changes."

There will also be opportunities for research and scholarship funding, and internships and attachments.

Ultimately, consumers stand to gain from a more professional hospitality workforce. Prof Siguaw believes that having better trained professionals will translate into better levels of services and greater consistency industry-wide. — *By Lyn Chan, a freelance writer.*

For more information, visit [www.cni.ntu.edu.sg](http://www.cni.ntu.edu.sg)

Back page: Going online for an MSc in Tourism and Travel Management with Universitas 21 Global (U21G) and The University of Nottingham.

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