

# ***Southern Utah University***

## ***School of Business***

### ***Department of Management, Marketing and Hospitality***

#### **BIOGRAPHY FOR LISA MARIE ASSANTE, PHD**

**Areas of Expertise in Hospitality Education:** Strategic Management, Human Resource/Leadership Management, Services Marketing, Food and Beverage Management, Sanitation and Safety, and Hospitality Math.

**Hospitality Industry Areas of Expertise:** Leadership Training & Development, Market Analysis, Subsidy Reduction, Retail Merchandising and Marketing, Operational Cost Analysis & Control, Program Development, Budget Development & Administration, Contract Negotiations, Profit & Loss Responsibility, Profit Margin Expansion, Client Relations, and Public Relations

**Biography:** Dr. Assante has taught in the field of hospitality administration for more than 15 years. She has taught courses in Strategic Management, Services Marketing, Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism, Travel and Tourism, Introduction to the Hospitality Industry, Food and Beverage Management, Restaurant Management, Liquor and Bar Management, Dining Room Service, Event Management, NRA ServSafe and HACCP, Hospitality Law, Human Resources, Financial Analysis, Hospitality Math, Quantity Food Production, International Hospitality Management, Event Management, and Business and Society.

During her time at SUU, Dr. Assante received one of the first service-learning designations at the University for her Quantity Food Production course (HRHM 3110). She has also earned a service-learning designation for HRHM 4601 – Strategic Guest Service. She encourages her students to write service-learning enhancement grants and student senate bills to assist with project funding, while developing external community partnerships. In addition to integrating service-learning into her classes, Dr. Assante also serves on the SUU Faculty Service-Learning Committee; participates in the annual Utah Campus Compact Engaged Scholars Retreat; serves on several University, School of Business, and Departmental committees; is the founder and advisor for the Hospitality Management Guild; is a co-founder of the Hospitality Research Center; is an active scholar and grant recipient; and has received tenure and rank advancement to Associate Professor.

For both the 2010/2011 and 2009/2010 academic year, Dr. Assante received the SUU School of Business, Department of Management, Marketing & Hospitality Outstanding Professor Award. For the 2010 – 2011 academic year, she was a candidate for the SUU Outstanding Scholar of the Year Award and was also recognized by the SUU Faculty Service-Learning Committee as a 2010 Service-Learning Fellow. In addition, Dr. Assante has also received Southern Utah University's Outstanding Educator Award for the year of 2008-2009; the 2008 SUU T-Bird Award for Professor of the Year; the 2008 Utah Campus Compact Outstanding Engaged Scholar Award; and the 2008 Western Decision Sciences Institute Best Application Paper Award presented by Alpha Iota Delta Honor Society.

Prior to her current appointment at Southern Utah University, Dr. Assante was an Assistant Professor of Hotel and Resort Management in the School of Travel Industry Management at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. During her time at UHM, Dr. Assante was an officer in the TIM faculty senate and a member of the TIM curriculum committee and graduate faculty. She served on

multiple search committees and was the faculty advisor to the Travel Industry Management Student Association (TIMSA). Furthermore, she initiated, developed, and executed the Hotels and Resorts of Halekulani Educational Partnership for strategic initiatives.

In addition to her appointment at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Lisa completed her Doctor of Philosophy in Hospitality Administration from Texas Tech University. Her dissertation work was in the area of college and university program rankings. More specifically, educators, administrators, students, and hospitality executives were queried using focus groups and on-line survey techniques to identify primary quality indicators for hospitality management programs. This exploratory research and development of quality indicators would allow comparisons among programs that could eventually evolve into a more consistent and reliable hospitality program rating/ranking system. More importantly, these quality indicators would be valuable to programs internally in an on-going assessment and strategic planning process. Dr. Assante's related research has been published in the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 34(2) and in the *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 7(2).

While earning her Master of Science in Hotel Administration at University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), Dr. Assante's most significant research included a curriculum needs assessment for a beverage management program to be implemented in undergraduate hospitality education. The study results indicated a need for a beverage management major. The competencies identified as important have formed the basis of the beverage management curriculum at UNLV. This research serves as one of her most rewarding educational efforts, as many UNLV students have now graduated with either a Bachelor of Science degree in Hotel Administration or Culinary Arts Management with a declared Beverage Management major.

In her most recent industry position, Dr. Assante was a Manager of Training and Development for The Venetian Resort~Hotel~Casino in Las Vegas where her primary focus was to formulate and implement leadership training and development programs for the 4 Star/4Diamond property concentrating on unmatched guest service. These programs were delivered to approximately 500 managers and 4500 team members. Additional areas of concentration included: individual department performance consulting; individual development programs; and 360 degree review processes.

Preceding her employment at The Venetian, Dr. Assante was an Assistant Professor at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. Her hospitality education experience also includes a full-time faculty position in the University and Community College System of Nevada in the Department of Resorts and Gaming. Prior to her employment at CCSN, she was the Dean of the School of Hotel/Restaurant Management at Pennsylvania Institute of Culinary Arts, where she was responsible for developing and implementing an Associate Degree Program in Hotel/Restaurant Management.

Before earning her Master's degree, Dr. Assante's industry experience concluded as a District Manager with Sodexo Management Services where she operated business generating 6.5 million dollars of annual revenue. As a District Manager some of her responsibilities included: the preparation of annual budgets; the formulation of annual business development plans resulting in expanded profit margins; the implementation of procedural controls to ensure proper management of corporate assets; the development and implementation of a catering division focusing on weddings and other gala events; and ensuring restaurant compliance with established quality and performance standards. Also under her jurisdiction were: contract negotiations including union, non-union, and government; compliance with current labor and employment laws, as well as

adherence to health and safety regulatory codes; and working with Zenger Miller trainers to structure and execute training programs to management and non-management personnel.

Dr. Assante believes that the joy of teaching is the art of learning. Additionally, she views education as an intangible asset; once it has been imparted it cannot be taken away, just disseminated to the next generation by a true leader--a professor. To quote Southern Utah University's President, Michael T. Benson, when presenting Dr. Assante with the SUU Outstanding Educator Award, "Nothing is more important to Lisa Assante than to provide every single one of her students with the knowledge and experience necessary for professional success. And nothing is more important to many of Dr. Assante's students than to earn her commendations for a job well done. There is a very sincere partnership built upon mutual respect. Many of Lisa's students say they appreciate the time she has taken to get to know them on a personal level and to encourage their unique interests and help them find a place for such passions in the real world. And for Assante, the textbook is just the beginning of learning, and she is constantly looking for new ways to help students gain professional, hands-on exposure to the service and travel industries. An integral faculty member in shaping SUU's Hotel, Resort and Hospitality Management program, Assante's friendly yet professional personality has been an asset in establishing professional partnerships that provide internships and even careers for many SUU students. As one of her students aptly put it, "Dr. Assante is the best!"

Obviously, it gives Lisa great pleasure to be able to contribute to the success of the SUU students, tomorrow's leaders. As Dr. Assante's gratitude to everyone involved in all aspects of her education has been immeasurable, she only hopes to continue to give back to her students what has been given to her. She is extremely excited to be part of the on-going development of the Hotel, Resort and Hospitality Management program at Southern Utah University and looks forward to her career in the School of Business, Department of Management, Marketing & Hospitality. Lisa is deeply grateful to all who have made it possible.

If you would like to contact Dr. Lisa Marie Assante, please email her at [assante@suu.edu](mailto:assante@suu.edu).

"Ancora Imparo - Still I Am Learning" ~ Michelangelo

#### **Education:**

##### **Texas Tech University**

Lubbock, TX:

December 2005 – Doctor of Philosophy in Hospitality Administration

##### **University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

Las Vegas, NV:

May 1998 – Master of Science in Hotel Administration

Concentration: Hospitality Education / Food and Beverage Management / Services Marketing

##### **The Pennsylvania State University**

University Park, PA:

May 1987 – Bachelor of Science in Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management