



Shuxu Liu volunteering at the China International Consumer Products Expo (2021)

Outstanding Student Nominee Shuxu Liu

By Brynn Kowalski

Shuxu Liu is a current senior with HAITC majoring in Tourism Development and Management. One of her recent essays has been selected by the *Tourism Tribune* China Tourism Research Annual Conference in 2021, and she has interned with several companies studying the interplay between theory and practice, including the Career International as a headhunting consultant and the Grand Barony Hotel Xi'an in the Food and Beverage department.

Q. What was your major in the HAITC program?

A. I'm majoring in Hotel Management in HAITC, and the, you know, the [program] in ASU is called Tourism Development and Management.

Q. What is your favorite memory or course from the program?

A. The wonderful memory... actually I had a lot of wonderful memories studying at HAITC. All the faculty here are really kind and professional, taking care of the students. I really like the practical courses headed by HAITC, such as the coffee-making and the wine-tasting [classes], and what impressed me most was the product assessment included in the Food and Beverage course; we invited faculties and HAITCers to enjoy the fancy dinner in our simulated restaurant. We served as waitresses and prepared [for] almost two weeks to prepare a complex set of service processes.

Q. What experience do you feel impacted you the most during the program?

A. HAITC gives us various opportunities to explore our interests and find out what we really want to do finally, and for me, what impacted me most was the process of preparing [the] essay that I recently worked on. I participated in Dr. Yu-Hua Xu's research assistant team, and in 2020 I became interested in the topic called Resilience and Crisis Management in [the] Tourism and Hospitality Industry. The COVID-19 pandemic has heavily obstructed the hospitality industry, so I want to explore whether the measures taken by the hotels can better help them to recover during the hard times.

Actually, I encountered lots of problems, because it was the first time I wrote a very formal, quite formal essay, so I quickly – at first, my article seemed illogical, but after reviewing a lot of literature and the help of Dr. Yu-Hua Xu, my article started to get on the right track. Right now, the article has been selected in the China Tourism Research Annual Conference in 2021, which is held by *Tourism Tribune* in China.

In addition, all the lecturers and professors encouraged us to speak out our own opinions rather than only listen to them. And we also had a course called the Public Speaking course. Based on that, I became more confident to speak my thoughts.

Q. What skills have you learned during your time in the HAITC program?

A. Actually, I have developed lots of skills, such as teamwork skills, which I think is quite important, because we have lots of group projects. We have to work together to successfully get the project done. In addition, problem-solving skills, and self-learning skills, which are also important.

Q. Do you have a favorite real-world experience using these skills, such as during an internship, volunteer, or research opportunity?

A. Not only for the self-learning, but also the problem solving [skills]. Both I will explain:

For the problem solving, it's that recently I finished with an internship [where] I worked as a headhunter consultant, which is to find the right person based on the job descriptions offered by the corporation. At the beginning, it was very hard for me to find the right candidates because [I was] lacking the experience and the accurate search words. I immediately sought help from my colleagues and the leaders who have been working on these projects for a long time. I successfully found candidates and completed the tasks. One actually can find problems every day, but learning how to use the resources around us to solve the problems is the key.

For the self-learning skills, actually, we have lots of learning materials relating to different kinds of courses. We need to utilize our spare time to learn these materials. This is also the big difference between studying in high school and college. Moreover, actually, I got an internship in the Xi'an Grand Barony Hotel in 2021. I worked in [the] Food and Beverage department, and the manager every day will prepare food – two cups of milk and one fried egg to the customer, which is a grandpa who usually stays in the hotel. One day the manager didn't come to the hotel for some personal things, and I asked the chef to prepare the food before the [grandpa] came to the restaurant, and the manager was really satisfied with my, you know, the action, the behavior, to appeal to the customer's preference first.

Q. What do you plan to do after you graduate?

A. Actually, for the short-term goal, I was admitted to the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, in International Hospitality Management in 2022. Then after that, maybe I will get a rotation in the luxury hotel because I think, you know, working in a luxury hotel gives me more opportunities to have personal interactions with the customers, which can better improve my problem-solving skills and calculate out my practical experience. In addition, I hopefully, I think that to– to publish my article that I mentioned before. For the long goal, I don't have a very specific goal, because I think everything is changing. So, I only have one direction: that is to adapt to the current development trend of the times, which is digital transformation in the hospitality industry to use data analysis to provide customers with personalized services.