

SCHOOL NEWS

Brooklyn students learn how their careers could take off



What better way to teach high school hospitality and tourism students about airport career opportunities than to go and visit one?

Students from the National Academy Foundation's (NAF) Academy of Hospitality and Tourism at the Erasmus Hall Campus in Brooklyn were treated to a full-day, job-shadowing event at JFK International Airport. Twenty-five students from the academy were chosen for the

trip based on qualifications that included attending class regularly and maintaining a positive attitude throughout the year.

"The staff at JFK International did a really terrific job," said Karen Francis, director and CTW Work-Based Learning Coordinator for the academy.

"They kept reiterating that the airport is a city, and all the career opportunities that are available in a city are available here. They have their own police force, fire

department, medical facilities and even a post office with its own zip code."

According to Francis, several students were so impressed with what they saw that they expressed an interest in working at the airport once they completed their studies. "Some of the boys talked about being engineers," said Francis, "and several of the girls expressed an interest in working at the airport as well."

Students had the opportunity

to go "planeside," which enabled them to get close-up views of airplanes landing and taking off. "I've flown to many parts of the world but this was the first time I'd had the chance to see things this close up," said Francis. "I know many of the students were just amazed at what they were seeing."

One of the people who spoke to the students was Sean Porter, manager of Landside Services in the Airport's Operations Division. He wanted to make sure students knew how important education could be in their lives. Porter's career path was one that many of the students could identify with, having been born in Guyana and working his way up to manager after coming to the airport.

The National Academy Foundation is an acclaimed network of career-themed academies that open doors for under-served high school students to viable careers. For nearly 30 years, NAF has refined a proven model that provides young people access to industry-specific curricula, work-based learning experiences, and relationships with business professionals.