

Dec. 18, 2007

Metropolitan State College of Denver

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**HOTEL LEARNING CENTER SLATED FOR
DOWNTOWN DENVER COLLEGE CAMPUS**

Denver - Metropolitan State College of Denver and the Department of Hospitality, Tourism, and Events (HTE) are preparing for a hotel and a Hotel Learning Center (HLC) to be housed on the Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC) campus located on 125 acres in downtown Denver, Colo. The hotel will include 150-200 guest rooms, restaurant, meeting and banquet space, and the HLC. It's scheduled to open fall of 2010.

"There are approximately 10 colleges or universities in the country that host hotels," says Chad Gruhl, Chair of the Metro State Hotel Learning Center Task Force. "We expect to be one of two on the West Coast, along with the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, to host a hotel and a learning center where students and professionals can come to learn about the hospitality industry."

The idea for the hotel was planted more than a decade ago, but is coming to fruition during a record surge in tourism for the city. According to Toronto-based business research company, Longwoods International, 2006 was the best year ever for Denver tourism with 11.7 million overnight visitors coming to the city. This is a 13 percent increase over the 10.4 million overnight visitors who came to Denver in 2005, the largest single one year increase in tourism in Denver's history.

At this point the hotel and learning center are estimated to cost between \$30 and \$35 million. The official release for the RFP for the management company/flag is scheduled for as early as February 2008.

"Metro State will be offering to individuals and corporations the opportunity to name both the Hotel Learning Center and various public spaces and facilities within the Center," says Gruhl, who is also an Assistant Professor and Director of Hotel Management in the HTE department. "Since the Hotel Learning Center will be located in downtown adjacent to one of Denver's most traveled thoroughfares, it offers a wonderful opportunity to any corporation seeking to publicize its support of higher education."

Questions will be answered at two predetermined dates in mid-January 2008. For more information contact Chad Gruhl via email at cgruhl@mscd.edu.

For information about Metro State, visit www.mscd.edu

For information about the HLC, visit www.mscd.edu/~hmt/resources/hlc.shtml

For information about AHEC, visit www.ahec.edu/

Metro State is a fully accredited, four-year institution, serving more than 21,000 students. It has the second-largest undergraduate enrollment in Colorado and is one of the largest four-year public colleges in the nation. Metro State enrolls the highest number of students of color among four-year colleges in the state. It boasts 60,000 alumni, 90 percent of whom stay in Colorado after graduation. Visit Metro State at www.mscd.edu.