

LAURA K. GRAHAM

Professional Profile

Over ten years of managerial leadership and entrepreneurial innovation to ensure the principals' standards are met and guest expectations are exceeded. Exceptional communication skills and business experience. Private service professional with a commitment to excellence and quick resolution of problems; notable success in large-scale event planning and operations/logistics. Colleagues describe me as a personable, hard-working, forward-thinking and trustworthy hands-on manager, with a guest-centric approach to estate management; exceptionally well organized and practiced in conducting 5-star service at the highest level of professionalism.

Personal Assets

- 10+ years of Private Service Experience
- 6+ years of Experience as High-End B&B Owner/Manager
- Expert Knowledge of the Food and Beverage Business

Skill Synopsis

- Delivers 5-Star Luxury Guest Service: up to 68 people
- Event Planning, up to 250 people
- Household Organization
- Wine Cellar Management
- Operations and Logistics
- Water Feature and Pool Care
- Exotic Animal Care and Pet Care
- Budget Creation and Adherence, use of QuickBooks
- Proper Care of Fine China, Silver, Glassware and Linens
- Expert Meal Service: Buffets, Plated and Tray Service
- Project Management
- Staff Supervision/Vendor Management
- Contract Negotiation
- Inventory Management
- Wardrobe Organization and Management
- Proficient with PCs and MACs
- Knowledgeable of Smart Home Technology: Crestron and Lutron
- Knowledgeable in Microsoft Office: Word, Excel and Outlook

Professional Experience

Private Estate Estate Manager

Central TX

May 2008 – Present

Oversee all estate management issues pertaining to 250-acre waterfront estate consisting of a 20,000 sq ft main residence and numerous guest cottages; annual budget of \$2M with an annual average of 600+ guests.

- Implement and maintain principal's standards of service and guest services for the property. Maintain property in a constant state of guest readiness including functionality of all facility systems and security.
- Organize and host special events; coordination of special projects and subcontractors necessary for those projects. Liaise with caterers and special event purveyors, bands, and entertainment.
- Hire, train, manage and supervise full time staff of 10: maintenance and housekeepers.
- Implement 8 ton shoreline dredge maintenance plan.
- Veterinary maintenance and care for exotic and domestic animals.
- Care and maintenance of vehicles including a variety of watercraft, RV, fire truck, and multiple types of recreational vehicles such as Segways, golf carts and four wheelers.
- Coordinate annual budget preparation, including payroll in conjunction with family CPA.
- Project Coordination: Oversaw principal's corporate real estate construction of two model homes (3,000 sq ft and 3,500 sq ft). Implemented the planning, coordinating, execution and completion of work on time and within the project budget; liaison to interior designer and sales team.

Professional Experience – continued

Private Residence

Dallas, TX

January 2008 – May 2008

Household Manager/Personal Assistant

Oversaw all household management, including security, vehicle maintenance, construction projects, event planning, hiring/training staff, household systems, interior maintenance, pool, pet care, grounds, inventory, auxiliary vendors and on call for emergencies.

- Initiated and maintained household manuals and kept inventories in accordance with set guidelines.
- Supervised, hired and trained staff of 12 (Chef, Housekeepers and Nannies); sourced/managed 100+ vendors and maintenance sub-contractors.
- Scheduled and supervised guest's culinary experience: buffets, cocktail parties and seated dinners.
- Coordinated annual budget preparation and basic accounting system and with family CPA.
- Personal work: reservations, gift purchasing and domestic/international travel scheduling and logistics.

Kennedy Manor Bed and Breakfast

Jefferson, TX

January 2001 – January 2007

Owner/Manager

Developed boutique, high-end, destination business consisting of six guest rooms in a 4,000 sq ft inn until it was sold in January 2007. Managed the successful operation of an award winning B&B; increased revenues by more than 50% in the first year.

- Created, supervised and implemented daily administration tasks: marketing, accounting and advertising.
- Duties included reservations, check-in/out, ordering and purchasing supplies, and scheduling staff.
- Selection, supervision and training of inn staff (housekeeping and maintenance). Researched, selected and managed over a dozen contractors/vendors: landscaping, renovations and construction trades.
- Was the primary contact for customer service and all guest hospitality services.
- Coordinated weddings with up to 250 guests; liaison with local businesses for special events.
- Designed seasonal menus, sourced/managed suppliers and prepared breakfast/evening hors d'oeuvres.
- Streamlined operations to enhance efficiency and customer satisfaction; winner of Arrington's Inn Traveler "Book of Lists" for three years: 2002-2005.

Tastebuds Catering

Hughes Springs, TX

August 1996 – July 2001

Owner/ Manager

Developed strategic business plans, researched competition's products and services, with an active role in all aspects of culinary design. Managed the sales, marketing, business development, administrative and operational functions, which included accounting, staffing and delivery.

- Created a local reputation for exceptional food, presentation and outstanding service; supervised food preparation for all events.
- Made recommendations for other aspects of events, including décor, flowers, lighting, entertainment, music, valet, transportation, tents and equipment.
- Responsible for recruiting and training new staff and supervising the existing staff so that a high level of service was provided to clients. Coordinated staff schedules (sous chefs, servers and table setters).
- As primary contact for customer service, committed to understanding the needs of our clients, and tailored follow-up to ensure satisfaction.
- Maintained inventories and equipment including, fleet maintenance of three vehicles.

Education and Certification

Safe Food Handling Permit, Texas Department of Health Retail Foods Division

Since 2000

Bachelor of Biological Sciences, Texas A&M University

1998

Professional Memberships

Domestic Estate Managers Association, Member

Professional Association of Innkeepers International (PAII), Member

Lion's Club International, Member

Historic Jefferson Foundation, Board Member, 2001 – present

Jefferson B&B Association, Treasurer 2001 – 2005