

# HOTEL EZRA CORNELL

## ISSUE FOUR

---

### WELCOME

Welcome to the fourth edition of the Hotel Ezra Cornell 100 External Newsletter!

We are so excited to bring the monthly newsletters back as we prepare for our historic 100th annual HEC Conference. Join us on the first Monday of each month for all of our updates, highlights, and insights into what is happening in the HEC community. We hope you are as excited as we are!

---



## HEC COUNTDOWN

**52**

DAYS

**0 8**

HOURS

**3 0**MINUTES

## HOTELIE HIGHLIGHTS

Cornell hotelies distinguish themselves through their exceptional passion, creativity, and unwavering dedication to service excellence. These remarkable individuals not only embody the true spirit of hospitality but also redefine it through their innovative approaches and genuine commitment to creating memorable experiences. Read more about what some of our students are involved with on campus!



### Emma Roder '26

For junior Emma Roder, the love of service runs through every aspect of her life. With a focus on food and beverage, Emma spends her time outside of class working at Simeon's in downtown Ithaca and serving as a course assistant for the beloved Establishment course. Over February break, she brought the art of hospitality home, creating a stunning five-course meal with wine pairings for her family using skills from her Introduction to Wines class.

Beyond the kitchen, Emma shines through her involvement with Absolute A Cappella, where she serves as president of Cornell's A Cappella Advisory Council. This semester, she's spearheading the A Cappella United concert, showcasing the diverse talents of all 16 groups on campus. In true hotelie fashion, Emma is also giving back to the community by mentoring HSMP students, serving as TA, and conducting research.

---

### Monica Lee '26

As a junior in the Hotel School, Monica Lee is proving that hospitality knows no bounds. After transferring to the Hotel School, Monica was drawn to the idea of crafting highly personalized experiences for diverse audiences. This passion led her to join AppDev, where she's helped create well-known mobile apps like Eatery and Resell. But for Monica, it's the people who make the digital magic happen. "Everyone has been kind and intelligent, but most importantly dedicated to the mission of our team," she shares.



Hospitality and service are at the heart of Monica's experiences, whether it's savoring the thoughtfulness of a well-designed meal during a NYC food tour or creating technology that enhances people's lives. Her advice to fellow Hotelies? "Always bet on yourself! If that doesn't come easy, learn to grow into someone you want to bet on."

## HOTELIE HIGHLIGHTS



### Megan Nguyen '28

First-year student Megan Nguyen may be new to the Hotel School, but she is already embracing the quintessential Hotelie spirit wherever she goes—including on a Vermont ski trip with friends over February break. Not only did she hit the slopes, but she also brought her hospitality skills to the dinner table, impressing her friends with a salmon dinner for seven. “I got complimented for my Hotelie skills,” Megan says. Even in casual settings, Hotelies cannot help but shine.

Megan also indulged in the iconic ski resort treat, “Waffle Cabin,” a must-try staple for New England adventurers. Inspired by her trip, she is now dreaming of an internship at Killington Resort, whose new eatery lodge and après-ski atmosphere left a lasting impression on her.

---

### Sebastian Matte '25

Sebastian, a senior Hotelie, sees music and hospitality as intertwined. “Something frequently talked about in both settings is this idea of making moments,” he explains. “Snapshots that people can take away with them to remember or feel the emotions of an experience.”

Currently producing a project unofficially titled Lost Dog with his friends, Sebastian views collaboration as the heartbeat of both fields. “It’s about blending your resources and your desire to make something special



for someone,” he says. Sebastian’s journey is deeply tied to the connections he’s forged during his time at Cornell—“I’ve met some of my best friends through HEC and the Nolan School,” he shares. “They really encourage me to chase my creative impulses.” This sense of community fuels his belief that hospitality is rooted in authenticity: “Service is about considering what your audience wants while staying true to what you can offer authentically.”

For Sebastian, hospitality is not just a profession—it’s a mindset. “Whether I’m writing music or running an event, the goal is the same: to leave people with a feeling they will want to revisit.”

## HOW IS YOUR HEC EXPERIENCE?



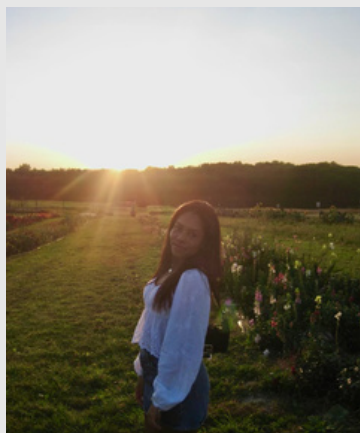
Anna Hardy '27

Anna Hardy '27 (F&B Service team): Being a part of the Food and Beverage Service team for HEC has been a fun and educational opportunity. I have enjoyed collaborating with my team to work towards creating memorable dining events and refining all the details to deliver an unforgettable experience for our guests. I am most excited to see our hard work come to life and feel the energy of HEC throughout the whole weekend.



Jenna Temple '27

Jenna Temple (Culinary Team): HEC has been an incredible experience. Working with the culinary team under Sofia's leadership has been both inspiring and rewarding.



Isadora Souza '25

Isadora Souza (Design Team): HEC has been a great experience so far and I have enjoyed meeting so many people! From being a part of the design team I have had the opportunity to work closely with other teams in the F&B pod!

## FOOD & BEVERAGE POD FEATURE



### Food & Beverage Department

The F&B department truly embodies the hotel school's motto, "Life is Service." As Director Andrew Zhang '25 explains, "Our department exists to serve the other departments... our work fundamentally relies on the collaboration with other F&B teams." The department plays a crucial role in facilitating communication and coordination among the Culinary, Design, Beverage, and Conference Service groups by organizing and leading function team meetings. These meetings help efficiently

resolve any logistical challenges that arise. Currently, each manager is focused on planning events such as breakfasts, cocktail parties, and Friday celebrations. These gatherings are thoughtfully designed to foster collaboration and open communication among department managers while featuring food from some of Ithaca's favorite spots, including CTB and Dos Amigos.

Beyond event planning, each manager is also contributing to individual projects aimed at enhancing HEC. For example, Alicia Scott '26 is leading a project to recap the conference and compile data from managers to share with program directors. Meanwhile, Vegas Chiddick '27 is working on initiatives to create more opportunities for the F&B department to connect with guests. Through their dedication and planning this academic year, the F&B department continues to elevate the experience for HEC members and guests for the upcoming conference.

### Conference Services Department

The Conference Services department collaborates with the F&B department to coordinate logistics, ensuring seamless integration of food and beverage operations with other event functions. As HEC weekend approaches, they are busy crafting detailed floor plans, mapping internal hotel logistics for workshops, and developing comprehensive safety protocols. The Conference Services department bridges the gap between the F&B department's mission and the logistical needs of other HEC department events throughout the weekend.



Jason Orenstein '27, an assistant director on the department, shares that in his second year of HEC he enjoys "getting a holistic view of HEC weekend by getting to work on every different part of the conference." The group is excited to see all of the protocols that they have created put into action to make the weekend run smoothly.

## FOOD & BEVERAGE POD FEATURE



### F&B Service Department

The F&B service department has been hard at work on preparations for HEC weekend! Currently, the department is working with the rest of the F&B pod to finalize plans for the 10 F&B events throughout the conference weekend. This involves coordinating with the culinary department to design functional food displays and working with the design department to finalize linen choices in accordance with each event's theme. Recently, they had the opportunity to put their skills to the test at Popup, a practice event that

allows the entire F&B pod to refine their execution ahead of HEC weekend. Looking ahead, the department is launching a new initiative, "Build Your Own Buffet Week," designed to help prepare for conference weekend in collaboration with the culinary department. This project involves setting up mock food displays that replicate the final weekend's setups, allowing them to test layouts and logistics in real time. In addition, they are finalizing service timelines to ensure seamless execution throughout each event.

F&B Service Director Joy Xu '25 has enjoyed watching her team grow over the past few months. "I am so proud of my team and all their hard work in ensuring every detail is cohesive, even down to the custom cocktail napkins." Despite the challenges posed by ongoing renovations, the team continues to find creative solutions to elevate the guest experience. "This year, we are pushing the envelope on what an F&B event can look like."

### Beverage Department

With HEC just two months away, the Beverage department is in high gear, meticulously preparing to deliver an exceptional drink experience. In their most recent meeting, the team finalized ingredients, scaled recipes, and completed BEOs while addressing key logistics, including food safety and transportation. Each beverage has been carefully crafted with attention to flavor and presentation, ensuring a memorable experience at every event.



Beyond menu development, the department is also responsible for hiring and training a team of bartenders for conference weekend. After successfully recruiting the team, the beverage department conducted comprehensive training covering industry terminology, event scheduling, and drink preparation techniques. With diverse themes planned, attendees can look forward to a creative and well-curated drink menu, expertly executed by a talented leadership team and well-prepared volunteer bartenders—making the beverage program a true highlight of HEC weekend.

## FOOD & BEVERAGE POD FEATURE



### Culinary Department

The Culinary department ensures that all of the operations in the kitchen run smoothly during HEC conference weekend. Not only is the group responsible for behind the kitchen strategy, but also for making sure all the dishes for the guests are just right. This job involves scaling a home cooked recipe up to banquet size, or scaling a larger recipe down. The team is estimating there to be around 300 servings of each dish.

Given the size of the operation, the Culinary department is also creating strategies on how to cook a large amount of food in a short amount of time and discusses how allergens could affect operations. Due to the demand of the team's tasks, they have a close-knit group. Natasha Jiwani '27, the executive pastry chef, shares that her favorite part of being on the team is, "The people! Everyone is just super welcoming and we always have fun together, which makes the hard work fun." Since the team is currently focused on the kitchen operations aspect of the HEC weekend, many on the team are excited to cook during the weekend for all of our guests.

### Design Department

The Design department has been making significant strides in bringing this year's HEC vision to life through a combination of innovation, collaboration, and meticulous planning. Recently, they successfully executed Popup with the rest of the F&B pod, which was a great opportunity for the department to strategically mirror this year's plated dinner theme to refine ordering logistics in advance of conference weekend.



Beyond logistics, the department has incorporated continuous learning through their meetings where they speak with industry professionals, refining their expertise and gaining valuable insights. They have also started a new project management initiative, giving managers the opportunity to create detailed mockups of their events and utilize Cornell's architecture studio to visualize and refine their concepts. Looking ahead, the department is excited to see their designs come to life as construction begins on their carefully planned projects. Design Director Matthew Merrill '26 expresses, "The department is taking an innovative approach to incorporate current hospitality trends into our schematic design and event themes, while also seeking to amplify student voices through collaboration with the FSAD (Fashion School), Music Department, and Architecture (AAP) majors."

## DEAN'S STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

The Dean's Student Advisory Board (DSAB) is committed to its mission of improving student life at the Nolan School of Hotel Administration. Beyond strengthening their current initiatives, such as "table talks" (a lunch with a professor paid for by the school), this semester DSAB is also designing new Hotelie merchandise and has proposed launching a faculty specialty lecture series. This lecture series would be open to all students, providing any professor with the opportunity to teach a one-time lecture on a topic they are passionate about.

DSAB encourages input from all Hotelies, and outside of their office is a suggestion box where anyone can share ideas to enhance the environment of the hotel school. Matthew Merrill '26 shared that his favorite part of being a DSAB member is "being able to see your ideas come to life." Recruitment for DSAB is happening this spring, and who wouldn't want to be part of an organization that meets with Dean Walsh every month in the Silver Birch Suite, with its amazing view of campus?

---

## THE AIR AND SEA HOSPITALITY CLUB

The Air and Sea Hospitality Club truly encompasses all aspects of the airline and cruise ship industry. They place a strong emphasis on teaching their members about the industries through formalized education sessions, networking events, and excursions. They attract members not just interested in pursuing careers within the industry, but also students who are simply passionate about traveling or flying.



This semester, the club is in full swing with events ranging from sessions on travel reward systems to speakers series with industry professionals like Hotelie Alumni Adam Levy '18, who currently is the head of Loyalty Integration Strategy at Alaska Airlines to fun movie nights watching Airplane! The club is working to expand their members beyond the hotel school and are collaborating with Professor Kwortnik to place a bigger emphasis on the cruise industry. E-board members have plans to visit the Delta Headquarters in Atlanta, and are eagerly looking forward to bringing back valuable insights to the club.

## POPUP RECAP

On February 8th, the F&B pod has the opportunity to practice and refine their skills before conference weekend by hosting a plated lunch for faculty and staff. From cooking the food, to implementing the design, to practicing food service, all teams were able to showcase their hard work. Special shoutout to the faculty and staff who came and supported the event!



# HEC THEME GAME!

## WHAT YOUR FAVORITE HEC THEME SAYS ABOUT YOU

### HEC 73 “ILLUMINATE THE WORLD”

YOU BRING CREATIVITY,  
OPTIMISM, AND A DESIRE TO  
MAKE A MEANINGFUL  
DIFFERENCE.

### HEC 81

### “A NEW ERA OF LEADERSHIP”

YOU ARE A LEADER WHO  
THRIVES ON RESPONSIBILITY  
AND INSPIRING CHANGE.

### HEC 95

### “DARE TO DO”

YOU ARE BOLD, AMBITIOUS,  
AND UNAFRAID TO TAKE  
RISKS TO ACHIEVE  
GREATNESS. 

### HEC 65 “COLOR YOUR WORLD”

YOU ARE EXPRESSIVE,  
VIBRANT, AND LOVE  
EMBRACING NEW IDEAS AND  
PERSPECTIVES. 

### HEC 32 “HEC INTERNATIONAL”

YOU ARE GLOBALLY MINDED,  
CULTURALLY CURIOUS, AND  
THRIVE IN DIVERSE  
ENVIRONMENTS. 

### HEC 100!

### “HECENTENNIAL”

YOU VALUE TRADITION,  
LOVE CELEBRATING  
MILESTONES, AND STRIVE  
TO LEAVE A LASTING  
IMPACT. 

# THANK YOU FOR READING!

ALL CONTENT WAS WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY:  
HEC 100 COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

*Julsey Reis* *Aria Capelli* *Anthony*  
*Tori* *Ben*  
*Michael* *Teddy Andres*

## Connect With Us



@HOTELEZRACORNELL



@HOTELEZRACORNELL