

Alexis Aarons
University of South Carolina
School of Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management
Columbia, SC
803-673-2813
Aaronsa@mailbox.sc.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Merkin Kicks Off Lodging Lecture Series At University of South Carolina

COLUMBIA, SC — The Lodging Lecture Series kicked off September 9th with prominent guest speaker, John Merkin, senior vice president of brand management for the Holiday Inn brands of the Americas, InterContinental Hotels Group. Merkin spoke to two groups of Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management students.

In his presentation, Merkin illustrated the importance and value of rebranding using the Holiday Inn brands as examples. He showed students the step-by-step process each hotel is required to go through in order to continue to hold the franchise name. Merkin discussed his 21 years playing a crucial role in the world's largest hotel group. He also took time to showcase the work of Ogilvy Action of Atlanta and its President Chris Milhous. Ogilvy Action is a marketing company who assisted the InterContinental Hotels Group in their relaunching efforts of the Holiday Inn & Holiday Inn Express brands.

The Lodging Lecture Series was developed by Instructor Kiran Shah and Professors Sheryl F. Kline and Brumby McLeod in the School of Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management at the University of South Carolina as a way to better prepare students for their futures in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industries, and to introduce them to successful individuals in their general fields of interest.