



Georgia Tech Promotes an Aggressive Logistics Education Agenda in Panama

Dr. Darío Solís, Managing Director, Georgia Tech Panama Logistics Innovation & Research Center

With the support of the Panamanian Government through the National Secretariat of Science, Technology and Innovation (SENACYT) and with the main objective of increasing Panama's Logistics capabilities, the Georgia Institute of Technology through the Georgia Tech Panama Logistics Innovation and Research Center, is conducting an aggressive and coordinated logistics competitiveness, research and education agenda directed to the private, public and academic sectors, as well as to society in general.

The education agenda in particular, includes a Dual Master's Program in Supply Chain Engineering jointly with local universities, an executive certificate program in logistics and related areas for professionals in the public and private sectors and curriculum development support for improving local university programs in logistics and supply chain. Additionally, the Center is participating as a facilitator with the National Institute for Professional Training and Human Development (INADEH) in the creation of a vocational training program in logistics. All these initiatives represent a complete educational offering in the important field of Logistics for Panama, the region and the world.

Dual Master's Program in Supply Chain Engineering

This program has been designed to help generate the necessary human resources to build logistics capacity in Panama and the region that in turn would contribute to improving logistics performance and increasing trade between Panama, the region and the rest of the world. In 2010, Georgia Tech and two Panamanian universities, the Technological University of Panama and Universidad Latina, consolidated the first group of students under this program with financial support from SENACYT.

After completing their first semester in Panama under a rigorous curriculum designed by Georgia Tech (GT) and taught by local and GT professors, and after satisfying the admission requirements for GT, 12 Panamanian students traveled to Atlanta to attend the second semester of the program. During this semester, the students complete intensive courses in supply chain strategy, information systems for inventory, warehousing, freight forwarding, import and export, service-oriented technology, such as: architecture, cloud computing, systems integration, RFID and other scanning and monitoring technologies. In addition, courses in supply chain engineering related to transportation and design are included. To complement the theoretical training, students in this semester participate in a seminar class in which they visit major logistics operations to hear experiences from experts and industry leaders. They also have to read dozens of articles, financial reports, and read books representing today's logistics and trade issues, in order to evaluate and criticize supply chain practices of specific operations.



The last component of the dual master's program is the formulation and implementation of a Capstone Project supervised by GT professors with support from the Georgia Tech Panama Logistics Innovation and Research Center. These projects will be implemented in Panama and will be focused on finding solutions to existing national logistics and supply chain inefficiencies and bottlenecks.

Support to local university education in the area of logistics and supply chain

As part of the support for improving local higher education programs, the GT Panama Center coordinates an initiative for the evaluation of logistics and supply chain curricula and to provide recommendations for improvement. This program has great potential and it only requires that the interested University sends a letter of interest to the Center, accompanied by a description in English of its academic programs in the subject area. Georgia Tech faculty and staff will review the information and would ask any other questions prior to sending recommendations.

The experience gained in the first few years at the Center in Panama, will allow the development of a strategy and a plan to promote Panama as a training hub in logistics and trade for Latin America. The dual program will be promoted in the region in order to prepare qualified professionals who clearly understand the potential of using Panama logistics assets for the commercial development of the region.

Professional Executive Courses

With extensive experience in executive education, the Supply Chain and Logistics Institute promotes professional executive courses in the field of supply chain and logistics in Panama. In November 2010, the Center launched the first series of executive courses in "Building the Lean Supply Chain", directed to public and private sector professionals involved



in logistics and supply chain engineering or management. Organizations such as the Panama Canal Authority, Riba Smith, SENACYT, Panama Maritime Authority, J. Cain & Co, Nutec America Inc, Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Panama, Panama Pacific Agency, Farmazona SA etc., participated in this first course series. Some of the courses already scheduled for 2011 include: Inventory/Transportation Planning and Analysis, Warehousing Planning and Management and the second offering of Building the Lean Supply Chain series.



GEORGIA TECH
Logistics Innovation & Research Center
Panama City, Panama

A Unit of the Supply Chain & Logistics Institute
