



## WHEN TEACHING BECOMES A VOCATION

Interview with Mr. Osman Dogramaci

Founder and Director of AIM Hotel & Tourism Management Academy

► With a legacy such as your own, your appearance in our Special Edition dedicated to the Légion d'Honneur seemed most appropriate. Could you remind us of your background?



**O. Dogramaci:** My father devoted a great deal of his life to education and higher learning. Légion d'honneur recipient and Académie de Médecine inductee, he founded the first private university in Turkey: the University of Bilkent\*. I knew very early on that I was destined to teach and more

specifically, hotel management. With a doctorate in political science, I attended the hotel management school in Strasbourg then that of the Sorbonne (Paris I), followed by training at Cornell-Essec.

After completing this circuit of top training courses and gaining experience in the heart of some renowned establishments, I wanted to reconnect with my father's legacy. In 1992, I began a new journey by creating a school offering courses designed specifically for tourism and hotel management. Since then, our school has grown and flourished. Internationally recognized, AIM is now ranked second in the SMBG ratings of the best hotel management schools and is partnered with prestigious Parisian and international hotels and palaces, as well as with Alain Ducasse Education.

► What can you tell us about AIM's core values?

**O. Dogramaci:** For over 20 years, we have made the individual students and their well-being our top priority. We've made a concerted effort to preserve the school's size. There is a rigorous selection process that allows us to judge a candidate's potential to work in the tourism and hotel industry. Studying at AIM not only means receiving a top education, but also emphasizes learning about one's self through contact with other cultures.

Though 50% of the students come from within the hexagon, the other half comes from the four corners of the world (Germany, Scandinavia, Great Britain, Russia, United States, Japan, South Korea...). As our classes are taught in English, non-francophone candidates can now choose France over other Anglo-Saxon destinations, and while here, take advantage of learning the French language and culture.

Our students' learning experience is further enhanced by AIM's proximity to two Parisian gems: the Cité Internationale Universitaire which provides a real campus feel, rivaling that of American schools, and the lush green landscape of the Parc Montsouris.

► What are the prominent features of the Bachelor of Science and MBA Professional degrees?

**O. Dogramaci:** Our courses are designed to prepare students for operational and functional management, specifically in the hotel and tourism industry. The professionalization of our students and our courses taught in English are the spearhead of our program.

Our main goal is to offer a curriculum that directly reflects the realities and needs of the industry. Our educators, all graduates from prestigious universities, have had first-hand experience in world class hotels and other flagship tourism establishments.

As mastery of the language of Shakespeare is indispensable, the second hallmark of our program is our determination to have all classes taught in English. Even if our students have a minimum background upon entering AIM, after spending 2, 3 or 5 years in an intercultural environment, they graduate with a level in line with the demands of the job market and their status as future executive managers.



\*Non-profit institution ranked among the top 100 universities in the world, the University of Bilkent has 12,500 students, half of whom are scholarship holders. Owner of Bilkent Holding. Specialized in large-scale construction – one of its member groups was ready to invest € 21 billion in one of the most ambitious international projects – the latter's mission is to make the university self-sufficient.