Taking the time: Alumna preserves the human touch in luxury travel

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Chelsey-Robin Ingenito (BSM ’97) is a CRM and Vendor Specialist with high-end travel service Fischer Unlimited, where she helps connect clients with once-in-a-lifetime travel experiences.

Have you ever imagined what it would be like to vacation with the elite: staying in private villas, glamping in remote regions and enjoying sought-after experiences with no tourists in sight? Well, it might cost you — $150,000 to start. But Chelsey-Robin Ingenito (BSM ’97), a CRM and Vendor Specialist with the high-end travel service Fischer Unlimited, can help you save something more valuable than money: your time.

“Time has always been a luxury product in and of itself,” Ingenito says.

For ultra-high-net-worth clients with exacting standards and refined tastes, Fischer Unlimited proudly proclaims its mission: “We exist to make life frictionless for those whose time is their most precious asset.”

Fischer Unlimited, formerly Fischer Travel, has set the standard for travel specialists for over 60 years. In the early 1980’s, when Bill Fischer started charging a $5,000 annual membership fee just to use his services, some thought the business model would lead to his downfall. Instead, Fischer transformed high-end travel and created a model that would become an industry standard. Today, the initiation fee is $150,000, followed by an annual membership fee of $25,000, and that’s before the cost of travel.

“Bill Fischer really created this idea of concierge-level travel, where you have white-glove handholding available to you 24/7, for the highest level of luxury travel,” Ingenito says.

That might mean securing a VIP suite at a fully booked hotel, finding tickets to a sold-out concert or arranging a private after-hours museum visit; luxury service means gaining access to places and experiences that seem unattainable.

Now, Fischer Unlimited is bringing that same level of care to lifestyle services including dining, gifting and events. Ingenito says the membership-only, referral-based service works because they can build long-standing relationships while remaining completely focused on the clients.

“Everyone who works here cares so much,” she says. “That care is what makes us special and how we build lasting relationships. It's the care that everyone feels. It comes from our leaders, and we transmit it to the clients.”

While the advisors at the 50-person company maintain direct relationships with clients, Ingenito is responsible for cultivating and managing relationships with vendors.

“I have this really unique position where I can find new and exciting bespoke activities and experiences for the clients,” she says.

During a recent trip to Egypt, Ingenito and a handful of travel companions visited the Valley of the Kings at sunset, after the tourists had departed. With key in hand, she unlocked the door and became the first to enter the tomb of Ramesses II, switching

on the lights before inviting the group inside to take in its remarkable history.

“It becomes a spiritual thing, and it is really special to be able to feel that,” Ingenito says.

That kind of deeply personal and nearly impossible to replicate experience captures the essence of luxury service. But as travel companies adapt to digital tools, Ingenito sees technology as enhancing, not replacing, the personal touch.

“The travel industry has actually been behind the curve when it comes to technology, because of the human element,” she says. “That will always be essential in this industry. It's something you feel.”

The good news? At a time when many jobs are at risk of being replaced by artificial intelligence, Ingenito is optimistic about career opportunities in hospitality, especially for people with soft skills that can’t easily be replicated by technology.

“There will always be the need for humans in this industry,” she says. “In hospitality, that’s what it’s all about. How do you make them feel?”

Ingenito advises graduates entering the hospitality field to consider hotel and lodging operations, where skilled professionals will always be needed.

“You really can't replace those people that are in the front office and in charge of the guest experience,” she says. “As hotel chains become stronger, there's more of a career path available within many of these hotel companies.”

As an industry expert-in-residence at the Freeman School, Ingenito’s goal is to help students secure internships, connect with employers and expand Freeman’s hospitality network. She is building relationships with major brands like Marriott and Four Seasons so students can connect directly with recruiters and access competitive hospitality programs. Ingenito reconnected with Freeman two years ago, when it launched its Hospitality Management and Entrepreneurship Certificate Program.

“New Orleans is a city that has such a foundation in tourism and hospitality that it makes sense. It's just such a perfect alignment,” she says of the certificate program.

Her biggest piece of advice for Tulane students starting out in the industry reflects what she’s learned over more than a decade in hospitality:

“Be prepared and consider the other person. Time is valuable.”