New partnership
by Lisa R. Schoolcraft

Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality at Georgia State University’s J. Mack Robinson College of Business has formed a partnership with convenience stores nationwide to help them compete with the fast-food industry.

GSU’s school formed an academic partnership with Alexandria, Va.-based National Association of Convenience Stores to develop its Center for Achieving Foodservice Excellence, or NACS CAFÉ.

As convenience stores, such as Atlanta-based RaceTrac and Tulsa, Okla.-based QuikTrip, upgrade their food offerings to compete with fast-food restaurants, convenience store managers and supervisors need more skills for profitable food-service operations. There are nearly 145,000 convenience stores nationwide.

Since 62 percent of convenience stores are individually owned and operated, “This is the particular group we hope to reach with resources that are user-friendly and adaptable,” said Debra Cannon, hospitality school director.

The college is developing courses that include menu selection, marketing and financial analysis.