

Transcript: Episode 5: Jessica Crawford | Information, Tickets and Travel Manager

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Host: Hello and welcome to the Above the Rest podcast, a podcast all about the 10th Force Support Squadron at the Air Force Academy. I'm your host, Taylor Burnfield, and for this episode I spoke with Jessica Crawford who oversees information, tickets and travel also known as ITT. She talked about everything that ITT has to offer this spring and summer including discounts on some popular attractions. Thank you for listening and hope you enjoy the show.

[Music]

Host: So thank you Jessica for joining us today

Jessica: absolutely thanks for having me

Host: and so you work over in information tickets and travel

Jessica: that is correct I am the manager of ITT

Host: and how long have you been with us?

Jessica: about 13 and a half months

Host: and do you have a military background or how did you get involved um with the Air Force Academy?

Jessica: my husband is an Air Force officer and he was stationed here eight years ago and then they sent him off to get his PhD so he did and then he owed four years for his education came back here taught a little bit at the academy and then promoted out so now he's on loan to the Space Force

Host: oh wow and what did he teach at the academy?

Jessica: military strategic studies

Host: very cool

Jessica: yeah he really liked it

Host: so information tickets and travel that is down in the outdoor rec in the community center?

Jessica: that's correct

Host: okay and so with spring and summer coming up do you guys have any exciting specials going on?

Jessica: Well, we have the Royal Gorge Train is always a beautiful ride in the spring and summer and then we have just got the Pikes Peak Cog Railway so that's exciting that people can come in and book with military discount directly with um ITT we also have Waterworld coming up Elich um some of the other ones that we still do with we're going to be bringing in a new ticket with iFly and that's going to be two flights with the Highfly we still do Overdrive we've got um Boondocks so a lot of little things that are going on and then of course there's always Disneyland Disney World Universal SeaWorld Knotts Berry Farm all of the big attractions

Host: because you all do things locally but then you also have out of state and in state

Jessica: that's correct

Host: what do you have out of state going on right now?

Jessica: oh my goodness um let's see we have a lodging anywhere so if you're having a family reunion and you need um a VRBO or an Airbnb we can hook you up with that we've got things happening in New Mexico we've got um Arizona like the balloon rides and the festival coming up in New Mexico that's a big one um just a bunch of different things in especially in the states surrounding us but I mean we can book in Georgia and we can book in New York and Maine and it's pretty much anywhere you want to go also the the Virgin Islands

Host: wow yeah and if someone is planning a trip right now and maybe you guys you don't have that listed on the website, can people come to you and say "Hey can you help me get a discount with this?"

Jessica: Absolutely all we really need to know is where they want to go when they want to go and how many people are going to go so and then my clerks can kind of start doing the research and then they'll give them a spread of information and then they can kind of pick and choose and we're more than happy to go ahead and make those reservations.

Host: so are you guys kind of like a travel agency then?

Jessica: I would say so yep

Host: and I know you guys are able to get discounts for military members. What discounts do you all offer?

Jessica: oh my gosh there's so many so many but they're very substantial so for for example the Ikon Pass that just went on sale today for a standard Ikon Pass it's \$1,400 for our active duty members it's it's \$889 for that's amazing yeah for young adults 13 and over um it's like 1,100 and for us it's \$669 i mean so they are substantial discounts and that's for the next season coming up we have the epic passes which are substantially discounted um shuttles to and from the airports we've got um the local discounts are anywhere from 10 to 25% so it's can save you a lot of money especially you have a if you have a big group

Host: and do you guys do anything with sports? I know there was a basketball game coming up

Jessica: oh yeah the Nuggets um in March it's a USAFA night. I do partner with Avalanche um the Switchbacks the Nuggets and um Broadmoor World Arena has a lot of different ones but those are our three big ones and you can get discounted seating on all of those and those are you know big tickets avalanche is a lot of money and now that the Switchbacks are champions that's it's going to be an epic year so we're really excited to be partners with them again this year

Host: do you guys still work with um the baseball team here?

Jessica: you know I haven't had a new contract with them and nobody seems to be answering my calls but I'll keep trying.

Host: okay and I know you all do cruises

Jessica: Yes we here at um USAFA ITT do Disney cruises so we can take you from start to finish along with that so if you want to go on the new ships if you want to go on the the Wonder or the Surprise or any of the other ones we can do that as well so we can get you um discounted cabins make sure you have the proper amount of ports that you want to go to where you want to go out of so yeah we can start to finish we also do National Geographic cruises I don't think you know that

Host: I don't think I've heard about that

Jessica: yeah those ones I mean granted they're expensive but because you go out with an actual National Geographic team and you have the photographers and the naturalists and all all of the nat geo stuff and you can go out to the Galapagos or the It's huge and it would be amazing that's like a dream of mine to definitely go on one of those so gosh yeah that's pretty awesome

Host: yeah I've never heard of that that's really cool. Do you guys partner with any music venues?

Jessica: we are um trying to get our foot in the door with the Ford Amphitheater you know I have a few contacts there we would love to do some business with them but Pikes Peak um Pikes Peak Center and the Broadmoor World Arena the Denver Coliseum the Ball Arena those are the big four that I have right now that we do business with okay so yeah and discounts no matter what you can just scan a QR code and you get a code from us put it in there and you get your discount so it's it's pretty effortless

Host: and you guys work with a lot of the the local attractions here in Colorado Springs? I think you guys work with the zoo? and then you mentioned the Cog Railway. Anything else locally you guys partner with?

Jessica: well you know iFly, Overdrive we are looking at some expansion here with some of the new businesses that are coming up um at the Northgate hopefully we'll be able to partner with the new hotel Polaris and do some fun things there um the Denver Zoo we got 50% off at the Denver Zoo for military and um off the top of my head no I can't think of anymore I should have brought my cheat sheets

Host: that's okay um and what do you think is a misconception that maybe people have about ITT?

Jessica: it's not free it's very discounted but you know we're a business too so we're not a for-profit business but we are here to support the military community and their morale and their families as well as the cadets up here on the hill so we just want to be able to offer them wild crazy awesome adventures that will create memories.

So it does cost but it doesn't cost as much as if you would go out into the private sector and if you want to know if we carry a certain

ticket or if we know somebody who does just call us because we have vines out all over the United States you know we just might know that one person you know in St Charles that you need to talk to in order to get a discount so I think that's the biggest one.

Host: What is your favorite activity through ITT? have you done a lot of the things that you all offer?

Jessica: um I've done a few I just got back from a training to Disney World and Universal Orlando saw some of their new stuff that's coming out so you know Disney's always magical so that's always kind of fun but Universal Orlando their rides are spectacular you know you wouldn't think so like the Hulk roller coaster oh man it it shoots you out and he goes roar and you just go and you spin all around and you go crazy and I mean you go 50 60 miles an hour so I don't know if people really realize that they've kind of upped their game for that.

And SeaWorld you know SeaWorld doesn't have the big whale shows and all the stuff anymore they have wicked roller coasters now in Orlando I know right yeah and sometimes SeaWorld a lot of times they're very discount but sometimes they also do free military access for a the military the active duty as well as a dependent you know and then their kids are really cheap and yeah they had to up their game somehow so yeah their roller coasters are pretty awesome so adrenaline I like anything adrenaline so whatever we can do on that part and I like to support the community.

So last year we did unite um a unite event and we took a bunch of um people from outdoor rec and ITT and we had a big team building and we went and saw a switchback game oh my god it was so fun you know I'm thinking soccer you know it was actually riveting it was super fun and we had a great time and we still talk about it to this day so they're already building a USAFA night again because it was so popular and you know it's just getting those people in the seats mhm so and support you know a local champion team so that's pretty exciting

Host: Do you get a lot of cadets who come in um and ask about ITT?

Jessica: not as many as we would like because from what we hear they don't know we're there so we try to come up we just started a new reaching a reachout program to cadets and we come up every Wednesday from about 7:30 to 9:30 different activities from outdoor rec and ITT um yesterday was Todd from CRC and I and the two weeks ago was just me but we are up there and we are having an engagement with the

cadets telling them about it quizzing them on it giving them pamphlets making sure that they know we have an equestrian center and we have um a Farish our recreation center up in Woodland Park you know we have snowshoeing we've got camping gear we have all of these things and I don't think they know because it's very isolating up here so we are really trying to reach out to them and let them know that we have all kinds of fun adventures for them too I mean they're our assets so we want to support that

Host: Yeah no that's great what things does ITT offer that you think cadets would be the most interested in?

Jessica: well rental cars that's the big one okay for all you cadets listening it's 10 days prior for a holiday three days prior for a regular weekend you must submit the form because we do Hertz and Enterprise but the form comes directly to us and then we forward it to the two Enterprise and Hertz so those are the big things especially if all of a sudden last minute their parents are coming or they have some friends coming into town and if they don't have a car here which a lot of them don't I think that's one of the big benefits but we have a cadet rate which is fantastic

Host: oh that's awesome and they can find those forms on the website usafasupport.com?

Jessica: that is correct under fun tab for ITT

Host: okay and there is um there's also a cadet tab and they can find that on there um do you have rental cars just for military?

Jessica: they get a discount but ours are specifically for the cadets on that one so I mean they could tell Hertz and Enterprise that you know they are military and they'll take care of that but we only book for cadets. But I mean we have all of the rates that we have for the local attractions are just as good for the cadets too okay so if they're not leaving on a break or they're just kind of hanging out doing their thing and they have some friends come over you guys can all go to Overdrive and you can all do iFly or you can you know go up to Denver and have discounted tickets right then and there just come by and see us for sure yeah

Host: and how else can people find out about ITT because I know you have your website and then you're also on social media

Jessica: we are we have um Facebook as well as Instagram so and we are connected um USAFA ITT and then information tickets and travels on Facebook yeah come by and see us for sure and then you know if you always want more information just give us a call and we'll give you to the right person we're happy to um send you documents we're happy to make sure that you know where to pick things up so and we're out and about always ask for a military discount never hurts

Host: okay and what is your uh what is the phone number for ITT or your email?

Jessica: it's Air Force AFB like Air Force Base at gmail.com airforceafb@gmail.com and that's directly for ITT and then the best phone number to call just to get transferred over will be 333-4475 because ITT is not open on weekends but if you want information our cashiers up front might know the information already so just call that and they're more than happy to transfer you

if you guys have any ideas on what you want me to get discounts with let me know because I'm not afraid to talk to people so it'll be a good time and yeah any water sports any kind of water stuff that we really want to try to enhance summer i know a lot of the cadets aren't here but just for our local military community you know just let me know where where can I reach out to you know I'd like to do Air 360 Dart Wars the North Pole you know I have all of these ideas it's just a matter of getting my foot in the door and talking to the right person if anybody knows let me know

Host: what is your favorite part about working for ITT?

Jessica: the people we have a good time you know it's I'm still you know 13 and a half months and I still look forward to coming to work

Host: that's awesome

Jessica: yeah so that is definitely worth it for sure so

Host: Oh that's amazing well thank you so much for stopping by the studio today i'm really glad we got to talk

Jessica: absolutely absolutely was fun get out the word people

Host: Thank you again for listening and be sure to stay up to date on everything happening at the support squadron on our Website

usafasupport.com and our various social media profiles on Instagram
Facebook and YouTube

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