

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **PolyU's School of Hotel and Tourism Management Celebrated 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by Hosting International Conference and Gala Dinner**

To celebrate the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) organised the Global Tourism & Hospitality Conference and Asia Tourism Forum (Global 2014 & 11th ATF) jointly with the Taylor & Francis Group on 18-20 May at Hotel ICON, Hong Kong. The conference provided an effective platform for academics, industry leaders, journal editors, young scholars and researchers to define the future roadmap of the industry, and strengthened the SHTM's role as a world-leading provider of hospitality and tourism education.

The conference was officially kicked off on 18 May by Mr Nicholas Yang, Executive Vice President of PolyU; Mr Ian Bannerman, Managing Director of the Taylor & Francis Group; and Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor of the SHTM.

“In face of the rapid growth and fast-changing development of the global hospitality and tourism industry,” Mr Nicholas Yang observed, “it becomes important for all the stakeholders to come together to develop strategies that support the industry and enable sustainable growth. It is, therefore, timely that we organise this conference jointly with the Taylor & Francis Group.”

With support from the School's faculty members, thirty SHTM undergraduate students formed the Organising Committee and managed the entire conference from planning to staging. The students enjoyed a valuable opportunity to gain professional experience and show their abilities. The Conference also creates an extraordinary experience for its delegates.

Taking the theme “Charting the New Path: Innovations in Tourism and Hospitality – INNOVATIONS · RESEARCH · EDUCATION”, the conference attracted delegates from over thirty countries and regions to exchange views, share research findings and insights related to tourism and hospitality in Asia and around the world. “The theme of the conference this year is something that we feel passionate about at Routledge and which aligns with our publishing perspectives,” Mr Ian Bannerman remarked.

The Conference's plenary sessions covered a wide range of topics, including “Innovation and Hospitality Research: References and Role Models”, presented by Professor Bruce Tracey from Cornell University; “Rejuvenating the City by Tourism Planning: Stories from Historic China”, presented by Professor Bi Hu (Tiger) Wu from Peking University; and “Innovations in Education, Research and Practices – Connecting the Dots”, presented by Dean Kaye Chon. A special session on Education in Hospitality and Tourism was conducted by Dr Fabien Fresnel from the Lausanne Hotel School, Professor Dennis Reynolds from Washington State University, Mrs Susanne Stolte from Hotelschool The Hague and Mr Alan Williams from the Australian School of Management.

In addition to plenary sessions and paper presentations, the conference featured unique “Meet-the-Editor” Sessions and a “Dinner with Speakers” for delegates to interact with prominent speakers who are also editors of leading tourism and hospitality journals, including Professor Abraham Pizam from the University of Central Florida, Editor-in-Chief of the *International Journal of Hospitality Management*; Professor Richard Perdue from Virginia Tech, Editor of the *Journal of Travel Research*; and Professor Chris Ryan from University of Waikato, Editor of *Tourism Management*.

The conference culminated in a gala dinner on 20 May, which was also held in celebration of the SHTM’s 35th anniversary. Officiating at the occasion were Professor Timothy W. Tong, President of PolyU; Mr Ho Kwon Ping, Chairman of the SHTM Advisory Committee and Executive Chairman of Banyan Tree Holdings Ltd; and Dean Kaye Chon.

Industry leaders, SHTM faculty, alumni and friends attending the dinner were amazed by the sand painting performance that represented the development of hospitality and tourism from the educational perspective. The musical performance by President Tong and SHTM students and the special performance “Professors and Students Unlike Any Other” by SHTM faculty, alumni and students were also memorable.

In his closing remarks, Professor Kaye Chon said, “We at the SHTM consider hosting the event as a way of uniting students, alumni, industry partners, educators and researchers to promote collaboration in hospitality and tourism education as well as research for the future innovative development of the industry. In the past thirty-five years the School has been leading the development of hospitality and tourism education, and we will continue to do so well into the future.”



Global 2014 & 11<sup>th</sup> ATF took place at Hotel ICON from 18 to 20 May.



*(From left): Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor of the SHTM, Mr Ian Bannerman, Managing Director of Taylor and Francis Group and Mr Nicholas W. Yang, Executive Vice President of PolyU officiating at the opening ceremony of Global 2014 & 11<sup>th</sup> ATF by performing the traditional eye-dotting ceremony.*



*Professor Philip Chan, Deputy President and Provost of PolyU (fourth from right), Mr Ho Kwon Ping, Chairman of the SHTM Advisory Committee (second from right), Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor of the SHTM (third from right) and Mr Leo Yip, Chair of Global 2014 & 11<sup>th</sup> ATF Organising Committee (first from right) and guests on stage toasted to the School's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary.*



*A live band performance by PolyU President Timothy W. Tong, PolyU and SHTM students earned loud applause from the audience.*

### **About School of Hotel and Tourism Management**

PolyU's School of Hotel and Tourism Management is a world-leading provider of hospitality and tourism education. It was ranked No. 2 internationally among hotel and tourism schools based on research and scholarship, according to a study published in the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research* in November 2009.

With 65 academic staff drawing from 20 countries and regions, the School offers programme at levels ranging from Higher Diploma to Ph.D. Currently a member of the UNWTO Knowledge Network, the School was bestowed the McCool Breakthrough Award in 2012 by the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education (I-CHRIE) recognising its breakthrough in the form of its teaching and research hotel – Hotel ICON – the heart of the School's innovative approach to hospitality and tourism education.

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