



PRESS RELEASE

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PolyU hospitality expert recognised as Top Ten Hoteliers of the Year

Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor of the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), has recently been honoured among the “Top 10 Hoteliers of the Year in China” at the 9th China Hotel Starlight Awards held in Shenzhen on 12-13 March 2014. The award is given to hospitality professionals with significant contribution to the advancement of the industry.

Dean Kaye Chon previously won the title of “Personality with Outstanding Contribution to the China Hotel Industry” at the 3rd China Hotel Starlight Awards.

Hailed as the “Oscar Awards” of the China hotel industry, the China Hotel Starlight Awards recognise the leading hotel groups, operators and individuals for their remarkable achievements and outstanding contributions. The “Top 10 Hoteliers of the Year in China” award was presented to Dean Chon to recognise his distinctive vision in creating an icon for the industry. That vision, unlike any other, led to the creation of a new education approach with Hotel ICON at the centre.

“It is truly an honour for me to be recognised as one of the top ten hoteliers in China,” said Dean Chon. “With the establishment of Hotel ICON, our teaching and research hotel, my vision has largely been achieved. The hotel and our school have become a new model for the entire hospitality industry and education, and we are setting new standards”.

It is both significant and meaningful for Dean Chon, as an academic, to receive such a prestigious award which recognises prominent leaders of true leadership and remarkable management talents in the hospitality industry. It is strong testament to his commitment, perseverance and relentless efforts in establishing the Hotel ICON brand and managing the Hotel ICON business and education model. The award has certainly given Dean Chon, a bona fide “Practising Professor”, and his team at the SHTM fresh impetus to further support the fast-growing hospitality industry in Hong Kong, the region and around the world.

The award also paid tribute to outstanding leaders of the hotel industry in China, they included Mr Chen Miao Lin, Chairman, New Century Tourism Group; Mr Ji Qi, Founder and Chairman, HuaZhu Hotels Group Ltd.; Mr Golden Sun, Chairman, OCT International Hotel Management Co., Ltd.; Mr Qian Jin, President of Greater China, Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc. and Mr Alex Zheng, Co-Chairman and Chief Brand Architect, Plateno Hotels Group.

Dean Chon joined PolyU in 2000. Under his able leadership, the SHTM has arisen as one of the world's leading institutions in hospitality and tourism management. In 2009, the School was ranked No. 2 in global ranking of hospitality and tourism schools based on research and scholarship, according to a study published in the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*. In 2012, the International Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education bestowed the McCool Breakthrough Award on the SHTM, recognising the School's breakthrough in the form of Hotel ICON.

Dean Chon is also well known for advocating the new wave of hospitality and tourism education known as the "Asian Paradigm", leading the way for the SHTM to become a global centre of excellence in the field of hotel and tourism. His tremendous contribution to extending the frontier of knowledge in tourism earned him the much coveted UNWTO Ulysses Prize in 2011. This top honour is testimony of the exceptional contribution that he has made to the development of global hospitality education through his leadership and research contributions.

Dean Chon was the past Chairman of the International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators (ISTTE) and is currently member of the Executive Board of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA). He was a professor at the University of Houston in the United States before joining PolyU.



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