

Press Release

16 May 2013

UNWTO and PolyU co-host China Tourism and China Hotel-Branding Forum 2013

Jointly organised by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), the China Tourism and China Hotel-Branding Forum 2013 (CTHF 2013) is being held from 16 to 18 May at Hotel ICON, Hong Kong.

The Forum was officially opened today (16 May) by Dr Che-woo Lui, Chairman of K. Wah Group; Mr Martin Craigs, Chief Executive Officer of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA); Mr Nicholas W. Yang, Executive Vice President of PolyU; and Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor of SHTM. Dr Taleb Rifai, Secretary General of UNWTO, addressed the audience by video.

Taking the theme “New Tourism, New Strategies”, CTHF 2013 set out to explore the many opportunities and potential challenges that have emerged from the rapid progress of Chinese tourism.

“We are pleased to play host to the Forum as we consider it one way to encourage industry partners, educators and researchers to collaborate closely in furthering the development of the hospitality and tourism industry in China,” said Professor Kaye Chon.

Addressing the audience by video, Dr Taleb Rifai said, “The year 2012 saw continued economic volatility around the globe, yet international tourism managed to stay on course. International tourism arrivals grew by 4% in 2012 surpassing a record 1 billion tourists globally for the first time in history. It clearly makes the case that the sector has shown its capacity to adjust to the changing market conditions and is expected to continue expanding in 2013. Despite ongoing economic challenges, the UNWTO forecasts international tourist arrivals to increase by 3% to 4% in 2013 with Asia and the Pacific leading the growth. This reinforces the fact that tourism is one of the pillars that should be supported by governments around the world as part of the solution to stimulating economic growth.”

It is worth noting that the Organising Committee of the Forum was comprised of twenty-five undergraduate students of the SHTM. With the support of the School’s faculty members, the committee was in charge of the whole event from planning to staging, which provided an invaluable opportunity for the students to show their abilities and created a unique experience for delegates.

With three tracks, namely “Contemporary (Live the Moment)”, “Transform (Move with the Times)” and “Future (Fly to Our Bright Future)”, CTHF 2013 has attracted delegates from a range of backgrounds and countries. The keynote and panel sessions covered a wide variety of topics including:

- Emerging Issues in China Tourism
- Sustainable Development of China Hospitality and Tourism
- Global Trends in Tourism and Their Implications for China Tourism
- Human Resources and Educational Development for China’s Tourism Industry
- Hospitality and Tourism Issues in Hong Kong
- Social Media and Tourism
- Hotel Industry Development in China
- Strategic Development of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry in China

The list of confirmed speakers included prominent international and local scholars and experts, just to name a few:

- **Mr Raymond Tong**, Executive Director and Vice President of Development – Greater China, Accor
- **Professor Dai Bin**, President of the China Tourism Academy
- **Professor Zhang Guangrui**, Director of the Tourism Research Centre, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
- **Mr Michael Li**, Executive Director of the Federation of Hong Kong Hotel Owners
- **Mr Lauri Tuomi**, Director and Vice President of the Research and Development Centre and Best Western Hotel Haaga, HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences
- **Mr James Lu**, Executive Director of the Hong Kong Hotels Association
- **Dr Che-woo Lui**, Chairman of K. Wah Group
- **Mr Martin Craigs**, Chief Executive Officer of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)
- **Mr Steve Hood**, Senior Vice President of Research and Founding Director of Smith Travel Research (STR), Inc., SHARE Centre
- **Mr Richard Adie**, General Manager of Statler Hotel, Cornell University’s teaching hotel

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 19 countries and regions, the School offers programmes 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 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.

For more details about the Forum, please visit the official website at URL:
<http://ctf2013info.wix.com/cthf2013#>



CTHF 2013 was officially opened today by Dr Che-woo Lui, Chairman of K. Wah Group (third from right); Mr Martin Craigs, Chief Executive Officer of PATA (fourth from right); Mr Nicholas W. Yang, Executive Vice President of PolyU (second from left); and Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor of SHTM (first from left).



Professor Chon said that hosting the forum was one way to encourage industry partners, educators and researchers to collaborate closely in furthering the development of the hospitality and tourism industry in China.

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