

22 September 2009

PolyU Scholar Recognised for Significant Contributions to Hospitality and Tourism Education and Research

Professor Bob McKercher, Professor of the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), was recently inducted into the International Academy for the Study of Tourism (IAST). Professor McKercher was also appointed as a Fellow by the Council for Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education (CAUTHE) in 2008 and formally inducted at the CAUTHE conference held in Perth in January 2009.

The International Academy for the Study of Tourism is an international organisation created to enhance both theoretical and practical research in the field of tourism. IAST membership is limited to 75 highly accomplished tourism researchers from around the world. Obtaining membership in IAST requires a nomination from a current Fellow, a presentation of the nominee's research work at the IAST conference and at least a two-thirds vote of the Fellows. Professor McKercher presented his work at IAST's 20th anniversary conference "A 20-20 Vision of Tourism Research: Roads Travelled, Hills yet to Climb" held in Mallorca, Spain, in June 2009.

Professor McKercher joins fellow SHTM colleagues Professor Kaye Chon, Professor Haiyan Song, Professor Cathy Hsu and Professor Stephen Witt in the Academy. SHTM is proud to have the largest number of Academy members in any university world-wide.

The Council for Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education (CAUTHE) represents the interests of university providers of tourism and hospitality education, including teaching, learning, scholarship and research. Its membership comprises all universities in Australia which teach and/or research in tourism and hospitality. CAUTHE initiated the Fellows programme in 2008 to recognise the enduring commitment made by some individuals to Australian hospitality and tourism education and research. Professor McKercher was appointed as one of the founding group of Fellows, and is the only Fellow currently not based in Australia.

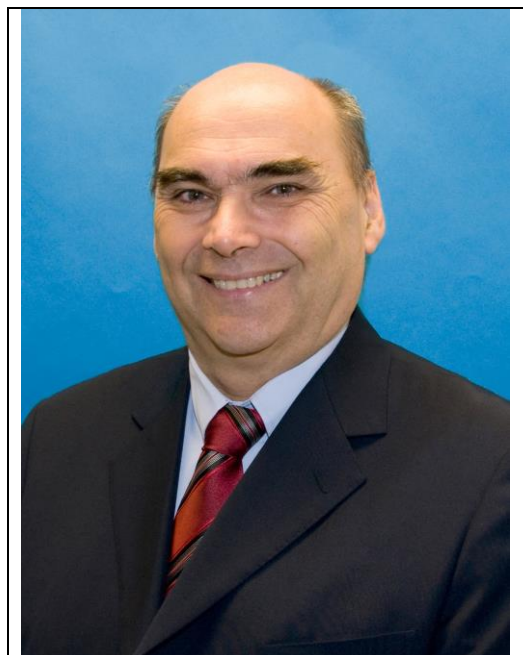
Professor Kaye Chon, SHTM Director and Chair Professor, said, "We are proud of Professor McKercher's outstanding achievement. The two honours bestowed on Professor McKercher further prove that he is again being recognised as one of the world's leading scholars for the invaluable contributions he makes to global hospitality and tourism education and research." SHTM's major strength is its international scope, and prides itself on its internationally recognised faculty members.

Professor McKercher has wide ranging research interests. He has published over 190 scholarly papers and research reports on a variety of cultural tourism, socio-cultural tourism, nature-based tourism, regional tourism development, tourism marketing and tourism education issues. He is the author of *The Business of Nature-based Tourism* (1988) and co-authored *Cultural Tourism: The Partnership between Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management* (2002). He has also co-edited two other books. Professor McKercher is the member of the editorial board of 14 international tourism journals.

Professor McKercher has been a tourism academic since 1990, working in both Australia and Hong Kong. Prior to that, he worked in the Canadian tourism industry in a variety of advocacy and operational roles. Professor McKercher joined PolyU in 1998.

PolyU's School of Hotel and Tourism Management is a leading provider of hospitality education in the Asia-Pacific Region. It is ranked No. 4 among the world's top hotel and tourism schools based on research and scholarship, according to a study published in the *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research* in 2005.

With 60 academic staff drawing from 18 countries, the School offers programmes at levels ranging from PhD to Higher Diploma. It was awarded the 2003 International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators Institutional Achievement Award in recognition of its significant contribution to tourism education, and is the only training centre in the Education and Training Network in Asia recognised by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation.



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