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PolyU Honorary Professor Jackie Chan named UNWTO's First Asia Pacific Tourism Ambassador

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)'s School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) held a special reception on campus yesterday (13 June) to celebrate the conferment on its Honorary Professor Jackie Chan as the First Asia Pacific Tourism Ambassador by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

The reception was followed by a special talk by Prof. Chan, entitled "My love of movies and tourism". Officiated at by PolyU President Prof. Poon Chung-kwong, the event was attended by members of the industry and the university community.

Prof. Jackie Chan was honoured with the prestigious title and presented with the official certificate by Mr Francesco Frangialli, Secretary General of UNWTO, in UNWTO's Ministerial Roundtable on Asia-Pacific Tourism Policies held in Macau yesterday. With the new appointment, Prof. Chan will help not only to promote tourism but also to carry out the noble mission of fighting poverty through tourism.

Speaking on the event, Prof. Poon said: "Our School of Hotel and Tourism Management, and Prof. Chan, will share the same commitment to promoting tourism and tourism education, for the benefits of industry, the community and the world."

The University has conferred the title of Honorary Professor on Jackie Chan in 2004 for a term of three years in recognition of his outstanding achievements and contributions to the movie industry and tourism. Prof. Chan is active not only in the field of entertainment but also in education, charity and supporting tourism as a means to promote world peace.

Prof. Chan has been appointed HK's official Tourism Ambassador since 1995. Over the years, he has taken part in many large-scale activities to promote the image of Hong Kong. Apart from receiving many prestigious awards from the film industry, Prof. Chan's honours include the 1986 Hong Kong Outstanding Young Person's Award, the 1988 International Outstanding Young Person's Award, and an MBE in 1989. In 1992, he was honoured for being the Most Outstanding Young Chinese in the World, and in 1996, he was conferred the honorary degree of the Doctor of Social Science by the Hong Kong Baptist University. In 1999, Prof. Chan was honoured with a Silver Bauhinia Star (SBS) by the HKSAR Government.

Internationally renowned as a global leader of hotel and tourism education, PolyU's SHTM was recognized by UNWTO as one of the world's 16 centres of travel and tourism education – the only one in Asia. According to a study published in the

Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research in August 2005, SHTM is ranked 4th among university world-ranking based on research and scholarship. It is the only non-US based institution in the top-five list.

Looking into the future, PolyU will build dedicated premises for SHTM which incorporate a teaching hotel on the site of its former staff quarters in Tsimshatsui East. Part of the new premises is expected to be ready for occupation in the 2008/09 academic year.



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