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PolyU to receive US\$1m bequest for establishing Andreas Hofer Scholarship

With a generous bequest of US\$1 million from internationally esteemed hotelier Mr Andreas Hofer and his wife, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) will establish the Andreas Hofer Scholarship for outstanding students of its School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM).

Prof. Poon Chung-kwong, President of PolyU, said the University is truly grateful for the generosity of Mr and Mrs Hofer. "This is the first bequest ever pledged for the Institution. Mr and Mrs Hofer have indeed set a fine example for other supporters of PolyU to follow," he said.

Mr Hofer, who was General Manager of the Mandarin Oriental Hotel from 1975 to 1982, said: "It was Hong Kong where doors to my career opened up and developed. This enabled my wife and myself, through hard work, to enjoy a privileged lifestyle. Whilst continuing to do so, we agree that it would be an honour to perpetuate the success by enabling worthy local students to pursue a career in the hotel industry."

Prof. Kaye Chon, Head of SHTM, is particularly delighted that the scholarship would enable the school to select young talents with a passion for the industry and commitment to work for Hong Kong.

The Andreas Hofer Scholarship will support two outstanding students of Hong Kong origin to study at SHTM, or graduates to pursue further studies at SHTM or other leading institutions around the world. Candidates would be selected on the basis of academic merits, their passion for hotel and tourism management and those who, due to financial considerations, would be unable to pursue their chosen career. All recipients of the scholarships, upon their graduation, are required to serve in the hospitality industry in Hong Kong for at least three years.

Mr Hofer has an illustrious career as well as a long affiliation with the hospitality industry in Hong Kong and world wide. He joined the Mandarin Oriental Hotel's Food and Beverage Department in 1966. His talents and exceptional organizational skills were recognized by the hotel management. After several promotions, he was eventually appointed General Manager of the Hotel in 1975. He served in this position until 1982.

During his tenure, the Mandarin Oriental was named best Hotel in Asia and the second best Hotel in the World. During his stay in the territory, Mr Hofer was also a Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Hong Kong Hotels Association from 1977-1980. After 1982, he moved to the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group's Head Office. Later he became Vice President, South East Asia of the company based in Singapore.

In 1987, he was appointed by Hong Kong's Wharf Holdings as President of the newly formed Marco Polo International Hotel Group. He served in this capacity until 1990 when he decided to start his own private hotel consulting and investment business, Hyde Park Land and Hospitality Management Ltd.

From 1990 to present Mr Hofer has worked with deluxe hotel and serviced apartment property developers in an advisory and consulting capacity. They included Wharf Holdings and USI Holdings of Hong Kong, Singapore Land, Marina Centre Holdings and Wing Tai Asia in Singapore, DNP Holdings of Malaysia and Aitken Spence Hotels of Sri Lanka. He is concurrently

Vice Chairman of Lanson Places Hotels and Residences, a division of Wing Tai Asia and its Hong Kong subsidiary USI Holdings Limited, and Executive Director of Hyde Park Land & Hospitality Management Limited in Canada.

The funds will eventually be donated to PolyU in the name of "Andreas Hofer Trust Foundation" and managed by the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation.

SHTM is a leading provider of hospitality education in the Asia-Pacific Region. According to the latest issue of the authoritative Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research (August 2005 issue), SHTM is rated number four in the world in terms of research, after Cornell University, the Michigan State University and Virginia Tech of the United States.

The School has been designated by World Tourism Organisation as one of its 16 Education and Training Network Centres around the world since 1999 and is the only such centre in Asia. In 2002, the International Academy for the Study of Tourism chose the School as the home of its permanent secretariat. It was awarded the "2003 International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators Institutional Award" in recognition of its significant contribution to tourism education.



Press Contacts

Prof. Kaye Chon

Chair Professor and Head, School of Hotel and Tourism Management

Tel: (852) 2766 6382

Mr Tony Tse

Programme Director (Industry Partnerships), School of Hotel and Tourism Management

Tel: (852) 2766 4032