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PolyU's School of Hotel and Tourism Management celebrates its silver jubilee

More than 700 friends and members of the School of Hotel and Tourism Management (HTM) of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU) celebrated the School's 25th anniversary at a gala dinner held yesterday (24 September) at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The Guest of Honour for the event was Ms Sandra Lee, Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Economic Development). Mr Victor Lo, PolyU Council Chairman; Prof. Poon Chung-kwong, PolyU President; Prof. Kaye Chon, Head of HTM; and Ms Sylvia Chung Chiu, Chairman of the event Organizing Committee and General Manager of Hotel Miramar Hong Kong were on hand to receive the guests.

Addressing at the dinner, Prof. Poon said, "For a quarter of a century, PolyU has established its fine repute as Asia's leading university-level provider of tourism and hotel education. Being the largest of its kind in Asia, HTM offers a diverse range of quality programmes which are hugely popular, attracting very high-calibre students eager to contribute to the future of Hong Kong's tourism."

Mr Lo said, "As tourism in Hong Kong takes flight, PolyU is committed to do our utmost to help turn the SAR into Asia's premier tourism destination.

"We are privileged to have enjoyed strong support from local and international tourism organizations, the Government and many friends and partners in the industry."

Themed "Glittering 25: Celebration of the Stars", the dinner was an occasion for supporters and friends of the School to celebrate the success of its hospitality education and training.

Special programmes of the dinner included the performance by renowned pianist Mr Choi Sown-le with the Bösendorfer grand piano decorated with 9,000 Swarovski crystals, which was specially brought from Vienna for the event; the fashion show staged by renowned fashion designer Mr William Tang and an exciting auction. All proceeds from this gala event will be contributed to support the School's student development, scholarships and exchange activities, research and staff development. Dr Jackie Chan, Honorary Professor of HTM, is the Honorary Chairman of the event Organizing Committee.

To add to the glamour of the event, the major sponsor Thierry Mugler had specially brought from France a crystal evening gown to Hong Kong for display during the occasion, which was also an inaugural product launch for the sponsor. The dinner was also graced by the presence of Ms Vera Strubi, Chairman of Thierry Mugler.

The School has received generous support from many sponsors, to whom its thanks are due. Among them, there were production sponsors: Aspirations Ltd, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Hotel Miramar Hong Kong, JC Group, Tom Lee Music Company Ltd, Mr William Tam, and wine sponsor Ernest & Julio Gallo.

The School has progressed from its earliest days as the Department of Institutional Management and Catering Studies in 1979 and to become an independent School of Hotel and Tourism Management within the University structure more recently.

Among the many awards and honours endowed in recent years on the School are, the designation by the World Tourism Organization as one of its Education and Training Network Centres around the world - the only one in Asia. The School is also the first institution outside North America to win the International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators' Institutional Achievement Award in 2003.

Through hosting a series of celebratory activities, the School commemorates the University's achievement of having nurtured more than 10,000 young talents for the hospitality industry in Hong Kong and to mark its commitment to the future. The activities included the conferment of Honorary Professorship on Dr Jackie Chan and a gala film premiere held earlier this year. Major conferences will also be organized to promote tourism and tourism education in the region. They include the First China Tourism Forum to be held on 25 September and the International Society of Travel and Tourism Educators Conference on 26 September.



(From left) Prof. Kaye Chon, Head of HTM; Prof. Poon Chung-kwong, PolyU President; Guest of Honour Ms Sandra Lee, Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour (Economic Development); Mr Victor Lo, PolyU Council Chairman; and Ms Sylvia Chung Chiu, Chairman of the event Organizing Committee and General Manager of Hotel Miramar Hong Kong.

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