PRESS RELEASE

SCHOOL OF HOTEL AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT AT THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY AND BANYAN TREE HOTELS AND RESORTS INK MOUs TO COLLABORATE ON EXECUTIVE EDUCATION AND INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMES

Hong Kong, 22 March 2011 – The School of Hotel and Tourism Management (SHTM) at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), and Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts, a leading manager and developer of premium resorts, hotels, spas and galleries, have come together to sign two Memorandums Of Understanding (MOU) to collaborate and work together in the areas of Executive Education and Internship programmes.

The signing ceremony took place today at the new SHTM premises was presided over by Mr Ho Kwon Ping, Executive Chairman, Banyan Tree Holdings Ltd, and Professor Kaye Chon, Dean and Chair Professor of the SHTM.

This strategic collaboration is in keeping with the two parties’ common interests in promoting executive education for those already in the hospitality workforce, research for product and service innovation, and industry attachment for students who aspire to join the hospitality industry upon graduation, on the basis of mutual understanding and support between both parties.

In the first MOU, the SHTM will provide Banyan Tree’s associates with executive education either at the SHTM or any of the Banyan Tree properties. Both parties shall pursue collaboration of further training on the basis of mutual understanding and agreement.

“One of the important roles of the SHTM is to feed research findings and other forms of expertise back to its principle base – the hospitality and tourism industry,” said Dean Kaye Chon. “We have already formed a firm foothold in establishing well-respected executive development programmes and we strive at all times to ensure that practitioners are kept abreast of the latest findings and trends that matter,” he remarked.

In the second of the MOUs, the SHTM and Banyan Tree will work together in the area of student internship and training, with Banyan Tree offering internship attachments each year to a number of SHTM undergraduates. The number of student interns will be determined by mutual consent each year.

Banyan Tree will also offer one-year industry attachments to Chinese mainland students who are eligible for admission to the SHTM’s MSc programme on the basis that they successfully complete the attachment. Both MOUs are signed for a period of five years.

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Mr Ho Kwon Ping, Executive Chairman, Banyan Tree Holdings Ltd, elaborated: “Both the SHTM and Banyan Tree see this collaboration as a win-win arrangement. We get to send our associates to attend on-going skills development and job-relevant training in a hotel school that is highly regarded in Asia for its standard of excellence, as well as provide a channel for industry internship which the undergraduates will need, and also future employment in the hospitality industry for these young, aspiring students hoping to join the trade.” “Banyan Tree Macau opens in May 2011. We are growing rapidly in China with as many as 13 new hotels opening between now and 2013 – this arrangement can only benefit service and industry standards as we move ahead,” he continued.

Echoing Mr Ho’s remark, Dean Chon said, “With Banyan Tree’s unwavering support and with our teaching and research hotel, Hotel ICON, at the heart of our new education model, we expect more success and greater contributions in the years ahead.”
About Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts
The leading international operator in the boutique resort, residences and spa industry, Banyan Tree offers a signature blend of romance and travel with a green conscience. The philosophy behind the hotels, resorts, residences, spas, retail galleries and destination club is based on rejuvenation of the body, mind and soul – a Sanctuary for the Senses.

To date, the Banyan Tree Group manages and/or has ownership interests close to 30 resorts and hotels, over 60 spas and over 80 retail galleries; as well as three golf courses.

About PolyU School of Hotel and Tourism Management
The School of Hotel and Tourism Management is one of the world’s leading providers of hospitality and tourism education. It was ranked No. 2 in the world among hotel and tourism schools based on research and scholarship according to a study published in the Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research in 2009. With more than 60 academic staff drawing from 18 countries, the SHTM offers programmes at levels ranging from Higher Diploma to Ph.D. It is designated by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation as one of its global Education and Training Centres.
SHTM website: www.polyu.edu.hk/htm

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