

Hong Kong Young Ambassador Scheme 2005 ceremony

Ms Eva Cheng, Commissioner for Tourism, today (August 5) said at the Hong Kong Young Ambassador Scheme 2005 Appointment and Awards Ceremony in the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, that the new tourist infrastructure coming on stream would attract more visitors to Hong Kong. All Hong Kong people, whether they were frontline staff in the tourism industry or local citizens, should do their best to welcome visitors and entice them to come again, she said.

At the ceremony, 225 newly appointed Young Ambassadors pledged to promote the spirit of hospitality in Hong Kong, providing a warm and welcoming atmosphere for visitors. The 171 students who are studying locally will be stationed at popular tourist attractions at weekends and on public holidays. They will organise promotional activities both in schools and the community and participate in large-scale tourism programmes. The 54 who study abroad will promote Hong Kong's image overseas as a preferred tourist destination at their schools and colleges.

"The young people being appointed as Hong Kong Young Ambassadors should act as the role models for every citizen to contribute to the hospitality culture of Hong Kong," Ms Cheng said.

Dr Eric Li, Chairman, Partnership Committee of the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, also said at the ceremony that the Young Ambassadors' friendly smiles and hospitality had impressed tourists and that he was proud of their achievements over the years. He encouraged the newly-appointed ambassadors to follow their predecessors' footsteps in enticing visitors back to Hong Kong.

Jointly organised by the Tourism Commission and the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, the Hong Kong Young Ambassador Scheme is now in its fifth year. It is also a major project of the Tourism Commission's "A Hospitable Hong Kong" campaign. In the year 2004-05, the Young Ambassadors contributed a total of 22,180.5 hours of service locally and overseas, with 463,278 participants. Over the past four years about 690 Young Ambassadors have spent over 48,100 hours helping over 1,798,000 visitors or local residents.

Today's ceremony followed three weeks of intensive training for those who had been selected from 684 applicants. Gold, silver and bronze medals were presented to

118 Young Ambassadors and four Outstanding Project Awards were given to projects conducted either in Hong Kong or overseas. Winners of these awards introduced their projects and Young Ambassadors from the past two years shared their experiences with their counterparts.

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Tourism Commission

Economic Development and Labour Bureau