

CONFERENCE REPORT

2007 International CHRIE Conference *25-29 July 2007, Dallas, Texas, USA*

The annual conference of the International Council for Hotel, Restaurant & Institutional Education (International CHRIE) was held at Hyatt Regency Hotel, Dallas, Texas, U.S.A., the 25-29 of July 2007. The majority of the delegates were affiliated with universities, though an important number of industry practitioners and tourism and hospitality policy makers were also represented. The conference aimed to bring together all relevant stakeholders to discuss a wide portfolio of issues related to the hospitality and tourism industry and education. The mixed audience of more than 400 participants included representatives from all over the U.S.A., many European countries as well as from Asia, Africa and the Middle East. This combination ensured the exchange of diversified ideas, and guaranteed lively and interesting discussions during the several academic and industry workshops, refereed paper presentations, posters, symposia, joint panels, and special industry group sector presentations.

Without doubt, this year's International CHRIE Conference proved to be a really big, interested, varied and excellently organised and administered event. Refereed papers were of high quality while the presentations and meetings events were grouped in the following categories: club management, culinary arts, education and curriculum, finance and accounting, hospitality management, food service, gaming, human resources, legal and government relations, leisure and recreation, lodging, marketing, meeting planning and convention management, technology and information systems, and travel and tourism. During the five days of the convention, a very large number of events took place. In total there were presented: 70 refereed papers, 57 posters, 18 academic workshops, 12 industry workshops, 30 symposia, 6 panels, 3 round tables, and 27 special industry group sector meetings. All refereed papers were published in the Conference Proceedings, edited by the co-Chairs of the Refereed program Committee (Evangelos Christou and Marianna Sigala,



both from the University of the Aegean in Greece). Last, 37 companies and organisations were represented in the exposition trade show.

A large number of papers focusing on marketing issues related to tourism, travel and hospitality formed a significant part of the refereed papers presentations. Information Technology and specifically Web based applications were the major focus of many of the presentations. Papers on Web page design and functionality, on e-commerce applications management and evaluation attracted the attention of the conference attendants. The impact of Internet on education was another major theme of the conference. Participants had the opportunity to learn how to best harness technology for distance/online education or training purposes as well as to get a first hand insight on how educational institutions are changing and adopting their educational methods and curriculum to address developments driven by technological forces. Furthermore, a respectable attention was also paid to issues regarding customer satisfaction and customer service. It should be noted that this year's conference program was well-balanced on presentations focusing on hospitality as well as on travel and tourism topics. In the general session opening ceremony Peter Jones (University of Surrey), president of International CHRIE introduced the conference program and explained its aims while stressing the significance the changes due to take place in the hospitality and tourism industries in the 21st century.

Bringing closer together, from all over the world, the different stakeholders (and views) of the academia and the professionals of the hospitality and tourism industries, as did this conference, is certainly a significant achievement. The next International CHRIE Conference will be held at Atlanta, Georgia, USA, the 30th of July 2008 to 3rd August 2008. The conference theme will be “*Welcoming a New Era to Hospitality Education*”. The deadline for the submission of refereed papers is January 20th 2008. All papers should be submitted electronically by using a designated online submission system; for more information please visit the International CHRIE's http site at www.chrie.org.

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