Welcome to the newsletter for the Centre for Tourism and Services Research.
Professor Leo Jago has recently stepped down from his position as Director of the Centre and will leave the University at the end of 2009. Professor John Breen is the Acting Director while we wait to fill the position which is currently being advertised.
Under the leadership and vision of Leo Jago the Centre for Tourism and Services Research has developed a much broader range of research expertise and industry partnerships. The Centre has university support to recruit additional research staff and postgraduate students and is now well placed to develop an international reputation. The Centre would like to publicly acknowledge the important contribution that Leo has made to this development.

The Centre continues to work in its traditional areas of expertise such as Tourism, Hospitality, Marketing and Events Management, but has now added three new areas of research specialisation as a result of the support from the university.

These new specialisations are Tourism and Climate Change, Travel and Wellbeing and Small Business Research and further details about their activities are contained in the following sections.
Victoria University’s Centre for Tourism and Services Research (CTSR) today announced its collaboration with a new Travel and Tourism climate initiative “Live the Deal” launched in Copenhagen. CTSR will supply underpinning research for implementing the initiative across the globe.

Live the Deal, an innovative, global campaign to help travel companies and destinations respond to climate change, reduce their carbon footprint and move to the green economy, was launched during the Copenhagen Climate Summit.

Announcing the new initiative, long time green tourism campaigner Geoffrey Lipman, assistant Secretary General of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and adjunct professor at CTSR said: “Copenhagen represents a new commitment by the world community towards sustainable low carbon growth patterns.”

“The targets and mitigation actions that countries develop and negotiate through this process will be a new base or travel industry action. What we are providing is a very simple way to get behind the evolving government initiatives, to keep pace with changing patterns and to demonstrate that our sector is acting, not simply talking.

The inaugural Summit will be in Abu Dhabi in the last quarter of the 2010. Live the Deal will be promoted by a multimedia video We Can Take this Climate Change from platinum album writer and Melbourne-based singer Alston Koch which will be profiled around the world in 2010.

See the animated video at: www.greenearth.travel.

CTSR Professor Terry DeLacy said Victoria University will work with UNWTO and other stakeholders to roll out the initiative across the world. Discussions are being held with public and private tourism stakeholders in Indonesia for Bali to be the first destination to implement the initiative. Professor DeLacy is available for interview: 03 9919 5349; terry.delacy@vu.edu.au.
The Travel and Wellbeing group is a recent addition to the Centre for Tourism and Services Research. The group is headed by Professor Marg Deery as the Research Leader, with Dr Sebastian Filep the Research Fellow who comes to VU from James Cook University and Ms. Alison Van Den Eynde who is the PhD scholar. Alison is researching social exclusion issues in the wellness tourism industry.

The group was involved with Tourism Victoria’s Daylesford marketing campaign launch of Spa and Wellness Tourism. The team also organised and hosted an extremely successful Industry Breakfast Forum with our special guest and program advisor, Professor Pauline Sheldon from the University of Hawaii. This event was well attended with numerous industry representatives. It is planned to host a similar forum in early 2010 in conjunction with Tourism Victoria.

In October the group hosted an academic seminar featuring Professor Robert Cummins from Deakin University, an expert on wellbeing and quality of life research. Colleagues from Monash University and La Trobe University also attended this seminar. The group has established an important collaboration in the Travel and Wellbeing research field with academics from Monash University and also James Cook University in Queensland.

Professor Marg Deery will be a keynote speaker on the topic of Community Wellbeing at the annual Tourism conference in Hobart next February.

In April 2010 the group will be hosting a special industry and academic forum at the major international event “Healthy Parks, Healthy People Congress” where we will be discussing the differences between indoor and outdoor settings in terms of wellbeing. The Congress organised by our research partner Parks Victoria, is expected to attract more than 1000 delegates from around the world and will give our research work great exposure.
The Research Group is headed by Professor Terry DeLacy. Terry previously held the position of CEO of the national Sustainable Tourism Co-operative Research Centre, prior to which he was Dean of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Faculty at the University of Queensland. Dr Min Jiang, Dr Emma Wong and Emma Calgaro are research fellows. The Group’s PhD scholars include Ryan Jopp, who is researching Tourism in the Great Ocean Road area and its effects on Climate Change; Nickson Peter, who is researching the Economics of Climate Change for Tourism; and Louise Klint, who is researching A Climate Change Resilience Framework for Tourism - A Case Study of the Dive Sub-Sector in Vanuatu.

In December the Climate Change group presented a seminar at our City Flinders campus with guests from industry partners such as Geelong Otway Tourism, Tourism Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment. The team also attended the Kick-Off Workshop for the Australian Government’s overseas aid program Pacific Tourism-Climate Adaptation Project (PT-CAP) in Suva, Fiji. This project is funded by AusAID for the next three years for a total of $350,000. While in Fiji the team interviewed 26 people across the government, tourism industry, development agencies, NGOs and academics as part of the PT-CAP project.

The Tourism and Climate Change group attended the AusAID Communications workshop in Canberra. In November, the team also presented on tourism, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and climate change in the Pacific at the International Conference on Meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Dr Min Jiang will be presenting on the topic of Adaptation to Climate Change Risks for the South Pacific Tourism Sector at the annual Tourism conference in Hobart next February.
Introducing the Small Business Research Group

Professor John Breen is the leader of the group and Rodney Con Foo is the Research Fellow in the team. Rodney comes to VU from industry with a successful record of running his own business and is in the final stages of completing his DBA.

Other academic staff from VU involved in small business research projects include Dr Stephen Burgess and Dr Rafael Paguio who are working on a project linking information technologies with home-based businesses and their sustainability.

The team is working with Professor Brian King at VU and Professor Beth Walker from Edith Cowan University on a project to better understand the learning and information channels used by small and medium tourism businesses. This project has an Industry Reference Group that provides advice and feedback on the project. The chief executives of the tourism industry councils in Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia have all participated in this reference group.

The group has worked with the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) to provide an opportunity for small business operators to voice their opinion about issues of concern to them. The Chief Executive (Secretary) of VECCI Wayne Kayler-Thomson is an adjunct Professor of the CTSR. This panel is now called the Victorian Small Business Council and meets three times per year. At the August meeting the Victorian Minister for Small Business attended and answered questions posed by the Council.

The group supported the City of Hobson’s Bay Business Excellence Awards by participating in the judging process. This role helped to develop an understanding of the local businesses in the region as well as develop the relationship with the local council.

Professor John Breen was recently announced as the national award winner for the Best Entrepreneurial Educator for 2009. The award is sponsored by the Business-Higher Education Round Table which is a not-for-profit organization that was established in 1990 to strengthen the relationship between business and higher education and its members are leaders in higher education, business, industry bodies and research institutions.