



**ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIAN
CONVENTION BUREAUX INC.**

**THE ASSOCIATION BEHIND THE
BUREAUX WHO MARKET AUSTRALIA
FOR BUSINESS EVENTS**

MEDIA RELEASE

Melbourne scores big on doubles winning the AACB Staff Scholarship – and Staff Prize in Brisbane...

Politically correct? Probably not. But the AACB Staff Scholarship submission by Sandra Chipchase, CEO of Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau, for Andrea Hasan, Market Analyst at MCVB, and the submission by Shannon Klein from the same Bureau for the AACB Staff Prize, were both stunning.

Announcing the wins, AACB's Executive Director Mike Cannon said "the three impartial judges were unanimous in their decision that, despite the fact that both women hailed from the same Bureau, they were clear winners". Which begs the question: What has the MCVB done to deserve this? Is their staff selection so scrupulous? Is their training second to none? Do they secretly slip their staff mega-vitamins with their coffees?

The Staff Scholarship and Prize were awarded at the AACB Staff Conference held this year from 25 – 27 August in Brisbane at the beautifully appointed Carlton Crest. Over seventy Bureaux staff attended from around Australia, along with Business Events colleagues from IMEX and Tourism Australia.

The annual conference, dedicated to convention bureaux staff education and the pursuit of excellence in the Business Events sector, comprises think-tanks, motivational and educational sessions along with a good measure of healthy – and not so healthy, depending on how much Queensland beverage was consumed – fun!

"Brisbane Marketing proved to be brilliant hosts", said Mike Cannon, "pulling out all the stops to make our 2006 conference one of the best ever". "Our guest speakers, including the likes of Kevin Leong from the Singapore Tourism Board and Sallyanne Atkinson AO, former Lord Mayor of Brisbane, gave Bureaux staff an outstanding perspective of issues such as market failure needs, and benefits to destinations from Bureaux partnering with the whole-of-industry".

Scholarship winner, Andrea Hasan proposes to use her \$5000 award and Qantas return ticket by attending the Destination Management & Marketing Institute in the USA, or one of the international Leads Exchange Seminars in Europe.

Her objective is to improve the quality of market intelligence and competitor analysis in Business Events; "a valuable asset to all of AACB's members", said Mike.

Shannon Klein, winner of the Staff Prize, awarded to Bureau staff with less than 12 months service, is a sales executive in international incentives at MCVB. Shannon hopes to eventually

move into a sales management position. Having identified the need to expand the potential for Asia, an emerging market with a huge potential for Australian destinations, Shannon's intention is to become an expert in the Asian market so that she can educate MCVB's members and suppliers about the cultural idiosyncrasies of the Asian market. Shannon hopes to use her \$1000 prize to study a second language and complete a cross-cultural studies course.

A professional development initiative, the AACB Staff Scholarship and Prize, both awarded annually, reflects AACB's commitment to encouraging staff to pursue nothing short of excellence and realise their dreams of successful futures. Both the Scholarship and Prize provide applicants with resources to conduct a project of value to the individual as well as to the bureaux of Australia in general. AACB is co-sponsored in the project by Tourism Australia and Qantas Airways.

In addition to the AACB awards, Mike Cannon added; "we are also delighted to report that IMEX will once again be offering an award to AACB staff this year for their Youth Leaders Forum to be held at IMEX 2007 in April next year, this year won by Tanya Henry of Brisbane Marketing who traveled to Europe with co-sponsors; Qantas".

Ends



Photo Caption, left to right:-

Robyn Henry, President of AACB Inc; Andrea Hasan of MCVB, winner of the AACB Scholarship; Heather Gough, Director of Sales for IMEX; Shannon Klein of MCVB, winner of the AACB Prize, Sue Thomson, General Manager of Tourism Events Australia

For further information contact:

Michael Cannon
Executive Director
AACB Inc
Level 13, 80 William Street
East Sydney NSW 2011
Tel: 02.93 26 91 33
Fax: 02.93 26 96 76
Email: mike.cannon@aacb.org.au

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