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**Pauline J. Sheldon**

Professor Emerita

Co-Director, Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI)

School of Travel Industry Management, University of Hawaii

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## **Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI) Meeting 6 – Report**

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*Transformational Leadership for Tourism Education* was the theme of the sixth annual meeting of the Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI). It was held June 28-30, 2012 at University of Bocconi, Milan, Italy with Prof. Magda Antonioli hosting forty-five innovative tourism educators from five continents. The three day meeting was a lively combination of panels, paper presentations, thought bubbles, and debate on the future of TEFI, interspersed with wonderful Italian food and tours of beautiful Milan.

A panel on the neo-liberal university consisting of David Airey, Ernie Heath, Johan Edelmeir and Karl Wöber opened a stimulating debate on needed change in tourism education. A second panel discussion on the role of leadership in transforming academic systems included international perspectives from New Zealand (Christian Schott), Brazil (Roberta Sogayar), India (Kumar Krishna) and Australia (Dianne Dredge).

Seventeen paper presentations about issues and ideas related to tourism education by international authors (one who connected to the entire conference on Skype including presenting her paper) were both provocative and creative in their format and content. A particularly poignant pairing of papers dealt with the issue of cultural oppression in tourism in Kashmir, which was followed by an inspiring presentation on how social entrepreneurship assisted local development in Kenya through a tourism education experience. Additional papers challenged the content of courses in tourism and others dealt with the issue of leadership more directly by identifying needed directions forward for future leaders. It is

important to note that many of these papers will be included in the Special TEFI Issue of *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism* in 2013 guest edited by Christian Schott.

The last major session of this year's TEFI focused on future directions. Working groups spent a substantial amount of time re-visioning TEFI *raison d'être* and the main contributions TEFI can make going forward. The new vision and the four areas that were identified are:

### **A NEW VISION for TEFI**

*To be the leading, forward-looking network that inspires, informs and supports tourism educators and students to passionately and courageously transform the world for the better.*

### **KEY FOUR AREAS OF CONTRIBUTION**

1. Advocacy for tourism as a field of study and employment;
2. Re-shaping Tourism Scholarship: relevancy, meaning and metrics;
3. A forum for creative, innovative debate about the impact of future socio-economic trends on tourism education; and,
4. Facilitation of innovative, values-based learning experiences for students at all levels.

For more about TEFI and tourism education, please visit our website [www.tourismeducationfutures.org](http://www.tourismeducationfutures.org)