

Ronnie C CHAN

Citation

In this era of globalization, society needs people capable of transcending national cultures and boundaries. The world needs individuals who are capable of using their knowledge to facilitate and augment understanding of the issues that are important to both East and West. The man we now honor, Mr Ronnie C Chan, is such an individual.

Born in Hong Kong in 1949, Mr Chan is known first as a very successful and vocal businessman. For the past 14 years, he has been at the helm of the Hang Lung Group, a company founded in 1960 by his late father, Mr Chan Tseng-Hsi. Under his leadership, Hang Lung has become a dynamic corporation, responsible for many key property projects in Hong Kong and Mainland China. He also co-founded the Morningside group, a privately held enterprise with successful operations in a wide variety of sectors in different parts of the world.

It says much about his character that Mr Chan is as concerned with the bricks and mortar above the land as with the foundations of our society. Throughout his impressive career, he has given tirelessly of himself to causes and issues he strongly believes in. Geopolitics and geo-economics fascinate him and he is extensively published on international affairs. He is also deeply committed to ensuring that our system of governance remains stable and equitable. For over a decade, he has worked unswervingly to inform the West about Hong Kong's return to the Motherland and China's accession to the World Trade Organization. He is someone who is never afraid to speak his mind.

Mr Chan's incredible breadth of interests spans the political, economic, cultural, and philanthropic arenas. He serves on the governing boards of major business corporations and not-for-profit institutions in Hong Kong and overseas. Locally, he chairs the

executive committees of the One Country Two Systems Research Institute and the Better Hong Kong Foundation. He serves as the Convenor of the Hong Kong Development Forum and as a board member of the China Development Research Foundation of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. He also chairs the China Heritage Fund, which restores important cultural sites in China. The Fund is the first and only entity since 1869 to build a Qing dynasty Imperial Garden in the authentic way inside the Forbidden City in Beijing.

Internationally, Mr Chan is a Vice Chairman of the Asia Society and Chairman of its Hong Kong Center, a Trustee of the University of Southern California, a Governing Board member of the Indian School of Business, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and Committee of 100. In 1998, Mr Chan became the first ever — and remains the only — Chinese to co-chair the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. These activities highlight the extent to which he is a citizen of the world.

Quietly and largely unsung, Mr Chan has also worked behind the scenes to ensure Hong Kong's youth has a more level playing field. His involvement with Youth Outreach since 1991 finds him combing the streets of Hong Kong with social workers in the early hours of the morning looking for teenagers needing guidance. At this University, Mr Chan has broadened the world view of students admitted through the Early Admissions Scheme. He has taken his students to dinner, knows each of them by name, and has persuaded many eminent speakers to share their wisdom with these young talents. In turn, they have flourished.

Education remains a priority for him. Together with Prof Yau Shing-Tung, another of today's

honorees, he established the Morningside Medal of Mathematics to honor world-class mathematicians of Chinese descent. This year, the two paired up again to establish the Hang Lung Mathematics Awards for local high school students.

Mr Chan was a valued member of the HKUST Council from 1994 to 2004 and is currently a serving member of the University Court. He has also funded two research centers at the University — the Hang Lung Center for Organizational Research, and the Center on China's Transnational Relations.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, I have the honor to present to you, on behalf of the University, Mr Ronnie C Chan, a business leader, a bridge between the East and the West, an educator, and a man with a deep social conscience, for the degree of Doctor of Social Sciences, *honoris causa*.