

Mr Ian Chun Wan FOK

Citation

“It takes 10 years to grow trees but 100 years to educate people.” This is a Chinese proverb that Mr Ian Fok Chun Wan has not only quoted but also taken to heart. As the second son of the late well-known patriot, entrepreneur and philanthropist Dr Henry Fok Ying Tung, he has made it his business – along with his far-sighted leadership of the Fok Ying Tung Group of companies – to power forward the challenging, long-term task of fostering the people as well as the educational institutions and programs that let learning and human talent advance and be diffused, and a better future be unfurled.

Mr Ian Fok has done so mainly through the Fok Ying Tung Foundation and associated charitable foundations, established by his father as early as 40 years ago. Such endeavors have resulted in over 70 major buildings at higher education institutions and schools in Hong Kong, overseas, and throughout Mainland China. Also, the Fok Ying Tung Education Foundation has in the past 30 years provided prizes and research grants to over 3,600 young professors in Mainland Universities to support their early development. Further, the Hong Kong Pei Hua Education Foundation he helped founded 35 years ago promoted exchanges between universities in Hong Kong and the Mainland and provided over 600 wide-ranging programs to train over 14,000 Mainland government officials for its modernization efforts.

With the integral link between science and technology and economic and social development, HKUST has enjoyed an on-going relationship with Fok Ying Tung Foundation, including jointly launching the Nansha Information Technology Park in 2002, along with the Guangzhou government, and a HK\$30 million donation to support the University’s research and academic development the following year. In 2005, the Foundation pledged HK\$800 million to HKUST. The visionary main goal was a Pearl River Delta hub to drive knowledge transfer – that vital way to bring new discoveries, cutting-edge perspectives, and innovation out of the University and into the community through commercialization, entrepreneurship, and professional training – and boost advancement.

The goal became reality with the establishment of HKUST Fok Ying Tung Graduate School and the HKUST Fok Ying Tung Research Institute. As an active supporter as well as generous donor, Mr Ian Fok is strongly committed to the Nansha institutions. At the same time, he has proactively contributed to the University overall, as a member of the Council (2004-10) and now the Court, and as an advisor to the Knowledge Transfer Advisory Group.

All this has been achieved while fast-forwarding the Fok Ying Tung Group, where he is currently

Chief Executive Officer, and Hong Kong business as a whole. Constantly seeking to bring together knowledge, human capital and economic growth, Mr Fok has strived to raise Hong Kong's profile as a business center internationally and continue his family legacy as a major bridge between Hong Kong, Mainland China and the world. Born in Hong Kong, with ancestral roots in Panyu, and Bachelor of Science and Master of Business Administration degrees from University of British Columbia in Canada, he had the all-round understanding and perspectives to succeed.

Mr Fok served as Chairman of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce and has received a Silver Bauhinia Star from the Hong Kong government for his distinguished endeavors in business development and fostering closer Mainland ties. Further, he has participated in high-level national and regional political and economic bodies, as a Hong Kong Deputy to the National People's Congress, Vice chairman of the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce. Mr Fok is an honorary citizen of cities in Guangdong and Jiangxi provinces and has been named among the top 10 philanthropists of Guangzhou. He has also received commendations from the China State Department for his contributions to development of the minority in China.

The championing of healthy lifestyles through sports, along with academic education, has always been a Fok family passion locally, nationally and internationally, and Mr Ian Fok is no exception. He is a strong and committed proponent of the Chinese martial art of wushu and Vice-President

of the International Wushu Federation, striving to have Wushu included in future Olympic games.

By literally building resources and nurturing human talents to generate change in such seminal and myriad ways, Mr Fok has inspired, motivated and enabled hundreds of thousands of people to push themselves and society forward. Even more significant as the opening proverb highlights, the institutions, education and training enjoyed by this generation as a result of his percipient philanthropy will extend to those yet to come.

Chancellor, on behalf of the Council of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, I have the high honor of presenting to you, Mr Ian Fok, Chief Executive Officer of the Fok Ying Tung Group, for the award of Doctor of Social Sciences *honoris causa*.