The dimensions of Dr Fong Yun-Wah's long life may be measured by the numerous causes he has championed, the organizations he has supported and the honors he has garnered. Now in his golden 86th year, Dr Fong simply wants to be known to the world as a 'servant of society' - bent on serving his community and humanity. In a life framed by service, he aspires, above all, to being an inspiration to teachers, students and the younger generation.

The Fong Yun-Wah story began in earnest more than half a century ago when he made his first donation to education in Dongguan in 1956, an act of charity frowned upon by the colonial authority of the day. During the war, he witnessed daily the suffering and starvation of his fellow citizens in Hong Kong. This planted in him the seeds of his personal compassion to help the needy, and to relieve suffering wherever he finds it. His own secondary education was interrupted by the war. This explains his passionate support of educational causes over the years. It also instilled in him a patriotic fervor and a belief that individual dignity is predicated on national dignity.

Nearly every level of education in Hong Kong has benefited from Dr Fong's and his family's generosity. From his Hong Kong base, his support of education spreads north, establishing dozens of schools in various parts of the Mainland, including his ancestral township in Guangdong Province. More recently, he financed the setting up of computer centers on the Mainland, especially in the remote northern areas of the country, so that geography would not be a hindrance to being plugged in for the economically disadvantaged. His spirit of generosity encompasses the Greater China donation circle, as he calls it, including a university in Taiwan. In doing good, he has never sought any leverage from any authority. Respect shadows him wherever he extends his helping hand.

Dr Fong has a special fondness for HKUST, which is demonstrated time and time again over the past 14 years. In 1997 he supported the building of a walkway between student halls. The Fong Shu Fook Tong Foundation also funded a scholarship to help recruit outstanding Mainland undergraduate students for our Business School. In 2008 he gave the university a replica of the Armillary Sphere to educate the young about the scientific achievements of the ancient Chinese. Last year, he made a multi-year pledge for the establishment of the Fong Shu Fook Tong Foundation Mainland Internship Program. And this year, to mark our 20th Anniversary, he successfully lobbied for an asteroid to be named after HKUST.

From education, his support in recent years has turned to healthcare and medical research, from the setting up of a breast cancer research center at the Sun Yat-sen University to the funding of research at the University of Hong Kong for the prevention of infection of fetuses by HIV-positive parents.

Dr Fong Yun-Wah, Honorary Fellow of HKUST
Despite his educational deficits, Dr Fong has a robust interest in science and technology, with a special soft spot for aeronautics, having donated a primary school at China’s famous rocket launch center at Xichang. He has called for greater support for research funding to science and technology. To Dr Fong, a university’s greatness is not in its buildings, but in having a critical mass of tip-top talents. It is his one fervent wish to see the emergence of a top-ranked university in Greater China that is truly global in its leadership. China’s future greatness, in Dr Fong’s view, lies in the state of its science and technology, for which HKUST is a frontrunner. He has nothing but high praise for this up-and-coming university, now ranked first in Asia after only 20 years. This dream of national academic greatness is the new focus for his financial good.

His history of generosity notwithstanding, Dr Fong believes that good deeds should not be solely measured by money. For years, he has been spending part of his day compiling newspaper clippings for Mainland schools, while setting aside 10% of his business earnings towards underwriting worthy causes. He has published two books for the moral education of the young, a distillation of his wisdom from years of living, reading and learning. Over his long life, he has followed the dictates of his conscience, embracing modesty, not the profit motive, while maintaining a keen interest in social issues critical to the healthy development of society.

Much good has been done through the Fong’s Family Foundation, and its Fong Shu Fook Tong Foundation, named in honor of his late father. Notably, Dr Fong was the Principal Director of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals and Chairman of Po Leung Kuk, the venerable advocacy agency for orphans. He has earned all the honors there is to be earned, from a Silver Bauhinia Star from the Hong Kong SAR government to an MBE by the Queen, a Gold Medal from the University of California at Berkeley, to honorary doctorates variously from the University of Victoria in Canada, the Russian Academy of Sciences Far Eastern Research Center and The University of Aberdeen in the UK. Finally but not exhaustively, he was awarded honorary citizenships all the way from Plains in Georgia, Corpus Christi in Texas, Winnipeg in Canada, not to mention his own native town. He was bestowed the honor of Top Ten National Poverty Alleviator at its 4th Award Ceremony. His long list of honors is as international as it is multifarious. But there is one personal and private honor he truly cherishes in his heart — the longevity of his marriage. This year, he celebrates the 66th year of his marriage to the love of his life. To spend quality time with his ailing spouse, he has even sacrificed his beloved golf game. This is the kind of man we honor today: loyal, giving and universally caring. He can indeed wear the title of ‘society’s servant’ with modest pride and inner satisfaction.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, on behalf of the Council of The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, I have the high honor of presenting to you Dr Fong Yun-Wah, Chairman of the Hip Shing Hong Group, for the award of Honorary Fellowship.

方博士行善多年，相信善舉應超越金錢界限。多年來，他每天花時間為內地學校彙寄剪報，並將業務收入的百分之十投入他認為有意義的活動。他出版了兩本以年青人為對象的德育培養專書，分享多年來他從生活、閱讀和學習中所累積得到的智慧，他一生憑良心行事、謙遜自持，不為利益所動，並對影響社會健康發展的社會問題十分關注。

方博士透過方潤華基金及紀念其先父的方樹福堂基金，廣施善心。方博士曾任東華三院首任總理，也是以保赤安良為宗旨的保良局主席。他獲得的榮譽來自全球各地，而且十分多元化，包括香港特別行政區政府的銀紫星章、英帝國員佐勳章，以至加州大學柏克萊分校的金章、加拿大維多利亞大學的榮譽博士、俄羅斯科學院遠東研究中心的榮譽博士、英國阿巴甸大學的榮譽博士等，此外他更獲美國喬治亞州平原市、德克薩斯州基斯德市、加拿大溫尼伯市及其家鄉頒發榮譽市民稱號及榮獲第四届全美十大扶貧狀元。不過，他心中珍視的榮譽，還是他歷經多年，恩愛情恆的美滿婚姻。今年，他與愛妻慶祝結婚66周年紀念，為爭取與妻子共聚的時間，他甚至放棄了至愛的高爾夫球運動。今天，我們代表方潤華博士忠厚賢能、樂善好施，彰顯大愛精神。他以「社會工作者」自居，並以此得到無比滿足，引以為傲。

副監督先生，本人謹代表香港科技大學校董會，恭請閣下頒授榮譽大學院士予協成行集團主席方潤華博士。