

## **Honorary Fellow Mr Wong Kam-po**

*Citation written and delivered by Professor Paul Lam Kwan-sing*

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council and President:

Mr Wong Kam-po has created an inspirational Hong Kong story with an illustrious career spanning over two decades of dedicated commitment and contributions to the sport of cycling and as an Asian Games gold medalist.

Mr Wong was raised in a family of seven siblings in Shatin. During his adolescence, like a lot of teenagers, he was at a loss as to what his future vocation should be. He had to step into society before completing his secondary education, but his life took a drastic turn for the good when some of his friends introduced him to cycling. The sport quickly became his lifelong passion, transforming him into a man of vision and purpose.

Consequently, and following much hard training, Mr Wong became, at the tender age of seventeen, the first person to win the Asian Junior Cycling Championships for Hong Kong. A bright future lay ahead, but strife among his teammates during the preparations for the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona disqualified the whole team. Mr Wong, suffering further disciplinary action, was banned from the Hong Kong cycling team for two years. This was a heavy blow to his dream to fight for the glory of Hong Kong. He was left feeling that all his hard work had been in vain.

Forced to give up cycling, Mr Wong became an audio products salesman until he met Mr Shen Jinkang, a cycling coach who encouraged him to take up the sport again. Subsequently, Mr Wong immersed himself in an eight- to 10-hour training schedule every day, which, regardless of weather conditions, involved cycling 180 kilometres!

After ten years of disciplined persistence, Mr Wong captured numerous gold medals. To name but a few, he captured the first gold medal in the Men's Individual Road Race at the first National Games after the handover

in 1997; he won the gold medal at the Asian Games in 1998, 2006 and 2010 as well as at the 2001 Asian Championships. In 2007, he became the first Chinese athlete to win the 15-kilometre scratch event in the UCI Track Cycling World Championships in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. From this event, he also brought home one of the highest accolades for a cyclist: the Rainbow Jersey.

Determined to become a world-class athlete, Mr Wong, after thorough deliberation with Mr Shen, took the courageous decision to shift his focus from road racing, at which he was most adept, to track racing. Following a further four years' arduous training, Mr Wong triumphed by winning the gold medal at the World Championships track events, advancing his career to a new level.

Mr Wong's extraordinary achievements have been applauded by the community and the HKSAR Government. In addition to being voted the best athlete several times at the Hong Kong Sports Stars Awards, he was awarded the Bronze Bauhinia Star by the HKSAR Government. President Hu Jintao praised Mr Wong, saying "You are more precious than gold" during his visit to the Hong Kong Sports Institute in 2007.

Notwithstanding his distinguished accomplishments in cycling, Mr Wong is the kind of person who is never afraid of undertaking new enterprises. While pursuing a bachelor's degree in health education at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, Mr Wong has continued training for the 2012 London Olympics.

In addition to competing for honours as a professional cyclist, Mr Wong is committed to establishing a long-term system and sustainable culture for cycling in Hong Kong, evidence of his remarkable contributions to nurturing young athletes.

Mr Wong Kam-po is an inspirational model for the Hong Kong spirit, retaining his drive and enthusiasm despite significant challenges to his dreams and aspirations. Despite the difficulties that lay along his path, he has journeyed for 20 years with exceptional fortitude and optimism, while

enjoying all that life has to offer. Often sharing his experience with young people, Mr Wong encourages people to keep fighting for their dreams in times of adversity.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, Mr Chairman of the Council and Mr President, it is my honour and pleasure to affirm Mr Wong Kam-po's tremendous contributions to Hong Kong. His experience is inspirational to our younger generation. Therefore I am hugely privileged to have the opportunity to present Mr Wong Kam-po to you for the award of Honorary Fellowship of the University for his extraordinary achievements.