

# **Honorary Doctor of Letters**

## **Dr FONG Yun-wah**

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Chairman:

We now honour a prominent businessman and philanthropist, a citizen of Hong Kong whose name is nevertheless known far beyond the borders of this city. Born in Heyuan to a family originally from Dongguan County, Guangdong Province on the mainland, Dr Fong Yun-wah came to Hong Kong with his family when he was only six and helped his father with managing the family business. Over a long period of more than half a century, the Fong family has become one of the great success stories in Hong Kong, and Dr Fong commands respect and admiration in the local community not only for his success in business, but also for his generosity in supporting educational and cultural undertakings in Hong Kong and on the mainland.

Dr Fong is Managing Director of the Hip Shing Hong Group of Companies and the Kam Wah Investment Company. He is Chairman of the Fong Shu Fook Tong Foundation and the Fong's Family Foundation, and he also serves as a member of the Pei Hua Education Foundation. As a businessman, Dr Fong is known for his prudence and sagacity, and as a philanthropist, he accomplishes the art of giving by setting aside annually portions of his business profits for charities. With his own schooling interrupted by the Sino-Japanese War, Dr Fong is particularly concerned with the education of the young in our society. He has made significant contributions to education on all levels, from kindergarten to college, both in Hong Kong and on the mainland. His generosity is widely acknowledged and won him the honour of being named as one of the ten Champions for Charities in China in 1997. Through the two Foundations, Dr Fong helps promote academic exchanges between Hong Kong and the mainland. In recent years, he has made donations for the establishment of dozens of schools and the setting up of computer centers on the Chinese mainland, especially in the Northwest, actively participating in the development of the great Northwestern region. He has also contributed a great deal to higher education in Hong Kong through charities and through his long association with several universities. He serves on the Board of Trustees of United College, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the Sponsorship and

Development Fund Committee of the Open University of Hong Kong. Here at City University, no one who enters the University from Festival Walk can fail to notice that one of the buildings on campus bears Dr Fong's name.

In his life and career, Dr Fong has shown us a wonderful example of caring, generosity, and humanity. This is evident in his concerns about health, social welfare and environmental protection. He is Vice-Patron of the Hong Kong Child Health Foundation, a committee member of the Hong Kong Red Cross, a Trustee of the Wildlife Fund for Nature in Hong Kong, and he has held important positions associated with a number of hospitals. Dr Fong also shows his wide interest and intellectual curiosity in his capacity as an Adviser to the Asteroids Naming Committee at the Purple Gold Mountain Observatory under the Chinese Academy of Sciences. With the approval of the Committee, one of the asteroids now bears the name of Fong Yun-wah Star, and on Dr Fong's nomination, another is named the Hong Kong Star.

Dr Fong has devoted himself heart and soul to the building of Hong Kong and his country, and yet he is also a man with a truly cosmopolitan vision of world peace and harmony; and so, fittingly, he has earned international recognition. An honorary citizen of a number of cities in the US and Canada as well as in China, he bears the titles of JP and MBE, and is an honorary professor of the La Trobe University in Australia and of several universities on the mainland. Among the many honours and awards Dr Fong has received, we may mention a Gold Medal from the University of California at Berkeley, a Silver Bauhinia Medal conferred on him by the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, and honorary degrees from universities in the US and Canada, the Hong Kong Baptist University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. We are very happy to welcome Dr Fong to our University today for the conferment of yet another richly deserved honour.

Mr Chairman, now I present to you Fong Yun-wah for the degree of Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*.