

Honorary Fellow Mrs Stella Lau Kun Lai-kuen

Citation written and delivered by Professor Ng Sik-hung

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council and President:

In her work as in her manners and poise, Mrs Stella Lau Kun Lai-kuen exudes confidence and grace. She exemplifies the fine breed of graduates educated at her alma mater, Diocesan Girls' School, where she has been Headmistress since 1999. Throughout her career, she has been able to discharge the demanding duties of her work without ever compromising her deep devotion to her family, both as a mother and a wife.

Yet, committed though she is to her work and family, she is consumed by neither, self-absorbed in none. On the contrary, she has been willing to reach out to the wider community, offering her time and talent graciously through a range of public services.

After graduating from Diocesan Girls' School, Mrs Lau, or Miss Stella Kun as she was known before marriage, took the courageous decision to pursue her university education overseas. This decision led to a journey that was unfamiliar to most girls from the Kun clan of Chiu Chow at the time, when traditional customs conspired to keep women family-bound as mothers and wives. But, against prevailing conventions, Miss Stella Kun's visionary mother offered her blessing, and the young student set off for Canada. She completed her Bachelor of Arts at the University of Waterloo in just 19 months.

Her academic prowess and self-discipline continued to serve her well in later years when she had to juggle work and family commitments to secure postgraduate qualifications in education and counselling. Prior to this, she had been able to realise her love of French culture by attending the University of Geneva and fulfilling the requirements for a diploma in French language and literature.

Mrs Lau puts her heart and soul into her vocation as an educator. Under her leadership and with the support of her staff, successive generations of students at Diocesan Girls' School have upheld the fine traditions of the school by demonstrating excellence in the academic, musical and sporting arenas. Two other school traditions have special pride of place in Mrs Lau's commitment to the whole-person development of her students. One is community service and the other is spirituality, both of which find expression in the school motto: Daily Giving Service. Coincidentally, the acronym of the school motto, DGS, also stands for the school name.

Mrs Lau has been pro-active in her support of university affairs. She was a member of the Council of City University of Hong Kong for seven years, serving on a number of committees until end 2007 when she took up an appointment with the University Grants Committee. Her public service to tertiary education goes hand in hand with her service to other sectors. She is Chair of the Board of the Hong Kong Schools Sports Federation, a high-profile role that led to her selection as a torch bearer for the Beijing Olympics. Additionally, she is a member of the Committees on Performing Arts and the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) Complaints Committee. She was appointed a Justice of the Peace in 2006 and she was a long-serving former member of the Broadcasting Authority.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, Mr Chairman of the Council and Mr President, I am hugely privileged and delighted to have the opportunity of presenting Mrs Stella Lau Kun Lai-kuen to you for the award of the title of Honorary Fellow of the University for her accomplishments in education and her contributions to the University and Hong Kong society at large.