

Honorary Doctor of Social Science

Dr William MONG Man-wai

Citations written and delivered by Professor CHENG Pei-kai

Chairman:

Dr William Mong Man-wai was born in Hong Kong in 1927. He had attended schools in Hong Kong before going to Shanghai and Beijing to pursue his university studies. In 1949, at the age of 22, Dr Mong was determined to cut a new path in his career, and so he went to Japan to familiarize himself with the Japanese language and culture.

Dr Mong left for Japan and started to learn Japanese as a fresh beginner — a first step to winning the confidence and support from Japanese manufacturers. He enrolled in a primary school and learned with the children there. He managed to complete the six-year primary school curriculum in just six months, and by then he was already a fluent speaker of Japanese. Dr Mong's learning experience became the foundation for his future development. Indeed, it is the story of a young person's persistent search for self-improvement through patient and unsparing efforts — a success story full of insights to our young people today.

In 1953, Dr Mong founded the Shun Hing Hong and became the sole agent in Hong Kong and Macau for National brand products manufactured by the Matsushita Electric Industrial Company in Japan. Shun Hing started with only three employees, and Dr Mong had to tour almost every potential retailer in Hong Kong to demonstrate the functions of National brand radios and electric cookers. Starting one's own business is always an uphill battle, and in Dr Mong's case this battle was won by persistence and industry. In 1960, Shun Hing Hong was expanded into the Shun Hing Electronic Trading Co. Ltd., and in 1995 the company became the now well-known Shun Hing Group. From its establishment almost five decades ago to the present, Shun Hing has evolved from a company of just three people to a very successful enterprise with 1,600 employees and numerous subsidiaries, with an annual turnover amounting to HK\$10 billion, half of which comes from the Group's investments in mainland China. Shun Hing's

scope of business covers a wide spectrum of audio visual and home appliances, office furniture and office automation equipment, security systems, industrial and engineering facilities, advertising, and property investment and development in China. In the past 50 years, Hong Kong has witnessed the rise to prominence of a homebred entrepreneur who has now become a legend known to many.

Dr Mong's success is not limited to business. Being a staunch supporter of social welfare and higher education development, Dr Mong established the Shun Hing Education and Charity Fund Limited in 1984. In less than 20 years, its donations have reached a total of HK\$30 million. These funds have been channelled into education, health care, sports, and environmental protection, all serving the same purpose of improving the quality of human life. In education in particular, the generosity of the Shun Hing Education and Charity Fund has greatly improved the learning environment of tertiary institutions in Hong Kong and mainland China. In addition to donations for basic facilities and infrastructure improvement, Shun Hing has supported a number research institutes, scholarships, and research grants with a view to developing young talents to meet the future needs of society.

As the old Chinese saying goes, "It takes ten years to grow trees, and a hundred to nurture men of talent." Dr Mong's generous investment in education not only embraces the humanitarian spirit of the Chinese tradition, but also lays the foundation for a brighter future of our society.

Our young people have a lot to learn from Dr Mong: his thirst for knowledge and self-improvement, his entrepreneurial spirit and industry, and most of all his sense of duty and commitment to social service and education.

Mr Chairman, now I present to you Dr William Mong Man-wai for the degree of Doctor of Social Science, *honoris causa*.