

# Honorary Fellow Mr Herbert Hak Kong Tsoi

*Citation written and delivered by Professor Lin Feng*

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council and President:

Mr Herbert Hak Kong Tsoi, Senior Partner at Herbert Tsoi and Partners, specialises in probate and probate litigation, but beyond his profession, he is known for his readiness to offer pro bono legal advice in service of the community.

Mr Tsoi read law at University College London and obtained a Bachelor of Laws degree with honours in 1973 and a Master of Laws degree in 1977. Upon his return to Hong Kong, he joined a local solicitors firm, but established his own practice in 1999.

Mr Tsoi was the President of the Law Society of Hong Kong between 2000 and 2002 and was admitted to its Roll of Honour in 2016. He is the Chairman of its Probate Committee and had been a member of the Standing Committee of Compliance and the Standing Committee on Policy & Resources. He has contributed to the legal profession in a variety of capacities throughout his career. Among his many accomplishments as President of the Law Society, he was instrumental in engaging the government to consider amending the Marriage Ordinance to allow solicitors to act as civil celebrants in marriage ceremonies.

The simple observation that “being more fortunate than others, he should do his best to help others” inspires his public service. Mr Tsoi has served the community in various capacities. He was a member of the Jiangsu Provincial Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, a member of the General Committee of the Federation of Hong Kong Industries. He is a member of the Hospital Governing Committee of the United Christian Hospital and a Director and the Honorary Secretary of the Chinese Young Men’s Christian Association of Hong Kong. He is a council member at two secondary schools and one primary school and acts

as the Honorary Legal Advisor to several Hong Kong non-government organisations. He is currently a member of the Court of City University of Hong Kong (CityU) and was a CityU Council member from 2013 to 2018. In fact, his firm has provided internships to students from CityU's School of Law for many years.

In 2006, he was awarded the Bronze Bauhinia Star by the HKSAR Government for his meritorious public and community service, in particular for promoting the legal profession.

To those who aspire for a career in law, Mr Tsoi points out that its practice is a high-risk profession requiring immense patience and precision. Especially in his specialty, probate law, a misspelled name or a misplaced decimal could lead to the demise of one's career. The law profession requires a high degree of commitment and meticulousness, and young people must possess genuine interest and a willingness to work hard before they enter the field. Ideally, they should own a curious mind.

What really keeps Mr Tsoi going, however, is his insatiable thirst for knowledge. Since law penetrates all walks of life, it provides the very platform that allows him to help as much as learn about how people think and act. In dispensing legal advice in his professional and volunteering capacities, Mr Tsoi gains an in-depth understanding of different lines of work in society. He speaks with amazement of the many cases that have come across his desk, the sublime and the squalid, the inspired and the absurd, all of which come together to make up the interesting world that we live in. He learns from all of them, and never ceases to better himself in other ways as well. By his own example, he is a true advocate of life-long learning.

Mr Tsoi is passionate about his calling, anticipating with excitement the beginning of each working day. He is, however, not the workaholic that one might assume. He makes a point of balancing his demanding law practice with hobbies and public service. In addition to lawn bowls, which he has played regularly for more than 30 years and for which has earned a National Coach (Level 2) qualification, he swims or exercises every

morning. Mr Tsoi regards such hobbies not only as respite from work but also as a way of cultivating and refocusing the mind, giving him the cool-headedness required in his practice.

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council and President, Mr Herbert Tsoi shows by his own actions that he is a life-long learner, a commitment that the University seeks to cultivate among our students. Seeing law as both a calling and a profession, he succeeds in running a thriving private practice and helping others through his pro bono services. His involvement in government and non-government matters has made Hong Kong a better place for all. Therefore, I request the University award Mr Herbert Tsoi the title of Honorary Fellow.