

# **Honorary Fellow Mr David Chow Tak-fung**

*Citation written and delivered by Professor Alice Chong Ming-lin*

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council and President:

Mr David Chow Tak-fung, President of the Hong Kong Optical Manufacturers Association and a member of the Board of Directors of the Grace Charity Foundation Limited, has dedicated himself to the optical industry for more than 50 years. He is active in promoting the development of Hong Kong industries and enthusiastic in his support of philanthropy. Over the years, his charitable acts have touched the lives of many people in Hong Kong as well as other places on the mainland.

In the late 1940s, Mr Chow followed his father to Hong Kong from his hometown in Chaozhou. As the eldest son of his family, he felt it was his duty to take care of his five younger brothers and sisters. Before he finished junior high school, he began an apprenticeship in polishing lenses for glasses. At about the time of Hong Kong's economic downturn in 1968, Mr Chow felt that as an apprentice he was too dependent on others for his livelihood. That's when he made the bold decision to launch his own business. He began with a workshop specialising in the making and polishing of prescription lenses. His strong sense of integrity enabled his business to expand. In the 1980s when China opened up its economy, Mr Chow seized the opportunity to go to Guangzhou, Chongqing, Beijing, Shenyang and other places to lend technical support to local optical industries. For his contributions to the development of eyeglass and contact lens production, he was awarded a certificate by the Ministry of Light Industry and the China Optometric & Optical Association. Working tirelessly, Mr Chow continued to introduce the most advanced optical technology to China. In 1992, his company obtained the ISO 9002 Quality Management System Certificate, the first optical lenses corporation in China to receive such recognition.

Mr Chow has a strong desire to educate himself, and applies himself to the development of new products. From 2003 to 2006, he succeeded in obtaining two patents. One of them was for his research into, and development of, polyvinyl acetate for sunglasses, thus filling a gap in the market. In 2008, the Professional Validation Council of Hong Kong Industries awarded Mr Chow an Honorary Fellowship in commendation of his extraordinary contributions to the optical industry.

Mr Chow is also keen to improve himself. He has an optimistic disposition and is content with his lot in life. He is adaptable to the changing times and knows how to confront difficulties in life in a positive and responsible way. He lives by three simple tenets: never dwell on petty gains or losses, never compare oneself with others, and always get a good night's sleep. There is no avoiding the ups and downs in life, he says. When one fails to get what one desires, there is no point in getting upset – perhaps it was never meant to be. When one succeeds in getting what one wants, one should be grateful, and should then appreciate that it is one's job to repay society for the privilege.

Since the 1990s, Mr Chow has many times made his way in and out of the mountain regions of China where he has witnessed a shortage of education opportunities for children. When children are deprived of education, Mr Chow observes, it is difficult for them to improve their lives. That's why he has donated generously to the building of schools in Gansu, Sichuan, Guizhou and other provinces, numbering more than 20 in total. He also set up funds for children living in poverty, enabling them to continue with their education.

In recent years, Mr Chow has noted the lack of compassion and communication between people in modern society. This is particularly the case with the elderly. To awaken the spirit of thanksgiving in society, Mr Chow has sponsored the Life Mentor Scheme at CityU. He also took upon himself to be a life mentor, a role that allows him to share his valuable life experiences with young people. He encourages them to associate with the elderly as a way of promoting cross-generational understanding and harmony.

Mr Chow gives unstinting support to higher education in Hong Kong. His ties with CityU are particularly strong. In addition to serving as a member of the Board of Governors of the CityU Foundation and the Honorary Patron of the Foundation, he has established the Mr and Mrs David T F Chow Bursary and Chow Tak Fung Chair Professorship. In acknowledgement of his generous support, the University named a campus facility as the Mr and Mrs David T F Chow Lecture Theatre.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, Mr Chairman of the Council and Mr President, Mr David Chow Tak-fung is a distinguished entrepreneur in Hong Kong. His contributions to Hong Kong and the mainland are all too clear to see. His deep concern for students and his passion for good deeds make him a role model for Hong Kong entrepreneurs and the youth. I present to you Mr David Chow Tak-fung for the conferment of an Honorary Fellowship of City University of Hong Kong.