

Honorary Fellow Professor Albert Ip Yuk-keung

Public Orator Professor Kim Jeong-bon

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council and President:

Asked whether a cool head or a warm heart is more important for the workplace, Professor Albert Ip Yuk-keung holds no doubts. With over 30 years' experience as a banking and real estate executive in New York City, San Francisco and Hong Kong, he is adamant that a warm heart will lead to more success. Building and sustaining personal relationships are essential if you wish to grow a business and nurture a career, much more so than being able to read data, crunch numbers and analyse.

Professor Ip has transitioned into local higher education arena fifteen years ago, bringing with him an accumulation of experience and wisdom from his careers at Citigroup, First National Bank of Chicago and Bank of America Merrill Lynch in diverse fields, from corporate banking, real estate finance and risk management to transaction banking and wealth management.

Consequently, City University of Hong Kong (CityU) has benefited enormously from the roles he has played in boosting students' career plans in the College of Business as Chairman of the Career Development Advisory Committee; and also his efforts in making the CAREer Launch Scheme, or CARLS for short, a success. Through his personal connections, he has connected hundreds of our students with top HR personnel across Hong Kong, kick-starting many careers during a challenging job market in 2020.

Perhaps we have Professor Ip's late father to thank for his son's incredible tenacity. Mr Ip the senior unknowingly enrolled his son in a higher class at his school in Macau where he grew up. Placed one year above his former classmates, Professor Ip found himself struggling to keep up. For a couple of years, he was near the bottom of his class in almost all subjects. So what did he do? Not accepting failure, he studied, and studied and studied. By his own admission, he used all his free time to improve his grades.

Although he doesn't recommend that students spend all their time poring over textbooks and neglecting outside activities, his perseverance paid dividends. Professor Ip secured a full scholarship from Washington University in St. Louis, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Mathematics and Computer Science (*summa cum laude*). He went on to obtain a Master of Science degree in Applied Mathematics from Cornell University and another in Accounting and Finance from Carnegie-Mellon University, receiving fellowships from both universities. Professor Ip is an Alumni Hall of Fame in Systems Engineering at Washington University in St. Louis. One thing he regrets is not finishing his PhD studies at Cornell.

Thereafter, his career took off. He joined Citibank in New York City in 1978 and worked his way up to become its Managing Director in Hong Kong in 2001. Between 2008 and 2012, he was Managing Director of Investments at Merrill Lynch (Asia Pacific). From 2014 to 2019, he was Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer at Langham Hospitality Investments. Professor Ip is currently an Independent Non-executive Director of five listed companies in Hong Kong. He has devoted a majority of his time to higher education, and is an Adjunct Professor of CityU, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and The University of Hong Kong.

When asked to identify his career highlights, he stresses the importance of flexibility. As a young man, he stepped out of his comfort zone and dived into the finance and real estate industries in New York City and San Francisco. Professor Ip built up experience in diverse fields, seeking new challenges and always keeping in mind the need for a warm heart.

When an opportunity to return to Hong Kong emerged in 1987, he didn't hesitate, confident that he could gain not only more international experience, but also could get involved in social and educational activities. Professor Ip is thankful to his wife, who gave up her successful career in the US to make his relocation to Hong Kong possible.

At CityU, CARLS has been a success to a large extent because of the connections and experience that experts like Professor Ip brings. He is

particularly excited about the wealth of career opportunities for CityU students in the Greater Bay Area. He is also sure, as Chairman of the Career Development Advisory Committee in College of Business, that more companies are becoming impressed by CityU graduates. Very few universities go to such lengths as to connect graduates to companies via direct contacts to the Human Resources Directors for job opportunities.

One of Professor Ip's most significant achievements at CityU is in student advising. Through his connections, he has invited numerous senior executives to join the Career Development Advisory Committee which he initiated at the College of Business. These advisory members offer their counsel and provide company contacts for career opportunities. Impressed by Professor Ip's dedication to supporting higher education, they donate their precious time to support students to enhance their job prospects.

More recently, Professor Ip has devoted some of his energies to the World Green Organisation as Chairman since 1 January 2021. He is leading the Green NGO to provide companies with professional education and advisory on Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance. Through this engagement platform, companies, students and green tech start-ups are well connected to work towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Professor Ip is also on the Sustainability Committee of New World Development and Power Assets.

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council and President, Professor Albert Ip Yuk-keung has contributed enormously to enhancing the job prospects of CityU students through his tireless efforts to connect graduating students with HR professionals and senior executives. In recognition of his outstanding contributions, may I present Professor Albert Ip Yuk-keung for the conferment of an Honorary Fellowship of City University of Hong Kong.