Face-to-face with the Chief Executive - Aspirations of youth for an international city

No more fresh air? Is medical care adapting to society’s changing needs? Is another financial crisis looming? Is Hong Kong an intellectual hub?

Over 700 students, including those joining online from cities around the globe such as Shanghai, Beijing, London, Vancouver, and New York, shared their aspirations for maintaining Hong Kong’s status as an international city with The Honourable Donald Tsang, Chief Executive of Hong Kong SAR.

The “Scaling New Heights - Addressing the Chief Executive’s Policy” seminar was organised by The General Education Unit and the “GO HK GO” campaign. It provided a valuable opportunity for HKU students to discuss the future directions of Hong Kong with the Chief Executive and express their aspirations for the Policy Address.

LegCo By-election candidates field questions from Hong Kong’s future leaders

The first Legislative Council By-election Forum, jointly organised by the Students’ Union and the Politics and Public Administration Association, was held in early November at Loke Yew Hall. The forum comprising eight candidates attracted over a thousand students who were eager to voice their opinions and questions.
In recent years, the Hong Kong Government has repeatedly made known its plan to develop Hong Kong into an education hub. This is considered a very important policy for better positioning Hong Kong in the worldwide competition for the top talent.

In line with this policy, HKU has been constantly increasing its intake of full-degree students from outside Hong Kong, and mainly from China in the last few years. The number of non-local undergraduates has increased from 180 in 2003-4 to 678 in 2006-7. Competition for such places has been extremely competitive particularly in the mainland. In 2007, HKU has received more than 11,000 applications for 246 places. All the students admitted by HKU have extremely impressive records.

To our delight, not only that these outstanding students choose HKU as the university of their choice, our graduation survey in fact shows that close to 40% of the non-local graduates in 2006 have chosen to stay and work in Hong Kong (39% mainland and 38% overseas). They are mainly working in finance, business and engineering. In addition, 9% have continued their study in Hong Kong and 4.3% elsewhere.

As an academic institution, one of HKU’s missions is to develop the best talent for Hong Kong and China. The outstanding non-local students who choose to work in Hong Kong have become contributing members of the Hong Kong workforce. Even if they return to their homeland in future, we believe their education and work experience in Hong Kong will enable them to make significant contributions to their homeland and help build closer economic and social ties between their homeland and Hong Kong.

Furthermore, the presence of non-local students has vastly enriched the campus experience at HKU. There has been tremendous positive interaction between local and non-local students in the classroom, group projects, halls and student societies. They also learn from each other’s study and living styles.

Our statistics suggest that the Hong Kong Government’s policy to develop Hong Kong into an education hub is a right one. It should allow tertiary institutions to admit more non-local students both at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels. To make this happen, it should also provide extra resources to remove constraints such as the severe lack of hostel places.

Dr Albert Chau
Dean of Student Affairs
Barefoot on the path to supporting children

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step
Close to 100 alumni and students hiked barefoot in a thirty-minute walk from Haking Wong Podium to The Peak in support of the underprivileged children, allowing them to continue their education in rural areas of Mainland China.

The hike was organised by the China Education Association, HKUSU, which would like to extend its programme to gain wider community support. The “Shoes-off Walkathon” has received donations of HK$50,000. Any support will be most welcome. Details: http://www.hku.hk/hkusucec/
“All of us should protect this fragile and unique environment before it is too late.”

Earlier this year, five university students from Hong Kong, including three from HKU, embarked on a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Antarctica.

While enjoying the spectacular beauty of nature, they also experienced first-hand the importance of preserving Antarctica and protecting the environment for future generations.

Tang Chin-cheung, also Chairman of Greenwoods, HKUSU, reports on this exceptional trip. “Since 1979, over 20 per cent of the polar ice cap, including the icebergs on which the wildlife of the Antarctic depends, has melted because of global warming… Antarctica is a zone for peace, science and natural reserve. It does not belong to any nation and is shared by all peoples of the world. We all must protect this fragile and unique environment before it is lost forever.”
A HKU Rising Star

Breakthrough research into the anomaly in tumour recurrence rates in liver graft transplants by HKU student, Kendrick Shih Hoi-dik and his mentor Dr Kwan Man, won a Rising Star award at the recent International Liver Transplantation Society’s International Congress and symposium held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The Rising Star is conferred annually to the six brightest and best combinations of youth and wisdom working in the clinical and basic science of liver transplantation research. This winning pair from HKU was the only team from Asia.

A lack of suitable liver donors in Hong Kong means most liver transplants involve grafts from living donors, usually relatives. However, there is a higher rate of tumour recurrence in liver transplant patients who receive grafts from living donors than those receiving cadaveric organs.

“We found in a laboratory setting that if you put cancer cells in IP10, it will grow arms and move faster. It moves at about 10 times the normal rate. This makes the cancer cells spread faster,” Shih said.

Dr Kwan explained that Shih’s finding had important implications for the future of living donor liver transplants as strategies could be developed to suppress the growth of IP10 and so minimise tumour recurrence.

“Remarkable” is how Shih’s supervisor Lo Chung-mau, Professor in Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Surgery, described his achievement. “Most students just want to graduate and become doctors as soon as possible. But Kendrick was willing to make this sacrifice and take a year out.”

This award brings international attention not only to the advances in liver transplantation research being made at HKU, but also to a young man who has his sights firmly set on working in Hong Kong after graduation.

Using rat models, Shih was able to discover the gene IP10 and how it affects cancer cells.
Celebrating 40 Years of Social Innovation

Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series 2007

To celebrate its 40th anniversary, the Faculty of Social Sciences invited eminent Social Scientists to address students and friends in a series of four lectures on the themes of social innovation and global citizenship.

“The New Challenges Facing Social Scientists”

Dr Rosanna Wong 王慧鳴 (BSocSc 1975; Hon DSoSc 2003), Executive Director of the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, explored the challenges at the forefront of public opinion and policy making in the 21st century. She encouraged aspiring “Socientists” to seize every learning opportunity and to equip themselves with knowledge, creativity, networking and problem-solving skills.

“Innovations within the Hong Kong Police Force in Response to Social Change”

Mr Tang King-shing 鄧竟成 (MIPA 2002), Commissioner of Police, examined the transformation of the Hong Kong Police Force over the past 40 years, from an authoritarian quasi-military force to a modernised customer-orientated police service team. “The police are the people; the people are the police,” he emphasised.

“On Becoming a Global Citizen”

Mr. Alex Fong 方志偉 (BSocSc 1978), Chief Executive Officer of Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, shared perspectives from the different vantage points in his career on how he had seen the world change China over the past three decades. He also shared his thoughts on how China is going to change the world in the coming decades.

“Dialogue with Mr Joseph Yam”

The concluding session of the Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series was delivered by Mr Joseph Yam 任志剛 (BSocSc 1970), Chief Executive of Hong Kong Monetary Authority. The Lecture was mainly an open dialogue between the speaker and the audience, with Professor Richard Wong, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, HKU as the moderator.

Details: www.hku.hk/socsc
ON CAMPUS

New Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning

Professor Amy Tsui 徐碧美 (BA 1971; DipEd 1972; MA 1979), Chair Professor of the Faculty of Education, has been appointed the new Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning at The University of Hong Kong, and will be in charge of teaching and learning issues, as well as quality assurance of the education experience related to the curriculum reform.

This Pro-Vice-Chancellorship is a newly created post to address the strategic priorities and developments ahead, especially those associated with the 4-year degree structure and curriculum reform of the University.

Professor Tsui studied English literature and linguistics in HKU, and obtained her PhD in Linguistics from the University of Birmingham. She taught at the National University of Singapore and the Chinese University of Hong Kong before joining HKU in 1990. She has held a number of positions within the University, including the Chairman of the Steering Committee on 4-year Undergraduate Curriculum. Professor Tsui has distinguished academic achievements, experience and knowledge in curriculum reform, as well as deep understanding of the local education system.

“The four-year undergraduate curriculum reform is a once-in-a-life time opportunity for us to critically reflect on the total learning experience that is afforded to our students, and to deliberate on how we can not only help students to develop intellectual capabilities and professional skills, but also nurture the core values of a responsible global citizen,” Professor Tsui said.

The First Chinese Winner of the Guy Medal

HKU Honorary Professor Howell Tong 湯家豪 is the first Chinese to win the distinguished Guy Medal in Silver of the Royal Statistical Society, UK. The award recognises his contributions in non-linear time series modelling. Professor Tong was formerly a Pro-Vice-Chancellor (2002-2004), Chair Professor of Statistics (1999-2004) and the Founding Dean of Graduate School (1998-2002). He won a Chinese National Natural Science Prize (Class II) in 2000.

HKU 1

To many people in Hong Kong, “HKU” is synonymous with excellence. A loyal graduate holds this notion dear to her heart and, to ensure that the University retains the unique, prestigious license plate “HKU 1”, she supported the University’s bid for the “HKU 1” vehicle registration mark at a government public auction with a generous donation. The funds raised at the auction are used to support the government’s poverty fund. By supporting her alma mater, this loyal graduate also contributes to eradicating poverty in society.

Croucher Senior Research Fellowships 2007

Three HKU professors received the prestigious Croucher Senior Research Fellowship awards: (from 2nd left) Professor Wang Zidan 汪子丹 of the Department of Physics, Professor Leung Suet-yi 梁雪兒 (MBBS 1986; MD 1998) of the Department of Pathology and Professor Chye Mee-len 蔡美蓮 of the Department of Botany. Kernie Hui 許珮茵 (1st left), a PhD candidate in microbiology, was awarded the Croucher-Butterfield Studentship for her research into the strain of H5N1 avian influenza.
The university should act as an advocate, an opinion leader in guiding our society forward, towards the ultimate goal of building a harmonious society …

I venture to suggest that the only way for virtues to be transmitted is to have them caught rather than taught. They may be found in the life examples of university professors, teachers and mentors – as they demonstrate vigorously in the safeguarding of integrity while pursuing academic excellence, as they uphold truth and justice at all costs, as their exemplary lifestyles speak of lives dedicated to helping and influencing the young.

- Extracted from the address delivered by Dr Thomas Chan on behalf of the honorary degree recipients

**Professor Lu Yongxiang 路甬祥**
(Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*)
is a world-renowned specialist in fluid power transmission and control, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress, PRC, and President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Professor Lu is “a senior statesman of Chinese science and a true pioneer in the best traditions of Confucius-cum-Lucretius”.

**Professor Daniel Tsui 崔琦**
(Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*)
is the Arthur LeGrand Doty Professor of Electrical Engineering at Princeton University and the 1998 Nobel Laureate in Physics. Professor Tsui has strong ties with HKU, both as a Distinguished Visiting Professor and as the Honorary Director of the Centre of Theoretical and Computational Physics at HKU.

**Dr Thomas Chan 陳思堂** (MBBS 1977)
(Doctor of Social Sciences, *honoris causa*)
is a neurosurgeon in private practice, Chief Executive Officer of World Vision China and Area Director, East Asia, of World Vision International. “He has selflessly dedicated the better part of his career to shining the light of humanity on thousands of disadvantaged children.”

**Dr the Hon Rafael Hui 許仕仁** (BA 1970)
(Doctor of Social Sciences, *honoris causa*)
is the former Chief Secretary for Administration of the HKSAR Government. Since his graduation from HKU, Mr Hui has had a long and illustrious career in the civil service, holding many senior positions, including Secretary for Financial Services and Managing Director of the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority.

Full citations: