

## Honorary Fellow A Citation

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### **Dr Akihiro Nagahara, LLB, LLM, LLD**

Born and bred in Taiwan, Dr Akihiro Nagahara pursued his dreams in Japan and founded his business in Hong Kong. He is a remarkable entrepreneur who proclaims the spirit of New Asia College.

A well-known entrepreneur and financial expert, Dr Akihiro Nagahara is also a social philanthropist eager to help the needy, give back to his motherland and contribute to the cause of education. He and his wife are golf enthusiasts who can often be seen swinging their golf clubs on the fairway.

Dr Nagahara was born Chang Ping-huang in Changhua, Taiwan, in 1940. He graduated with a bachelor degree with distinction in law from Taiwan University at a time when most graduates chose to further their studies in the US. Yet the ambitious Ping-huang opted for Japan. In 1968, he earned a full scholarship from Japan's Ministry of Education and enrolled in Hitotsubashi University, where he obtained both a master's degree and a doctoral degree. After graduation, he joined the JCG Finance Company (JCG), a consumer finance company established by Chinese expatriates in Tokyo, embarking on an illustrious career in business. In 1977, he was assigned by JCG to spearhead the establishment of its Hong Kong branch, and assumed the role of General Manager. For the purpose of working and travelling at ease in and out of Japan, Ping-huang decided to naturalise as a Japanese citizen and adopt Akihiro Nagahara as his Japanese name, a name similar to Changhua in Chinese in tribute to his homeland. JCG's business expanded rapidly in Hong Kong under the leadership of Dr Nagahara. In 1990, JCG was acquired by Public Bank Berhad of Malaysia and renamed Public Finance Limited. In 1992, two years after leaving JCG, Dr Nagahara made a comeback to the financial sector and founded his own business, United Asia Finance Limited (UAF) in 1993. It was an incredible success, outperforming his previous companies, and in recent years, Dr Nagahara has expanded the business to cities in mainland China. In addition to its 49 Hong Kong branches, UAF currently runs more than 150 branches in over 10 cities across the country, including Beijing, Shenzhen, Tianjin and Chengdu. Offering loan services with a pragmatic approach, UAF has helped individuals and small and medium-sized enterprises cope with cash-stricken situations. Dr Nagahara is also the Chairman of The Hong Kong SAR Licensed Money Lenders Association Limited, winning recognition from both the government and the industry. In 2013, he was named one of the 'Capital Leaders of Excellence' by *Capital* magazine.

While conducting business across Japan, Taiwan and mainland China, Dr Nagahara has also been an earnest supporter of the promotion of cultural and educational interactions between Hong Kong and these three regions. In 1982, he set up a cultural fund at New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), to facilitate the College's development and cultural exchanges. Since becoming a member of the College Board of Trustees in 1997, he has provided full support to the activities of the College. In addition to being a member of the Board of Trustees, he is currently a member of the Investment Sub-Committee of the College, and a member of the Sub-Committee on Student Exchange Programmes with Universities in Japan. Dr Nagahara loves golf and is a good amateur player. He goes golfing in Shenzhen with his wife on a weekly basis, a years-long habit that has helped hone his skills. Dr Nagahara is an active participant of the CUHK Golf Day and, each year, he represents New Asia College at a golf game to help raise funds for both the College and the University. He takes pleasure in the event as he can play golf for a good cause.

Dr Nagahara is keen in serving the community and very supportive of charities. He was a director of Po Leung Kuk from 2004 to 2009, and is currently the honorable chairman of the Hong Kong & Macau Taiwanese Association Ltd. He is also a director of Hong Kong and Macau Taiwanese Charity Fund Limited, which hosts the Taiwan Culture Festival in autumn every year to introduce Taiwanese arts and culture to Hong Kong. Dr Nagahara is a key sponsor of this event.

In recognition of his contributions to public services and the cultural exchange between Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan and mainland China, and his long-standing care and support for CUHK and New Asia College, Mr Vice-Chancellor, it is my great pleasure to present to you Dr Akihiro Nagahara, also known as Dr Chang Ping-huang, for the award of an Honorary Fellowship of the University.