

Honorary Fellow A Citation

Dr CHU Ka-lok Peter, BBS

'Excellence with a soul, Leadership with a heart.' Shaw College's slogan enjoins those pursuing leadership roles to cultivate caring, kindness, sincerity, righteousness, and a dedication to contributing to society. The College has itself championed this philosophy with its environmental advocacy, demonstrating a commitment to saving energy and supporting environmental protection through sustainable development. When it comes to embodying Shaw College's vision and mission, few understand it better than Dr Chu Ka-lok, Peter who has been a member of the College's Board of Trustees since 2004.

Born in Jiangmen, Xinhui District, Guangdong Province, Dr Chu emigrated to Hong Kong and industriously devoted himself to his studies. In 1952, he completed his secondary education at Queen's College, then moved on to obtain a Diploma in Mechanical Engineering in 1955 from Hong Kong Technical College, the predecessor of Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Having grown up with a keen interest in household electrical appliances, Dr Chu quickly developed a deep understanding of their working principles and functions. In 1974, combining his expertise in mechanical engineering and his years of experience in sales and marketing in electrical appliances, he founded Alpha Appliances Limited. In 1976, the company began its collaboration with General, a Japanese air-conditioner manufacturer, becoming its sole agent in Hong Kong and Macau. After analysing the needs of Hong Kong's air-conditioner market, Dr Chu proposed to General that they manufacture machines of a smaller horsepower and size to cater to those with limited living spaces, thus delivering higher quality and more customised products and services to their customers. General's air-conditioners were among the first to be awarded the energy efficiency label, as well as Hong Kong's first energy efficiency label for split-type air-conditioners.

Through tremendous market insight and years of hard work developing the appliances market, Alpha Appliances secured General as the top air-conditioner brand in the local market, with products well received by property developers, government departments, hospitals, educational institutes, private enterprises, and general consumers alike. By keeping abreast of the newest trends and technological developments, Dr Chu successfully expanded his household appliances business. He was the first to introduce plasma display to Hong Kong and also acted as the agent or dealer for numerous brands of premium home appliances, including Fuji Electric (air-conditioners), Gala (washing machines, clothes dryers, refrigerators, dehumidifiers) and Cinetron (washing machines, clothes dryers, refrigerators, dehumidifiers and fan heaters). This firmly positioned the company as a leading supplier in the local electrical appliances market. Between August 1997 and December 2004, Alpha Appliances was listed on Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited; it was privatised in 2005. The company – which currently employs more than 200 people – has long been one of the top three leaders in market share.

As a staunch advocate of environmental protection and corporate social responsibility, Dr Chu has made enormous contributions to Hong Kong's environmental causes. Alpha Appliances took the initiative to elevate the energy efficiency of their products. The company established eco-friendly practices by using air-conditioner refrigerants that do not produce chemicals harmful to the ozone layer, and by introducing inverter type air-conditioners. These air-conditioners have a built-in inverter compressor that can maintain and lock its operational speed, significantly conserving energy by slowing the compressor down when the indoor temperature drops. Dr Chu has also made multiple suggestions to

the government about promoting the wider adoption of eco-friendly refrigerants, as well as other strategies to educate the public on environmental awareness.

Dr Chu runs his business based on a philosophy of sincerity and pragmatism. He opposes hyperbole in marketing, stressing that, 'When it comes to doing business, we must use a down-to-earth, no-nonsense approach. We must sell genuine products at fair prices, and not exaggerate their functions.' Alpha Appliances is dedicated to upholding these pragmatic and sincere principles, providing its customers with superior, comprehensive after-sales service. Leading with heart and sincerity, Dr Chu not only pays attention to his customers' rights, but also to the well-being of his staff, earning respect and admiration from all quarters. In 2005, he was invited to be an Honorary Senior Fellow of the Professional Validation Centre of the Hong Kong Business Sector. In 2006, he was awarded both the Bronze Bauhinia Star by the HKSAR Government and the World Outstanding Chinese Award. After achieving success in his career, Dr Chu spared no effort in contributing with a kind and caring heart to various public and charitable services in his community. Beginning in 2005 and ending in 2012, he served as Co-chairman of the Community Chest Organising Committee and as a member of the Campaign Committee for the Community Chest of Hong Kong. Since 2014, he has also been a member of the Chest's Board of Directors, and has made several personal donations in support of the Chest's activities. Dr Chu has also been a keen sponsor of education, supporting a variety of education expenses for several institutions through donations to the Hong Kong and Kowloon Electrical Appliances Merchants Association Limited. His donations have also helped fund the establishment of the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Hong Kong and Kowloon Electrical Appliances Merchants Association Limited School. Truly, Dr Chu's

contributions have not only benefited generations of students, but also the overall cause of education in society. In February this year, Dr Chu made a generous donation to the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals in support of the Group's provision of high-quality and professional nursing service to needy seniors and the development of related facilities. The new care home was named the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Chu Sau Cheung Nursing Home, in honour of Dr Chu's generosity and commendable deeds.

Dr Chu has been greatly involved in The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Since 2004, he has served on Shaw College's Board of Trustees. During this period, he has made numerous donations to support the College's teaching and research, and he has set up scholarships to assist students with much-needed financial support, allowing them to focus on their studies. Our teachers and students are grateful to Dr Chu for his generous support of CUHK and his care for the University will always be remembered.

Dr Chu is a pragmatic and sincere entrepreneur who sets an excellent example in the sales and marketing of home appliances, and in extending his personal success to benefit his customers, staff, and the entire industry. His contributions to environmental education and other charitable causes are highly commended. Accomplished, diligent and virtuous, Dr Chu certainly meets Shaw College's benchmark of 'Excellence with a soul, Leadership with a heart'. Mr Chairman, it is my great pleasure to present to you Dr Chu Ka-lok, Peter for the award of an Honorary Fellowship of the University.