

Honorary Fellow A Citation

Ms Cheung Tih-loh Karen

In the chapter *Encouragement to Learning* of the book *Xunzi*, there is a saying: 'When goodness accumulates into virtue, the spirit will find satisfaction in itself, and the sagely heart will not be in any way wanting.' This maxim means with good deeds and virtuous conduct, one will attain spiritual clarity and sage wisdom, which are highly commendable attributes of mankind. If at the same time, such kindness and benevolence could pass on from generations to generations, like a river that flows far and wide and with spiritual clarity shining on earth, the wisdom of the sage will greatly benefit society. Such universal compassion is just like a big leafy tree providing shade and comfort to all, which is praiseworthy. When one keeps acting virtuously, then one will attain wisdom and good fortune at the same time. That is why the chapter *Words of the Text (Wenyan)* in the book *I Ching* writes: 'The family that accumulates acts of charity will have many things to celebrate and even his descendants will reap the legacy'. This is indeed the highest respect and the most sincere blessing to such a family.

Ms Cheung Tih-loh Karen is currently the Trustee and Chief Strategist of The D. H. Chen Foundation. Ms Cheung came from a distinguished and respectable philanthropic family. Her late maternal grandfather, Dr Chen Din-hwa, is a philanthropist and a well-known real estate businessman who founded the Nan Fung Group, while her mother, Dr Vivien

Chen, is currently the Honorary Chairman of the Group. For years, both her grandfather and mother have given out numerous donations in support of the University and the higher education development in Hong Kong. Since childhood, Ms Cheung has been inspired by her grandfather and mother, an upbringing that naturally shapes her magnanimous character and upright morals. An exceptionally intelligent and obliging girl with a kind heart, Ms Cheung achieved excellent grades when studying at St. Paul's Co-educational College in Hong Kong. Upon graduation, she went to pursue undergraduate studies at the Department of Neuroscience of Claremont McKenna College in California, where she graduated with flying colours. After that, Ms Cheung returned to Hong Kong for work. She insisted on starting from the bottom to allow herself engaged with different strata of society and be able to experience the sweat and tears of the rank and file of the community. As time went by, she accumulated ample work experience and metamorphosed into a broad-minded and caring woman executive. Thus equipped, she joined Nan Fung Resources Limited (now known as Vervain Resources Ltd.) and as she could establish a harmonious relationship with co-workers, she was the person-in-charge of human resources and administration. She gave a lot of thoughts and planned with great care regarding the staff establishment of the company. In her daily work, she remains to be strict with

herself but lenient with others – whether she communicates with her staff, or conducts herself in society, she is always a humble, low-profiled and easy-to-get-along person.

Ms Cheung joined The D. H. Chen Foundation which was established in 1970 by her grandfather, Dr Chen Din-hwa, a devout Buddhist. For years, the Foundation has been driven by Dr Chen's philosophy 'Care for others as well as you would care for yourself', and has been supporting numerous philanthropic projects in Hong Kong, mainland China and other parts of the world. Following her father's footsteps, Dr Vivien Chen continued the family philanthropic work through taking up the role of the Foundation's Chairman, and devotedly promoting education, healthcare, as well as Buddhist values to meet the need of society. With the Foundation's aspiration to build a compassionate society and promote compassion-based values, Ms Cheung and the Foundation team are committed in exploring new philanthropic ideas and models, creating more synergy and impact through innovative, sustainable, and meaningful programmes. From 2016 to 2019, the Foundation supported the project 'Quality Schools in Hong Kong (QSHK)' in collaboration with local universities, schools and non-government organizations. QSHK is a comprehensive, interactive and organic project that targets to empower local primary, secondary and

special schools in pursuit of sustainable improvement and development. On another front, the Foundation also aided students in the QSHK who managed to maintain a positive attitude even after encountering difficulties in life. Through participating in various life enrichment activities including experiential learning, physical training, as well as art education, students were fostered to do well in their studies and to be cultivated with positive values. The success of the QSHK since implementation is remarkable and the number of students benefited is substantial. With the involvement of CUHK's Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research in the QSHK, the University has acquired a deep understanding of the care and sincerity the Foundation has bestowed on the underprivileged communities in Hong Kong. As for Ms Cheung's innovative ideas for education, the University also concurs with and harbours sincere admiration for her.

While realizing her grandfather's philanthropic aspiration in the Foundation's work, Ms Cheung and the Foundation team always cleverly find ways to break new grounds. The D. H. Chen Foundation Scholarship Program, set up in 2015, has offered a new definition of scholarship to nurture future leaders. On one hand, the Foundation provides comprehensive financial support to 20 outstanding students from four local universities each year, covering their tuition fees, overseas exchange and living

expenses so that the benefited students could have the opportunity to widen their horizon and broaden their minds through the overseas experience without any financial burden; on the other hand, the Scholarship is unique in emphasizing on students' life enriching elements. Through the social service exposure and mentorship, the Foundation endeavours to cultivate their compassion-based values and the hearts for service. Throughout the years, quite a number of CUHK students have benefited from the Foundation's Scholarship Program. For many a time, Ms Cheung even made presence as Trustee of the Foundation to meet with scholarship recipients at the Roundtable Discussion sessions. The benevolence of the Foundation and the contribution of Ms Cheung will long be remembered.

Wellbeing is always a key element in Ms Cheung's work of education and philanthropy. In 2017, Ms Cheung and the Foundation team partnered with the University's Hong Kong Institute of Educational Research to launch The InSpirEd School Project. The Project integrates the concepts of Buddhism and Christianity in enriching teachers' personal spirituality, which could then be transformed into a practical approach to teaching so that spiritual education could be applied at school. Through the project, both teachers and students can learn and develop life-enhancing and life-promoting qualities – a cornerstone of a society built on positive energy.

On the other hand, Ms Cheung has noticed that the medical service provided by the public healthcare system of Hong Kong has long been grossly inadequate, and the healthcare workers have been under immense pressure. Therefore, she strongly supported The D. H. Chen Foundation in funding the construction of the CUHK Medical Centre, a non-profit private teaching hospital of the University for the Hong Kong community. The donation serves to realize the important mission of the family, which is to set up in Hong Kong a pioneer medical facility with a self-sustainable operational model. The Foundation envisages that when the CUHK Medical Centre comes into operation, it will be run on a model unique in Hong Kong, and will become an important healthcare centre for innovating clinical services, an incubator for advancing clinical research, and a training ground for medical students. Running on a transparent budget model, the Hospital will offer affordable medical services for the people of Hong Kong, and is dedicated to bridging the gap between the services provided by public hospitals and those of the private ones. In view of that, Ms Cheung is in great support of the establishment of the Hospital, helping the University realize its dream of setting up a teaching hospital. Ms Cheung has been following the footsteps of her family members and continues in their tradition to reach out to the underprivileged. For the kindness of the Chen family, and all their generous deeds, both

the staff and students of the University will always be appreciative and grateful.

Mr Chairman, it is our pleasure today to honour this noble and philanthropic family for their kindness and assistance to the community, and to recognize as well the young and talented one of the family, Ms Karen Cheung, for having faithfully continued the good will of three generations of the family through supporting education and philanthropic work that are of immense benefit to society. Mr Chairman, it is my great pleasure to present to you Ms Cheung Tih-loh Karen for the Honorary Fellowship.