

Dr Chai Ngai-chiu Sunny

Honorary Fellow

Citation

In the chapter *King Hui of Liang* of the Chinese classic *Mencius*, there is this saying: "Through the scales will the weight of an object be known, and by way of the ruler will its length be determined. Likewise, subjective perception should give way to thorough examination in our daily encounters." The expression means that to quantify the exact weight and measurement of an object, one should seek the help of unbiased measuring tools, instead of merely applying our own judgement. Along the same vein, a decision maker should experience personally before drawing up a detailed, objective analysis of the challenges and opportunities ahead. I believe our honoree who is now on stage, Dr Chai Ngai-chiu Sunny, also publicly acclaimed as "King of Scales", already has a meticulous grasp of the meaning of that quote by *Mencius*.

In 1988, the young Sunny Chai graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology in the US with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. A life-time learner, he obtained an MBA from our University in 2007 and went on

to complete the Engineering Doctorate (Engineering Management) programme at the City University of Hong Kong in 2010. Dr Chai is the Managing Director of Fook Tin Group Holdings Limited. The company specialises in the design and manufacture of commercial as well as household scales, professional medical sensing devices, timers, and other small healthcare devices. Over the years, the products of Fook Tin have gained worldwide acclaim, and the company's scales products are globally placed at the forefront of this line of business. Dr Chai knows well that to produce products of sophistication and in compliance with world standards, he must explore all avenues to leverage advanced technology in the design and manufacturing processes. To that end, he had, through a number of overseas acquisition efforts in the 1990s, acquired top-notch expertise and technologies, and applied them in the manufacture of weighing equipment to enhance the quality of the company's products. Such a strategic move resulted in opening up more production lines of state-of-the-art professional scales that can be used in the medical, industrial and

automotive fields, and thus earning him the popular nickname “King of Scales” in the region. This high-tech approach in development has brought the company not only fame but also recognition from peer companies worldwide. To recognise his exceptional entrepreneurial and innovative spirit, he was awarded the “Hong Kong Young Industrialist Award” in 2004.

A successful industrialist and an influential and well-respected business figure in Hong Kong, Dr Chai has been entrusted with a number of government appointments in community service. He started his service at the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTP) in 2014 and was appointed Chairman in 2018. In 2021, He was elected Chairman of the Federation of

Hong Kong Industries. Started off as a young industrialist, the seasoned Dr Chai is now at the helm of the development of innovation and technology industry in Hong Kong. This role is strategic and carries lots of responsibility for the long-term development of the city. An ardent industrialist, Dr. Chai has tirelessly

thrown himself into exploring toward which direction the Hong Kong industries should move forward in the light of this revolutionary era. As Chairman of the HKSTP, he has repositioned the missions of the three industrial estates of Hong Kong and renamed them as “INNOPARKs”. The move, according to Dr. Chai, aims to help tenants in these InnoParks promote their business by coaxing them into undergoing timely transformation that embraces smart, technology-driven processes. Since the eighties, industrialists in Hong Kong have started moving their production lines to the Chinese mainland. Acknowledging this trend, the insightful Dr Chai has re-assessed the development of Hong Kong industries. He can see that the companies now at the INNOPARKs are mostly engaging in innovative industry. The question is how the INNOPARKs could help these companies advance their business by “Innofacturing”. Dr Chai tries to elucidate the issue at stake: “High-tech products do not need labour-intensive support. Hence tech-based companies can choose to remain in Hong Kong, and also because the city has a robust intellectual

property (IP) system. These examples can be found in all the InnoParks, where we have companies researching the use of 3D preoperative planning and 3D printing technologies in support of orthopaedic surgery, and exploring the production of biomedical devices." Dr. Chai is of the further view that as the labour cost on the mainland continues to rise, more Hong Kong industrialists will pursue the road of automating their design and production lines with the help of robots. This trend has helped move the "strategic manufacturing process" back to Hong Kong. Indeed, Dr Chai's judicious remarks have hit the nail right on its head.

In face of this epoch-defining moment, Dr Chai has strenuously pushed the Government to undergo strategic planning regarding the development of Hong Kong industries. In this regard, he considers the nurturing of talents the most important to the city. In light of the current innovation and technology (I&T) development, Dr. Chai estimates that the demand for space for such endeavours will have to increase by four-fold. At the

same time, the need for talents in the field will increase even more than four-fold. To support such a rapid development trend, he also recommends that local universities should help by offering more AI academic programmes to cater for the future. For his sharp business acumen and visionary insight into I&T, our University has appointed him Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Faculty of Engineering. Under his wise counsel, the Faculty started to offer, in 2022, the "Bachelor's degree of Engineering in Artificial Intelligence - Systems and Technologies" programme, which has since attracted a large number of applicants. The Hong Kong government has started cultivating startup companies, through its major initiative called InnoHK. With the support of HKSTP's established vibrant I&T ecosystem, startup companies can further expand markets and nurture talents in the sector. To this end, the University responded by setting up six InnoHK Centres pursuing research areas in healthcare, biomedicine, AI and robotics technology. These centres will help the transfer of University's research outputs into real socio-economic benefits for industries.

The University is forever grateful to Dr Chai and the HKSTP for their support in these knowledge transfer undertakings.

An enthusiastic business leader, Dr Chai is eager to give back to society. Amidst his busy schedules, he still spends an inordinate amount of time participating in services for the country and the Hong Kong community. He is a member of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. He is also a member of both the Chief Executive's Council of Advisors and the Advisory Committee on Attracting Strategic Enterprises. In addition, he is Chairman of the Vetting Committee of Professional Services Advancement Support Scheme, and also Chairman of the Innovation and Technology Advisory Committee under the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. For his contributions to the promotion of innovation and technology development and his strenuous efforts in community work in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong government awarded him the Bronze Bauhinia Star in 2018. Dr Chai was also appointed Justice of the Peace in 2021. Two local universities,

respectively The Hong Kong Polytechnic University in 2018, and the City University of Hong Kong in 2022, in turn honoured him with the title of honorary fellowship in recognition of his notable achievements in business and unwavering efforts in community service.

Mr Chairman, let us today salute Dr Chai for his outstanding achievements in business, and his selfless contributions to Hong Kong's overall development of innovation and technology. He has contributed a lot of personal efforts to help place Hong Kong at the forefront of "Industry 4.0", leading its development of advanced manufacturing processes and high value-added industries basing on innovative technologies. Furthermore, he has made significant contributions to the development of innovation and technology education and research at our University. Mr Chairman, it is my great pleasure to present to you Dr Chai Ngai-chiu Sunny for the award of Honorary Fellowship.