

Honorary Fellow A Citation



Mr Chien Lee

Mr Chien Lee is a member of a distinguished family with a strong tradition of service to the community and support of worthy causes. We do not have far to look today for signs of his family's generosity to this University. This very building, with its state-of-the-art Lee Hysan Concert Hall, along with the Chung Chi Administration Building next door, the Institute of Chinese Studies and the Art Museum all owe their existence to the Lee family's munificence, which goes back to the very beginning of the University. J S Lee, Mr Lee's father, through the Bei Shan Tang Foundation, has endowed the University's Museum with many treasures of Chinese art. As a Governor of the Foundation and a member of the Advisory Board of the Institute of Chinese Studies, Mr Lee himself is now carrying on his father's work. Family traditions and values have been among the greatest shaping influences in Mr Lee's life.

By the same token, internationalism has been a strong theme throughout Mr Lee's life. He attended St Paul's Co-educational College until Primary 6, followed by three years at Le Rosey in Switzerland, and then another three years at Philips Academy, Andover, in New England. He then attended Stanford University where he did a BSc in Mathematical Science, an innovative interdisciplinary degree combining the study of mathematics, statistics and computer science. He then did a MSc in Operations Research. Mr Lee entered the world of work by spending two years at Price Waterhouse in San Francisco, after which he returned to Stanford to earn his MBA. After graduation, he joined the corporate finance department of Morgan Stanley in New York. Having worked in two world class professional firms, Mr Lee was impressed with both the collegiality of their partners and their meritocratic atmosphere of achievement. At the same time, he was impressed by their emphasis on ethics, on "doing the right thing".

Mr Lee returned to Hong Kong in 1983 and took up a place in one of the Lee family's companies, Lee Gardens International, working to expand the hotel business. He found it fascinating to be among the first to be opening up new business links and opportunities in China. In the early 1990s he became the Director of Scottish and Eastern Investments Services Ltd, where he further pursued his business focus on China through investments in various industrial ventures such as the manufacture of eye glasses.

Following family tradition, Mr Lee devotes a good deal of his time and effort nowadays to work for the betterment of the Hong Kong and international communities. One major focus of his community work is the Outward Bound movement, which he first came across when he was at boarding school in America. He is a strong believer in the value of "outdoor experiential education", in which young people can discover, though testing themselves in challenging situations, that, in the words of the founder's motto, "there is [always] more within you". He believes that the education offered by Outward Bound can be an extremely valuable complement to the typically strong academic emphasis of a Hong Kong education. Through



leaving the safety of their “comfort zone”, Hong Kong youth can begin to discover and develop their potential to care for themselves, for others and the world around them. Mr Lee himself has been not only Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Outward Bound Trust of Hong Kong, but also Deputy Chairman of Outward Bound International, the body overseeing the 38 Outward Bound schools throughout the world.

The same focus on community work at both the local and the international levels can be seen in his roles on the Advisory Council of the Asia Society Hong Kong Center and the Hong Kong Leadership Council of the Asia Foundation. Through this work, Mr Lee is able to support programmes that promote both local development in Asian countries and international dialogue between these countries and the rest of the world.

Mr Lee has also been very active in support of his *alma mater* institutions. At Stanford University he has served as a member of the University’s Board of Trustees and is currently a member of the Board of the Stanford Alumni Association as well as a member of the Advisory Council of the Graduate School of Business. Modestly Mr Lee says he took away more than he contributed in these roles as he has learned what he describes as “best practices” in the realm of educational institutions. For example, what he has learned about good governance, fundraising practices and financial management has stood him in good stead in his role as Council Member and fundraising chair for St Paul’s Co-educational College, which is currently undergoing a historic transformation from an Aided to a Direct Subsidy Scheme school.

At Chinese University Mr Lee has for many years served on the Career Development Board. In the current difficult economic times the Board has played an active role in promoting skills and disseminating knowledge that will be helpful to young graduates entering the workforce. Mr Lee stresses the need for language proficiency and interviewing skills, as well as the need to think beyond Hong Kong for employment opportunities. He himself emphasizes the opportunities that are opening up for Hong Kong graduates in mainland China and he tries to help students “bridge the gap” they will face in seizing these opportunities.

Mr Lee and his family have been loyal and magnanimous supporters of this University and of the Hong Kong community in general. Mr Chien Lee devotes a good deal of time and energy to worthy causes, especially those that help our young people to realise their potential. He has been heartened, he says, by the way in which the Hong Kong charities he works for have continued to attract donations even in the current difficult economic climate. In this he sees signs of the abiding strength of Hong Kong. It is my privilege, Mr Vice-Chancellor, to present Mr Chien Lee to you for the award of an Honorary Fellowship.

This citation is written by Professor David Parker