

## Honorary Fellow A Citation



### Mr Tam Chung Ding, MBE, JP

Hong Kong's future as a knowledge-based economy will very much depend on the new CEO of the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation, Mr Tam Chung Ding, better known as C D Tam. As a top executive of the Motorola Corporation in the Asia Pacific, he spearheaded the development of advanced technology in Hong Kong. Through his leadership, advanced semiconductor chips such as "DragonKat", and later "DragonBall™", the heart that powers the popular Palm Pilot PDA (Personal Digital Assistant), were created, designed and produced in Hong Kong, showing that the territory has the potential to become a world-class centre of high-tech design and development. Through the establishment of HKSTPC (Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation) and ASTRI (Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Company Limited) Mr Tam plans to bridge university-based research with industry know-how. Mr Tam's record as a highly successful technology industrialist gives conviction to the belief that Hong Kong's future in this area can be bright.

Mr Tam took pure mathematics and physics in his science degree at Hong Kong University and began to branch out into electronic engineering when he needed to design and build an amplifier for his electric guitar. His background in solid-state physics made the newly burgeoning world of semiconductors intelligible to him, when he pursued his new interests in solid-state electronic design. After graduating in 1966, he taught for two years while working on circuit designs and writing articles on electronics in Chinese for *Wireless World* and has been amazed at the wide readership they achieved.

In 1968 Mr Tam joined Motorola Semiconductors in Hong Kong as a design and applications engineer. After several years he moved to sales and marketing management. Later he was promoted to Operation Manager with engineering and profit and loss responsibilities for the Asia Pacific. In 1980 he became the first Chinese to be General Manager of Motorola Semiconductor Products in the Asia Pacific, and as such was a role model for local employees. Under his leadership, Motorola Semiconductors Asia Pacific Group grew from US\$30 million per annum in 1980 to over US\$2 billion in 1996.

Mr Tam's spectacular success as a leader lay partly in the fact that, through job rotation, he was able to call on his experience in three vital fields, engineering, marketing and finance. But even more important was a then-revolutionary philosophical approach to the management of the Asia Pacific Group. His idea was that the strength of the Group would be maximized through combining the best of East and West. Western assertiveness, systematic planning and technology-driven innovation were married with an East Asian emphasis on working diligently with focus, attention to detail and long-term strategic planning. Mr Tam's approach was vindicated: Motorola Semiconductors Asia Pacific Group became the most profitable of all geographical regions.



Further innovations in Mr Tam's approach included the product management concept, whereby local managers assumed both engineering and financial responsibility for their products, so that good technical ideas had always to be tempered by market-place realism. Mr Tam opened up new geographical territories and also pioneered a "speed and quality" approach, so that the entire organization came to focus both on "Six Sigma quality" and speed of execution. But perhaps most important of all, he was able to change perceptions at corporate headquarters about the Asia Pacific region. A significant attraction of Hong Kong in the 1960s had been low-cost labour. Mr Tam managed to demonstrate that the territory could also excel at creative, knowledge-based activities such as semiconductor design. The development of the Silicon Harbour Center in Hong Kong by Motorola, has played a significant part in the development of the high technology sector in Hong Kong.

In 1996, Mr Tam moved to Austin, Texas as Senior Vice President to take up responsibility for the Micro-Controller Group, and later became General Manager of the Transportation System Group. In 1999, he was promoted to President of Asia Pacific Region and returned to the region with a major focus on Motorola activities in China.

After 33 years' service, Mr Tam retired from Motorola in 2002 to become our immediate neighbour on Tolo Harbour when he was appointed Chief Executive Officer, Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation. This appointment reflected his great success as an industrialist, but also as an advisor to government and the higher education sector. He had been a key advisor to the Industry Department, as Chairman of the Electronics Committee of the Industry and Technology Development Council; and as a member of the Applied Research and Development Scheme Committee. He had been a Board Member of the Industrial Estates Corporation, a Director of the Hong Kong Industrial Technology Centre Corporation, as well as a Council Member of the Hong Kong Productivity Council. More recently he has been Chairman of the Technology Committee of the Hong Kong Applied Science and Technology Research Institute Limited and a member of the Innovation and Technology Fund Nanotechnology Projects Vetting Committee. He has also served on various committees of Hong Kong's universities.

At Chinese University Mr Tam has made many important contributions towards the establishment of the Faculty of Engineering. He was a former member of the Advisory Committee on Electronics. In November 2002 he delivered a speech at the Conference on the "Future of Photonics in Hong Kong" for the Institute of Optical Science and Technology and Photonic Packaging Laboratory at the Chinese University. He has re-joined the Advisory Board of our Faculty of Engineering.

Mr Tam has achieved many firsts over more than 30 years in both industry and in community service. He is dedicated to the creation of a solid platform for Hong Kong's future in advanced technology. It is my privilege to present him to you, Mr Vice-Chancellor, for the award of an Honorary Fellowship.