

Honorary Fellow A Citation



Mr Paul Ming Fun Cheng, BA, MBA, JP

In 2003 the Chinese University of Hong Kong reached the significant landmark of its fortieth year. To honour its rich history and achievements, the University planned a year of celebrations, and the man entrusted with the task of making it all happen was long-time Council Member Mr Paul Cheng, Chairman of both the 40th Anniversary Celebration Organizing Committee and the 40th Anniversary Fundraising Committee. Over several months in 2002, Mr Cheng and his Committee worked with alumni, faculty, and administrative staff of the University to design an attractive and memorable programme. The SARS crisis of the early months of 2003 paralyzed many aspects of Hong Kong life, but it did not prevent the 40th Anniversary Celebrations from achieving a huge success. The fact that the whole University community was able to come together in the ways Mr Cheng and his Committee had planned, meant that it began its fifth decade with an invigorated sense of pride and confidence in its future.

Mr Paul Cheng is one of Hong Kong's key business leaders. In April 2005, he was appointed Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Link Management Limited, in the wake of its initial public offering (IPO) as Hong Kong's first real estate investment trust (REIT). As is well known, this is one of the major developments in Hong Kong's recent past. Link is one of the world's largest real estate investment trusts with assets of over \$HK 30 billion. At the IPO over a half a million Hong Kong investors were ready to invest, many times more than could be accommodated by the float. Sensitive to the complex social, economic, political and legal cross-currents involved in such a major public responsibility, Mr Cheng has taken the reins of corporate governance at Link drawing on his long experience in business and public affairs. He stresses – in his own words – “the need to listen closely to ... stakeholders, seek common ground among differences, and strike the right balance between the need for continuity and the desire for change.” Listening, seeking common ground, and looking to strike the right balance between competing demands, all characterize Mr Cheng's success in corporate leadership.

Educated at Lake Forest College in Illinois, Mr Cheng took an MBA at the Wharton Graduate Business School of the University of Pennsylvania. He was for many years Chairman of Inchcape Pacific and N.M. Rothschild and Sons in Hong Kong. He is a pioneer of the city's head-hunting profession and has himself trained many of the territory's leading head-hunters. Mr Cheng has also been active in public and community service, the only businessman who has chaired both the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce and the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong. He has been a Member of the Legislative Council, as well as Chairman of the Panel on Financial Affairs of the Provisional Legislative Council. He was a Member of the Preparatory Committee for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and a Member of the Selection Committee for the First Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.



Mr Cheng has been recognized for his various roles in corporate and public life in Hong Kong. He was knighted by the King of Belgium in 1991 for his contribution to that country's trade with Hong Kong. He was appointed an honorary citizen of Nanjing in 1994, made a Justice of the Peace in 1997 and an Honorary Fellow at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology in 2004. He is a Founding Member of the Court, HKUST, as well as an Adjunct Professor in its School of Business and Management.

Since 1992 Mr Cheng has been a Member of Council at the Chinese University, where he has always been generous in giving his valuable guidance, advising successive Vice-Chancellors and Council Chairmen on a number of policy matters. He has also been helping the University to raise funds for strategic developments. He has held various significant positions and made important contributions. These include being a Member of the Executive Committee of the Council and a Member of the Task Force on the Development and Financing of the University in the Next Decade and Beyond. Under his chairmanship the Career Development Board has helped our graduates to enhance their careers, for example by developing their language skills and by participating in the Personal Assistant Training Scheme – a Scheme that owes a lot to Mr Cheng himself. In 2002, he was able to draw on his long experience as a head-hunter when he became a member of the Search Committee for the appointment of the New Vice-Chancellor. He is also an Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Business Administration.

Mr Chairman, it is my honour to present to you Mr Paul Ming Fun Cheng, distinguished corporate leader and loyal friend of the University, for the award of an Honorary Fellowship.

This citation is written by Professor David Parker