

Chinese  University

BULLETIN

The diamond jubilee

Reflecting on CUHK's history
with an eye on the future

No.1, 2024







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Brilliant six decades revisited



CUHK celebrated its '*jiazi*' (diamond jubilee) last year. Six decades on, the barren hills that were desolate have now flourished into a comprehensive research university. In Hong Kong, CUHK is an ideal institution for parents and students. The University's international rankings are rising steadily, with its inbound and outbound exchanges becoming more frequent. Thanks to the foresight of its predecessors, the University's mission of bringing together China and the West, bilingual education, unique collegiate system and all-round education have cultivated generations of sincere, honest and outstanding young people for society.

Six decades of fond memories are worth recounting. The first edition of *Chinese University Bulletin* this year chronicles CUHK's 60th anniversary celebration events, as well as achievements over the past six decades. The edition includes an interview with the

chairperson of the Anniversary Celebration Steering Committee Lina Yan who shares her close bonding with her alma mater, highlights of the events preparation, and her expectations of the University. The most beautiful scenery of CUHK is people. In this regard, we showcase eight interviews with members of the CUHK community from different generations from the CUHK 60th Anniversary Oral History Project, including members of senior management, professors, staff members and alumni. The interviews document their vivid personal histories which are parts of macro-history of the University.

Six decades, an entire '*jiazi*', symbolise both the end and the beginning of a cycle. At this juncture, let us look back and reflect on our history as well as looking forward to the next brilliant '*jiazi*'.

1963—2023—



Diamond jubilee celebrations and milestones



Kicking off diamond jubilee celebration activities

EVENT

60th anniversary commencement ceremony

DATE

12 / 2 / 2023

VENUE

Central Campus

More than 1,000 guests and staff gathered at University Mall, while over 9,500 alumni, faculty, and students joined online live broadcast to participate in the 60th anniversary commencement ceremony. The ceremony featured a 200-drone performance to form iconic CUHK landmarks and celebratory messages, complete with a projection light show and performances by the CU Chorus, student dancers and cheerleaders.



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- 1 The projection light show on the University Library facade
- 2 Diamond jubilee celebrations kickstarted
- 3 The CU Chorus
- 4 Student cheerleaders
- 5 The first-ever drone show performance on a Hong Kong campus



4



5

Timeless treasures



1



2

EVENT

CUHK 60th anniversary miniature exhibition

DATE

15 / 9 – 17 / 10 / 2023

VENUE

New Town Plaza, Sha Tin

The CUHK 60th anniversary miniature exhibition presented a collection of 50 exquisite artworks. Among the highlights included a magnificent 4.4 metre-tall illuminated "Gate of Wisdom" and an endearing mini-CUHK school bus. The exhibition also showcased art pieces closely related to CUHK and the Sha Tin community, symbolising the enduring 60-year journey of growth and evolution shared by CUHK and Hong Kong.



Where virtuosities come together

EVENT

Yo-Yo Ma & HK Phil

DATE

8 / 11 / 2023

VENUE

Hong Kong Cultural Centre Concert Hall

The world-renowned cellist Dr Yo-Yo Ma performed a special concert with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra to commemorate the diamond jubilee of the University. A day before the concert, Dr Ma visited CUHK to engage in a dialogue with over 200 students and perform impromptu.

- 1 In front of the meticulously crafted replica of the University's Science Centre, affectionately known as the "rice cooker" with the giant CUHK emblem, graduates are captured in a moment of celebration. With flowers in hand and accompanied by graduation dolls, they toss their square academic caps into the air for photos
- 2 Mrs Gwen Kao places a miniature figurine of the esteemed former CUHK Vice-Chancellor and Nobel Prize laureate, Professor Charles Kao, at the miniaturised replica of the iconic University main entrance, fondly known as the "four stone pillars"

A joyous celebration

EVENT

60th anniversary banquet

DATE

10 / 12 / 2023

VENUE

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Over 2,000 CUHK students, staff, alumni, international partners and friends joined the event to celebrate the institution's achievements, cultural and academic ethos. Paul Chan Mo-po, Financial Secretary of the Hong Kong government and CUHK alumnus, attended as guest of honour.



1



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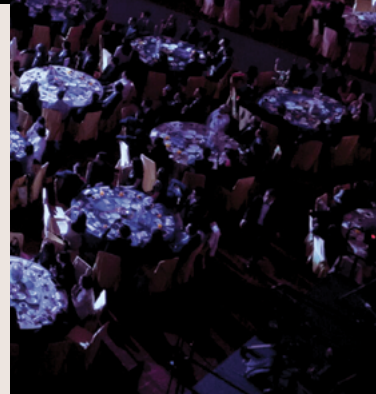




3



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6



7

- 1 From left: Hamen Fan Shi-hoo, Roger Luk, former CUHK Vice-Chancellor Professor Ambrose King, Professor Rocky S. Tuan, Dr Norman Leung Nai-pang, and Kelvin Yeung
- 2 Wu Cheng (2nd left), Deputy Director-General of the Department of Educational, Scientific and Technological Affairs of the central government's liaison office, presents a commemorative gift to the University on behalf of the office director Zheng Yanxiong
- 3 Paul Chan Mo-po
- 4 Former CUHK Vice-Chancellor Professor Joseph Sung (left) and Warren Chan Chee-hoi
- 5 Professor Arthur Li (1st right), former CUHK Vice-Chancellor and Dr Alice Lam Kiu-yue (2nd right), former University Treasurer
- 6 Masters of ceremonies (from left): Phoebe Chan, Heidi Chu, Akina Fong, Eleanor Hui and Mark Huang
- 7 Dancing performance



A gathering of great minds



EVENT

The Times Higher Education Asia Universities Summit

DATE

21 – 23 / 6 / 2023



EVENT

The Diamond Jubilee University Presidents' Forum

DATE

9 / 12 / 2023



EVENT

The Sino-US University Presidents' Dialogue

DATE

10 / 12 / 2023



EVENT

The 2023 Meeting of the Association of University Presidents of China and the Forum on Building World-class Universities

DATE

10 / 12 / 2023



Research and collaboration milestones



ACHIEVEMENT

Cross-border partnership agreement

DATE

22 / 2 / 2023

CUHK, CUHK-Shenzhen and the Shenzhen municipal government signed a tripartite agreement at Government House, signalling the three parties' intention to deepen collaboration on education, research and technology transfer.



ACHIEVEMENT

The CUHK Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Research Institute (Futian)

DATE

28 / 3 / 2023

Located in the Shenzhen-Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Co-operation Zone in Shenzhen, the plaque unveiling ceremony of the CUHK Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Research Institute (Futian) marked a new chapter in cross-border innovation and technology collaborations.



ACHIEVEMENT

The Advanced Therapy Products Good Manufacturing Practice Centre

DATE

15 / 6 / 2023

Jointly established by CUHK and the Hong Kong Institute of Biotechnology, the Advanced Therapy Products Good Manufacturing Practice Centre officially opened.



ACHIEVEMENT

CUHK Beijing Centre

DATE

28 / 6 / 2023

Located in Dongcheng District, Beijing, the CUHK Beijing Centre strives to establish Beijing-Hong Kong exchange platform and deepen academia-industry collaboration.



ACHIEVEMENT

CUHK Shanghai Centre

DATE

28 / 8 / 2023

Following the establishment of the CUHK Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Research Institute (Futian) and the CUHK Beijing Centre, the establishment of the Shanghai Centre, located in Yangpu District, is the third important strategic development of CUHK on the mainland.



ACHIEVEMENT

CUHK Jockey Club STEM Labs

DATE

18 / 12 / 2023

CUHK has established five Jockey Club STEM Labs with the support from the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust. Each Lab focuses on a unique research area and is set to deliver impactful discoveries and innovative outcomes.

Rankings[#]

Times Higher Education (THE)

World
University
Rankings

10th
in Asia

53rd
in the world

ShanghaiRanking

Academic
Ranking
of World
Universities

3rd
in Hong Kong

Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)

World
University
Rankings

10th
in Asia

36th
in the world

[#]Figures as of 5 June 2024

60th anniversary activities in numbers*

26

lectures/talks

26

conferences / forums /
seminars

Events

8

concerts

8

sports events

7

exhibitions

9

visits / tours

10

ceremonies

16

others

*From February 2023 to March 2024

A 'diamond jubilee' for veteran alumna

Lina Yan's six decades of dedication to her alma mater

When CUHK began to plan celebrations for its 2023 diamond jubilee, alumna Lina Yan (69/ United College/English; 72/Diploma in Education) stepped up to chair the steering committee responsible for some 130 celebratory events. Taking on this demanding role capped nearly six decades of commitment to her alma mater. Yan was at the helm of the CUHK Convocation for three terms. Currently, she is a member of the University's governing Council and the chairperson of the Board of Trustees of United College. "CUHK is my second home. For as long as my alma mater needs me, I will do my best," she says. In 2005, CUHK conferred on her an honorary fellowship.

All this is on top of a multi-faceted career that included many other commitments to public





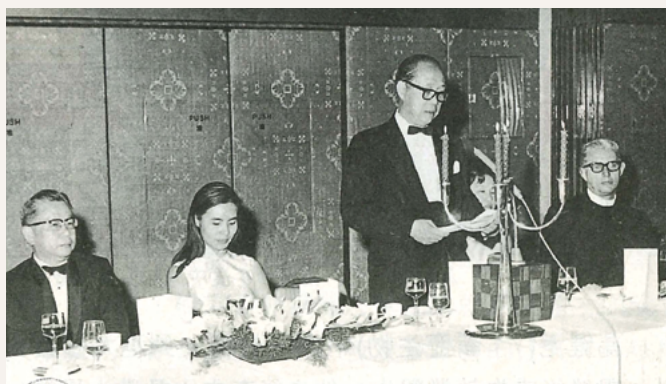


service. After graduating, Yan was a secondary school teacher, then a vice-principal. From 1976 to 1995, she worked at Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK), where she headed the Educational Television Division. She also hosted RTHK's inter-school TV quiz programme *Jr. On Your Mark* and directed programmes such as *Hong Kong Connection*. Since student days at CUHK, she has been a drama enthusiast and actress.

Serving since college

Yan's decades of volunteer service to CUHK began when she was a student at United College, whose campus was then in Bonham Road, Mid-Levels. She participated in the Student Union and played an active role in running the College's drama club. In 1966, she was invited by the College's head, Professor Cheng Tung-choy, to chair the 10th College Anniversary Ball Committee. Although only a sophomore, she successfully organised the College's first large-scale ball with other student committee members, including fellow drama enthusiasts Luther Fung, Irving Koo and Michael Hui Koon-man.

"Luther, Irving and I love plays. Even though the Bonham campus was small, we had great fun rehearsing plays on the simple stage. Everyone was engaged in college life. When the College





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invited us for help, we gladly offered our support," she recalls. Decades later, they performed in a drama to celebrate the 50th anniversary of United College. Yan was the chairperson of the drama's organising committee. She and Luther Fung collaborated again in the University's 40th anniversary play *Of Phoenix Lineage*.

The teamwork, character analysis and interpersonal skills that come with acting also served Yan well in the fields of education, media and public service. "I'm grateful to CUHK for nurturing me and giving me many opportunities to explore. I was fortunate enough to have good teachers who encouraged me to participate in drama activities, namely Rev Fr John Gannon and Professor Yao Ke. Gannon was a Shakespeare expert teaching English literature and drama, and Yao was a famous Chinese playwright who taught in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature."

Gathering the bright minds

Yan has made many good friends and accumulated life experiences in her abundant campus life, which are the source of her motivation to give back to CUHK. She has served on the CUHK 40th Anniversary Organising Committee, chaired three terms of the CUHK Convocation, and is currently a Council member of CUHK and the chairperson of the Board of Trustees of United College. She has served her alma mater for nearly six decades in the blink of an eye. "The more I get involved, the more I feel it's worth dedicating to my alma mater. CUHK has laid the foundation of my life, made me more courageous and confident, and broadened my network."

"This was a great opportunity to give back to my alma mater," she says. It involved liaising with alumni, colleagues and social luminaries spanning 60 years, as well as gathering talented people at CUHK today. The Steering Committee was founded with the approval of the Council's Executive Committee in December 2021, and held a meeting in March in the following year. It mainly focused on formulating the overall direction of the celebration events, guiding the 60th anniversary working groups, and performing the duties assigned by the Council or the Vice-Chancellor. The Committee has established the working group on 60th anniversary, which has five working sub-groups to coordinate alumni activities, the gala dinner, fundraising, global strategies and social impact activities.

Into the splendour of diamond jubilee events

All colleges, faculties and departments participated in the jubilee celebrations, which ran from February 2023 to June 2024. "Many were unforgettable," says Yan. "For the commencement ceremony there was a light show and a drone performance that was the first-of-its-kind in Hong Kong's higher education sector."

In this performance, which combined technology and art, the CUHK logo and "CUHK60" were displayed above the University Mall, where more than 1,000 guests, staff and students had gathered. A light show telling the CUHK story was projected onto the Library's facade. This was followed by dancing and choir performances by students, watched online by more than 9,500 alumni, faculty members, staff and students.



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The University also took its jubilee celebrations to the community. An art exhibition at nearby New Town Plaza in Sha Tin featured 50 works. Aside from exhibits of CUHK landmarks, it featured works closely related to the Sha Tin community, along with street scenes and buildings of Hong Kong's past and present. The exhibition, which received more than 180,000 visitors and was widely covered by local and mainland media, represented the 60 years that CUHK and Hong Kong have travelled together. "This celebration event was not only for CUHK people, but also an opportunity for integrating CUHK's story into the community and the Greater Bay Area through the media."

Another memorable moment in the jubilee programme was a concert featuring Yo-Yo Ma, held at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre in November. The world-renowned cellist has a deep connection with CUHK. He received an honorary doctorate at the time of the University's 30th anniversary. Helping to make the 60th anniversary concert happen were the alumni sub-group of the anniversary working group, the Shaw College Alumni Association and the Department of Music. "This concert was not only a celebratory event but has become part of the collective memory of many Hong Kong citizens in the audience that night," says Yan. On the eve of the concert, Yo-Yo Ma visited the CUHK campus to engage in a dialogue with more than 200 students and delighted them by giving an impromptu performance.

- 1 The 10th Anniversary Ball of United College was held at the Hilton Hotel, Central in 1966. Lina Yan chaired the ball committee. From left: the College's head Professor Cheng Tung-choy, Lina Yan and Sir Kenneth Fung Ping-fan (Source: Alumni Affairs Office)
- 2 As a student, Yan chaired the United College Drama Club. She has acted in many plays, including Chekhov's *The Bear* (photo to the left) and Cao Yu's comedy *Still Thinking* (Source: United College)
- 3 Lina Yan believes that CUHK's collegiate system has enriched campus life and deepened bonds among alumni

CUHK is my second home. For as long as my alma mater needs me, I will do my best.

With the staunch support from CUHK alumni for the concert, the University has set up the CUHK 60th Anniversary Artistic Talent Development Fund. Its aim is to nurture arts talent by subsidising CUHK students with aspirations in music, arts and cultural management to take part in summer internships or overseas exchange programmes, helping them lay solid foundations in creative fields.

More than 2,000 CUHK students, faculty members, alumni, mainland and international partners and friends gathered in December for a gala dinner to celebrate 60 years of achievement by CUHK. "I'm grateful to the alumni for their wonderful performances that night. Alumni from different generations took photos together. The scene was heartwarming."

After 60 years of development, CUHK has grown from three constituent colleges to nine. It now has eight faculties and one graduate school, and the total number of alumni is close to 300,000. The University's Quacquarelli Symonds global ranking is among the top 50 in the world. It ranks the first locally in Times Higher Education Impact Rankings and Reuters Asia Pacific's Most Innovative Universities. "The results are remarkable," says Yan.

Still waters run deep

She adds that CUHK alumni have become leaders in all walks of life, while quietly contributing energy and wisdom to their alma

mater. "CUHK attaches great importance to the humanistic spirit, and the motto 'Through learning and temperance to virtue' simply reflects everyone's dedication to striving for progress," says Yan. "CUHK has repeatedly reached new heights in teaching and academic research. It was the first Hong Kong tertiary institution to establish a campus and research institute in the Greater Bay Area, making it possible to extend its excellent qualities of education, scientific research and contribution to the mainland."

In Chinese culture, a '*jiazi*' is a 60-year cycle. Yan hopes that everyone associated with CUHK will stride ahead in the next 60 years with the spirit of "inheriting history and innovating with boldness". She envisions that the University community will continue to lead in scientific research and culture, and boldly innovate, riding on existing foundations to transform scientific research results into outcomes that benefit the world.

She looks upon CUHK as a large family where everyone is willing to help and encourage one another. "I hope that successful CUHK people will mentor their junior counterparts and contribute to their alma mater together. No matter what subject you major in or what industry you are engaged in, you can always find like-minded people in the community. Let's work hard together and help our alma mater scale new heights."



Selections from CUHK 60th Anniversary Oral History Project

The most beautiful scenery at CUHK is people

Starting from 2020, 60 members of the CUHK community from different generations were interviewed by CUHK 60th Anniversary Oral History Project. In the space of about 18 months, alumni, teachers, janitors, school bus drivers, members of senior management and administrators recalled their good old days at the University. Their stories are parts of macro-history of the University, which was founded on a barren hill in 1963.

The oral history project was led by former Dean of Arts Professor Leung Yuen-sang. The interviews were conducted by Professor Puk Wing-Kin, vice-chairman of the Department of History, and Shirley Chan, a member of the project. The contents have been uploaded to the website of the University Library.

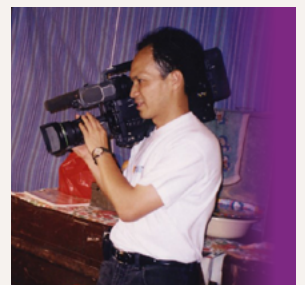
The most beautiful scenery at CUHK is people. The first part of the *Bulletin* chronicles CUHK's 60th anniversary celebration events, as well as its achievements over the past six decades. The interviews conducted by CUHK 60th Anniversary Oral History Project are among the key contents of the issue. Given space constraints, we selected and published abridged versions of eight interviews, including those of former Vice-Chancellor Professor Ambrose King Yeo-chi,

former Pro-Vice-Chancellor and founding Master of CW Chu College Professor Kenneth Young, world-renowned mathematician and alumnus Yau Shing-tung, Emeritus Professor of Translation and alumna Serena Jin, librarian of Hong Kong Studies Chau Yuan-weng, "Chung Chi Nanny" Yau Yuk-yau, technician of the Audio-Visual Division Ho Yuk-wing, and school bus driver Chan Shu-pui.

Time flies and the eight interviewees had a bond with CUHK spanning several decades. Their desire for the betterment of the University was clearly expressed in their interviews.

Scan to read more
oral histories





Rising to tough challenges

Ambrose King Yeo-chi



PROFILE

Professor Ambrose King Yeo-chi was educated in Taiwan and the US. He joined CUHK's Department of Sociology in 1970. In 1977, he was made department chair and head of New Asia College. He was appointed as Pro-Vice-Chancellor in 1989. In Taiwan, he was elected as a member of Academia Sinica in 1994. In 2002, Professor King became the fifth Vice-Chancellor of CUHK. He retired in 2004.

Sociologist Ambrose King Yeo-chi was the youngest professor ever to head New Asia College. Ultimately, he became the oldest to take up the post of the University's Vice-Chancellor. In his 34 years at CUHK, going back almost to its establishment, Professor King helped steer the University through many challenges, including reform of its governance structure in the 1970s and a period of drastic government funding cuts after the SARS outbreak in 2003. As Vice-Chancellor, he also oversaw the establishment of the School of Law.

In the 1960s, he was a university lecturer while working as a deputy chief editor for the Commercial Press of Taiwan. With a research interest in the modernisation of China, he was much sought after as a speaker by local universities. His book *From Tradition to Modernity* (1966) was a phenomenon and quickly recognised as a seminal work in Chinese studies.

In 1969, when he was conducting post-doctoral research at the University of Pittsburgh in the US, Professor King was invited by Dr Choh-ming Li, founding Vice-Chancellor of CUHK, to join his team. "Dr Li impressed me with his confidence and great powers of persuasion," Professor King recalls. "He cast the future of CUHK in a very positive light—no ordinary academic could have done that."

Professor King arrived the following year at CUHK and New Asia College, one of the new university's three constituent colleges. He soon observed that while the College had a distinctively rich atmosphere of Chinese culture, there was a gap between Dr Li's vision for CUHK and reality at the College. Dr Li had articulated a mission for CUHK "to combine tradition with modernity, and to bring together China and the West", placing a strong emphasis on bilingual education. Professor King felt that this vision was not fully appreciated at the time by some of the College's teachers and students, in particular the need for proficiency in both Chinese and English, which Professor King saw as essential to CUHK's standing as an international university.



In the late 1970s, as China launched its policy of reform and opening up to the rest of the world, an initiative was launched to rejuvenate the study of sociology on mainland China. It was led jointly by Yang Ching-kun, Professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh and Fei Xiaotong, a distinguished anthropologist on the mainland. Supported by Professor King, teachers from CUHK's Sociology Department contributed, delivering lectures at different places on the mainland. As part of these efforts, CUHK convened a social sciences forum in 1983, inviting scholars from both sides of the Taiwan Strait for the first time. It was a historic initiative. Professor King and Professor Rance Lee Pui-leung organised one particularly successful seminar and, later, launched an exchange platform on Chinese culture and its modernisation. Over the next two decades, the platform hosted many important academic seminars and forged collaborations.

Professor King was also at the centre of other major developments of CUHK. In 1974, the University set up a working party to review its own governance structure. CUHK had been founded as a federal-type university, with each of the three constituent colleges managing their own academic departments—often with overlapping disciplines—and enjoying high autonomy over such matters as admissions and curriculum design. Shortly after joining CUHK, Professor King came to the view that the system had created problems in resource allocation and division of responsibilities between the Colleges and the University. He felt that organisational reforms were essential for the further development of the University as a whole.

Professor King was one of the younger members elected by teachers to serve on the working party, which 18 months later produced a report. A key recommendation was to consolidate those departments belonging to the same discipline under one departmental roof. As he set out explaining the working party's recommendations to colleagues at New Asia, Professor King recalls being met by objections and fierce resistance. Matters were eventually resolved in 1976, when the University adopted the recommendations of the government-appointed Second Fulton Commission, integrating academic departments while leaving the Colleges to take care of student development matters. Professor King notes that the college system has remained a robust feature of CUHK education. "Many of our working group's recommendations were adopted and, 40 years on, they proved to be good for CUHK, which continues to achieve great success."

After Professor King became head of New Asia College in 1977, he took great pains to strengthen the College and raise its profile as a stronghold of Chinese studies. Among many initiatives, he set up the Ch'ien Mu Lecture in History and Culture to have distinguished scholars from around the world deliver public lectures at CUHK, including New Asia founder Ch'ien Mu, the renowned ancient Chinese science and technology scholar Joseph Needham, American sinologist William Theodore de Bary and Japanese sinologist Tamaki Ogawa.

Despite a heavy load of administrative duties, Professor King never abandoned teaching and research. A paper he published at the University of California in 1975, entitled "Administrative

Forty years on, many of our working group's recommendations proved to be good for CUHK.





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- 1 From left: CUHK founding Vice-Chancellor Dr Choh-ming Li, Professor Ma Lin, Mrs Li, Sir John Fulton, Professor King and Dr Chen Fong-ching outside the Vice-Chancellor's Residence
- 2 Joseph Needham (3rd left), prominent historian of science and sinologist, is joined by biochemist and historian Lu Gwei-djen (1st left), for a talk at New Asia College in 1979
- 3 Professor King (centre front) hosts the University Presidents' Global Forum 2004 at CUHK

"Absorption of Politics in Hong Kong", drew the attention of three colonial governors, who at various times sought his views and insights on political and governance issues. He also advised the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Law Reform Commission, the Central Policy Unit and the Hong Kong Research Grants Council.

Taking up vice-chancellorship of CUHK was never in his plan. Professor King recalls that one day, in 2002, then Vice-Chancellor Professor Arthur Li Kwok-cheung informed him that he would soon join the Hong Kong government as a minister and wished to name Professor King as his successor. After pondering for a moment what would be in the best interests of the University, Professor King gave Professor Li the nod. He well appreciated how hard it would be in such a short period of time for the incumbent to find a suitable candidate to succeed him. As a Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Professor King felt well-positioned to take on the responsibility.

He held the post of Vice-Chancellor for two years prior to retirement. "My responsibility is heavy, but the journey is short" is how he once described his role. Soon after he was installed, the then mysterious and terrifying viral respiratory disease known as SARS hit Hong Kong. The World Health Organisation issued an emergency international advisory against travel to the city.

Professor King was forced to postpone the University Presidents' Global Forum, which was meant to be a highlight of celebrations for CUHK's 40th anniversary. At the same time,

medical personnel who were staff or alumni of CUHK risked their lives treating patients at local hospitals. Among them was 35-year-old Dr Joanna Tse Yuen-man, a CUHK medical faculty graduate, who volunteered to work in a SARS ward and died after becoming infected. At her memorial service, Professor King hailed her as "Hong Kong's daughter". His moving tribute to Tse was widely reported in the media.

The epidemic triggered a sharp economic downturn in Hong Kong. CUHK was among many public organisations in Hong Kong that had to accept deep government funding cuts. "You know how deep our budget cut was? US\$50 million a year! I told a university president visiting from overseas and he was simply astounded."

To cope with the funding emergency, Professor King put forward a proposal to reorganise the University's academic programmes. Once again, he found himself on the receiving end of opposition from some students and staff. "Looking back, I have no regrets," he says. "I believe the austerity measures helped preserve the University's ability to reinvigorate itself. Within two years, CUHK would wade out of hardship and emerge stronger."

Under Professor King, the University eventually celebrated its 40th anniversary in style, bringing back the Presidents' Global Forum, establishing a new School of Law and steadily ushering CUHK into a new era.

Humble beginnings

Kenneth Young

PROFILE

Professor Kenneth Young obtained his Bachelor of Science from the California Institute of Technology in 1969 and his doctorate from the same school in 1972. He joined CUHK as a physics teacher the following year. Over the next five decades, he served as chairman of the Department of Physics, Dean of Science and Dean of the Graduate School, becoming Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University in 1994. He led a task force in 2005 to steer the implementation of the new four-year undergraduate curriculum for CUHK. He was also founding Master of CW Chu College. Other past positions include being a member of the University Grants Committee and chairman of its Research Grants Council.





Since Professor Kenneth Young came to CUHK in the summer of 1973, he has devoted himself to teaching and research. Retirement has not stopped the educator from imparting his knowledge. On campus, one would find the emeritus professor teaching not only quantum field theory and other topics of theoretical physics in his department, but also the history of CUHK in general education classes.

In those classes, he would show photos of New Asia College, one of the three founding Colleges of CUHK, in its early days on Kweilin Street, Sham Shui Po. The students would be momentarily awed, but it was just that—a fleeting response.

“When I spoke about the verse ‘Nothing left, in my hands’ (from the college anthem), I myself was touched, but their reaction was mild.” He then thought it was best to let young people know about the humble beginnings of the University, so they would come to cherish what they have now.

Professor Young came aboard after conducting post-doctoral research in the US for a year. The three founding Colleges of CUHK had already set up their own academic departments and moved their science faculties to the Science Centre on the new Sha Tin campus in order to share laboratories and equipment. “In the same corridor, it was totally possible for one to bump into three physics department chairpersons,” he jokes.

His first impression of CUHK was that it was really “out in the boonies”.

“The atmosphere here was so different from the city centre,” he recalls. “The train came only once an hour and ran on diesel. The train station was called Ma Liu Shui, not University (Note: the station was renamed in 1967). It was still a one-track system. A station staff member would hand a big rattan ring to the train driver (who would pass it to the staff members of the next station), to ensure the single-track line had only one train at a time between two stations. This is something young people cannot imagine today.”

At that time, CUHK was a fledgling institution with limited resources. For example, two or three offices shared a telephone number. “And when someone rang, all three offices would ring together.” The internet age was yet to come, and even fax machines were not easily available. “It was a big deal to make an international call—you needed to seek approval from the department chair. I think I made only two or three calls overseas in those days.”

It was therefore very difficult to get the latest updates about the academic field. “What we could do was to invite international scholars to give a speech on our campus when they happened to visit Hong Kong, so we could get some trends and developments from them,” he says.

Apart from teaching, Professor Young had early tastes of administrative tasks way before he was appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor in 1994. In 1973, students went on a campus march to protest

When I spoke about the verse ‘Nothing left, in my hands’, I myself was touched, but their reaction was mild.

against a lack of hostel places. Dr Choh-ming Li, the then Vice-Chancellor, decided to build a temporary hostel as a quick fix and appointed Professor Young as vice-chairman of the management committee for the new facility—which came in the form of four half-cylindrical metal huts (now still standing) at the fringe of the Sir Philip Haddon-Cave Sports Field.

“The environment was terrible. The four huts accommodated 80 students each, with three huts for boys and one for girls. No air-conditioning was available, nor any warden to take charge of matters—who among the teachers would want to move in?” Nevertheless, what was planned to be a five-year provisional hostel ended up remaining until the early 1980s.

Yet those were the days when the life of teaching was the most relaxing and enjoyable, he adds. This was so even though a teacher back then did not earn a handsome salary or receive large sums



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of research funding as they may do now—the government-funded Research Grants Council was not set up until 1991.

“My first pay cheque was a bit more than HK\$3,000. It sounds like a meagre sum today, but at that time there was no pressure on research KPIs. Research was purely driven by interest.” Promotion was based mainly on seniority and subject to a strict quota, he says, taking the Physics Department as an example: only one out of 16 teachers could hold a professorship and another a senior lecturership in the 1970s.

Having taught generations of students over his 50 years at CUHK, Professor Young does not agree that the expansion of university education has caused student standards to drop. “It’s easier

to compare students from different times in my classical physics class because the material hasn’t changed in the past few hundred years,” he notes. Students nowadays do as well as those in the 1970s and 1980s, he says, except that young people back then would not argue over marks. “These days, every now and then, you have students wrangling over one or two marks, saying ‘I need an A’. This did not happen in the old days so you could say students were in a way ‘better-behaved,’” he smiles.

1 A teaching laboratory of the Department of Physics in the 1980s

2 Professor Young (2nd right) in a football match of the 1983 Vice-Chancellor’s Cup


3 Professor Young teaches a postgraduate class in physics in spring 2024

When genius means more than a piece of paper

Yau Shing-tung



PROFILE



Professor Yau Shing-tung, Distinguished Professor-at-Large and director of the Institute of Mathematical Sciences at CUHK, is one of the world's most influential contemporary mathematicians. Graduating early from CUHK in 1969 and completing his doctorate after just two years at the University of California, Berkeley, he won the Fields Medal—regarded as the “Nobel Prize in Mathematics”—at the age of 33, and has since received many additional honours. Having taught at Harvard University for 35 years, he moved to Tsinghua University in 2022, where he is director of the Yau Mathematical Sciences Center.

World-renowned alumnus Yau Shing-tung launched into his stellar academic career without a graduation certificate from CUHK. He retells this story with gusto.

Born in Guangdong province and raised in Hong Kong, the young Yau Shing-tung was admitted to Chung Chi College's Department of Mathematics in 1966. It wasn't long before his brilliance caught the eye of others, and he was allowed to skip foundational courses, freeing up time for him to take on more difficult mathematical challenges.

During his second year at CUHK, the Department recruited Dr Stephen Salaff from the University of California, Berkeley to lecture on differential equations. Upon seeing the young Yau's gift for mathematics, Dr Salaff invited him to assist in writing his lectures, and even to take on classes teaching third-year students. Believing that his student had already learnt everything that four years of education at CUHK could offer, the professor suggested that he graduate a year early and proceed at once to further studies in the US.

Dr Salaff's colleagues at Chung Chi's Department of Mathematics all agreed—but the University's authorities wanted to test Yau's abilities independently before making a final decision. “They asked Professor Wong Yung-chow from the University of Hong Kong to try me out, so he summoned me to meet him,” he recalls. “At our meeting, Professor Wong told me about some research he was doing, and said he wanted my advice. At the time, I thought his research wasn't significant, so although I did give feedback, I didn't give much. Back came the professor's report: ‘Yau Shing-tung is no genius.’” At the time, an amused Professor Yau says, he was unaware that his lacklustre response to Professor Wong's request would come with consequences. But it did: the



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- 1 Professor Yau at a graduation ceremony, 1969 (courtesy of interviewee)
- 2 Professor Yau as a young child with his father, Professor Chiu Chin-yin (courtesy of interviewee)
- 3 Professor Yau at a public lecture held at CUHK, April 2023

University denied the young mathematician his request for early graduation.

While an undergraduate in April 1969, Yau Shing-tung was accepted by the University of California, Berkeley for further studies and awarded a handsome scholarship. "I couldn't graduate along with my cohort, and I couldn't join the congregation either," he recalls. But at that point, then head of Chung Chi College Dr Yung Chi-tung stepped in. "He decided to grant me a diploma at the College's graduation ceremony; this meant that I had a certificate from Chung Chi, but not CUHK. When they called my name during that ceremony, I was so shocked! I thought they'd never give me a diploma, but I'm honoured that they did in the end. Everyone applauded and cheered me on as I graduated." He says he never minded the lack of a formal graduation certificate from CUHK, as it had already given him a taste of encouragement and friendship in academic life.

Yau's interest in maths had begun years earlier in secondary school. "What really piqued my interest was learning plane geometry: from a few simple axioms you can draw diagrams that prove so many other theories, which in turn lead to the most beautiful diagrams," he remembers. "That's what kickstarted my passion for maths." As such, mathematics became the obvious choice for Yau when he enrolled for university. So was

Chung Chi College: his late father, Professor Chiu Chin-yin, had been teaching at Chung Chi in the 1950s before its amalgamation into the University. He had been close to then College head Dr Lin Daoyang, who was searching for a suitable campus site for the future Chinese University; Ma Liu Shui in Sha Tin having finally been chosen, the younger Yau remembers his father going out to farms, explaining to villagers that they wanted the land for a university.



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From a few simple axioms, you can prove so many other theories, which in turn lead to the most beautiful diagrams. That's what kickstarted my passion for maths.

"A lot of them were quite against that and refused to sell their land. But most of them had the same Cantonese surname as our family, so we had the same lineage, and shared Hakka ancestry. Ultimately my father won them over, and they agreed to sell—imagine if they hadn't. We wouldn't have CUHK here, on this spot." Because of this special connection, young Yau chose to follow in his father's footsteps after matriculating by setting his sights on CUHK.

Even after so many years, Professor Yau has crystal clear memories of his teachers at Chung Chi, along with all they taught. The head of the College's Mathematics Department, Tse Lan-on, taught linear algebra at the College and was a friend of his father. In addition to Dr Salaff, other members of staff who joined from overseas in Yau's second year included Dr Ronald F Turner-Smith, whose main subject was algebra. Professor Yau also singles out Dr Elmer J Brody for mention. "Here was a very interesting teacher who'd graduated from Princeton and then visited Singapore before arriving at Hong Kong. He liked the Chinese language but didn't consider Cantonese to be a proper language—only Putonghua would fly with him. So that language was required during Dr Brody's lessons, and I learnt all my Putonghua from him."

Dr Brody would bring out Chinese mathematician Li Wenqing's *Functional Analysis* during lessons

and ask his students to look for errors, starting with the first chapter. "That was our entire semester: reading the book, pointing out mistakes and how one might correct them. It was very interesting as it trained our critical thinking; you needed to know what was wrong, and how to make it right again."

CUHK was Yau's first step towards an academic life of great distinction, during which he has been showered with many international honours. On top of teaching at Tsinghua University in Beijing, since 1993 he has spent three months each year in Hong Kong, teaching and supervising research students at CUHK and leading academic work at the University's Institute of Mathematical Sciences. He declares, "Six decades on, I still think that the Department of Mathematics in CUHK is the best you can find in Hong Kong!"



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Where the heart lives

Serena Jin Sheng-hwa

PROFILE

Shanghai-born Professor Serena Jin Sheng-hwa and her family moved to Taiwan when she was in elementary school, and relocated to Hong Kong when she was in her second year of high school. She graduated from the Department of English at Chung Chi College in 1962 with a Joint Diploma (equivalent to Bachelor of Arts), followed by a master's degree in arts from the University of Washington, in the US and a doctoral degree from the Paris-Sorbonne University, in France. Professor Jin started teaching at CUHK in 1965 and retired in 2005. She currently serves as Emeritus Professor of Translation and an honorary fellow at CUHK. She is also president emeritus of the Hong Kong Translation Society, and was awarded the OBE in 1997 for her contribution to the development of translation and bilingual culture in Hong Kong. She was also awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award in Translation Culture by the Translators Association of China this year.





"Home is where the heart is," said Professor Jin Sheng-hwa when she was appointed an honorary fellow in 2012. "It is a sanctuary where one finds solace, strength, and a strong sense of belonging. It provides a sense of stability in the ever-changing world. CUHK is my home, a place of eternal beauty, deep connections, and comfort. It is where my heart lives."

Professor Jin only started taking English lessons while in junior secondary school in Taiwan. When her family moved to Hong Kong, she found it hard to cope with the English curriculum. But she made an all-out effort to catch up with her peers, and even set her sights on becoming an English major at university. In the late 1950s, she was accepted into the Department of English of Chung Chi College, one of the three constituent colleges from which CUHK was later founded. Professor Jin's college life was not confined to classrooms. She participated in the Inter-collegiate Debate Competition, representing the Mandarin-speaking group and performing so well that she went from third to first position in her team, which she led to victory in the overall championship.

A year after graduation, Professor Jin went to the US to study for her master's degree. Upon returning to Chung Chi College two years later, she became a tutor in the Department of Religion and Philosophy, where she was responsible for arranging course schedules for students. In the department office, she found herself sitting directly opposite Professor Lao Sze-kwang, who had been the chief judge when she competed in debates. "Little did I know I would become his colleague several years later. I had a happy time working there," Professor Jin recalls.

While tutoring in the Department of Religion and Philosophy, she also became a "trailblazer" for establishing the Department of Translation at CUHK. Professor Jin explains how it happened: "At that time, each department had to submit a



bilingual course list for the production of a College booklet. I was responsible for the Department of Religion and Philosophy's submission. The College Secretary later told me that my submission was impressive as it did not require any sub-editing work. I also translated a speech for the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and the quality of my work was also recognised. That was how I blazed the translation trail before the Department was established."

CUHK's Department of Translation was eventually established in 1972 and housed at New Asia College. That same year, Professor Jin moved across from Chung Chi College to join the new Translation Department. She remained at New Asia College until her retirement.

Professor Jin and other Taiwanese scholars teaching at New Asia College initiated the establishment of Yun Chi Hsien, a restaurant famous for its beef noodles. "I was involved in the selection of carpets and dishes," says Professor Jin. "I also gave suggestions for the restaurant's interior decorations." She recalls that Professor Lu

Yaodong, a renowned historian and food critic, passed down his own beef noodles recipe. "Meal gatherings at Yun Chi Hsien were very happy." Yun Chi Hsien became a place where professors from Taiwan would gather. "There were a lot of us, such as Professors Ambrose King Yeo-chi, Liu Shu-hsien, Chiao Chien and Lao Sze-kwang. Our small round table near the entrance could fit more than 10 of us!"

Professor Jin's boundless oeuvre can be divided into three broad categories: translated works, treatises on translation studies, and creative writings. Over the years, she has translated poetry, letters, short stories, novellas, novels and plays. She finds it hard to say which works she has enjoyed translating most but three Chinese translations that stand out in her mind are: the British adaptation of Chinese tale *The Orphan of Zhao*; *Fu Lei's Family Letters* (in English and French), a bestseller published in 1981, and *The Ballad of the Sad Café*, a book published in 1951 by the American author Carson McCullers. "I strained



1 Early days at the Department of Translation (courtesy of interviewee)

CUHK is my home, a place of eternal beauty, deep connections, and comfort. It is where my heart lives.

every nerve to translate *Fu Lei's Family Letters*," says Professor Jin. "Fu was a renowned translator. As the one who had to translate his works, I knew that readers would have high expectations of me. I started with studying Fu's own translations before translating three batches of his letters which each have a different language style." The third batch of Fu's letters are to famous in-laws of their famous pianist son, who settled in London in the late 1950s and married the daughter of the violinist and conductor Yehudi Menuhin. "It is the most complex piece of text," Professor Jin notes. "It covers discussions on music, philosophy, and the everyday lives of the family's kids. Therefore, I had to pay close attention to the choice of language and strike a balance between formal and colloquial dictions, so as to produce the most faithful and effective translation."

Professor Jin has penned citations for many CUHK honorary fellows and honorary graduates, including Jao Tsung-I, Ji Xianlin, Pai Hsien-yung, Yu Kwang-chung, Li Ka-shing, Gao Xingjian and Yang Liwei. She also spearheaded CUHK's

establishment in the year 2000 of the Global Youth Chinese Literary Award for the New Century, raising over HK\$1 million for the first award. Professor Jin served as chairperson for nine consecutive years. By the year the third award was held, 480 tertiary institutions worldwide were competing for the award.

When Professor Jin gave a speech during the 64th Anniversary Celebration of New Asia College, she inspired the audience by quoting Emily Dickinson's poem "To Make A Prairie"—"To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee... And revery. The revery alone will do, If bees are few". Sixty years ago, as a young academic, Professor Jin came to CUHK "empty-handed", precisely as the lyrics of the New Asia College anthem describe. After many years of dedication and hard work, she has flourished and bloomed with grace.



Serving the temple of learning

Chau Yuan-weng

PROFILE

Chau Yuan-weng joined CUHK Library in 1989. Over the years, she has worked at Li Ping Medical Library, United College Wu Chung Library, Chung Chi College Elisabeth Luce Moore Library and the University Library. Her service included positions as head of the branch libraries and librarian of Hong Kong Studies. After retiring in 2017, she returned as research associate on Hong Kong studies of the University Library, until 2020.





As a CUHK librarian of more than three decades, Chau Yuan-weng feels privileged. The vast sea of knowledge was within easy reach every single day of her career. And yet, the experience was humbling because a librarian had to be receptive to lifelong learning to do the job well, she says.

Much of Chau's working life revolved around Hong Kong studies, starting with managing the Hong Kong Collection at the United College Wu Chung Library in the 1990s. In 2002, when the collection was moved to the University Library and renamed Hong Kong Studies, she went along as well, tasked with collecting material about the city's history, politics, economy, society and culture.

Her interest in all things Hong Kong deepened. "Since the opening of Hong Kong as a trading port, mainland China has gone through tumultuous times. Many people came to Hong Kong to take refuge, including intellectuals bringing artefacts and books," she notes. "In a way, Hong Kong has been a haven. We have the duty to conserve the artefacts properly and introduce them to the public."

The role of the library, Chau stresses, is not only in storing books but also in letting readers know what resources are available. "I feel that the Library has been more proactive in recent years, having a team dedicated to handling donations and managing our collections," she notes. "Apart from books, the Library also accepts donations of photos, letters, manuscripts and programmes of important events, even voice recordings of lectures by distinguished scholars."

Under Chau's coordination, the Library received donations of several batches of taped lectures that included the interviews and lessons—numbering in the thousands—of the learned Chinese classics expert Ho Shok-wai, who exhorted her to take utmost care of the audio tracks.

On a separate occasion, a friend asked her if the CUHK Library would consider accepting a personal collection of taped lectures of Hok Hoi Library from the 1970s and 1980s, which would have been a pity to discard. The lectures were delivered by esteemed scholars of the time at Hok Hoi, co-founded in Hong Kong in 1923 by Lai



1 Books compiled by Chau Yuan-weng for CUHK Library

Chi-hsi, an imperial scholar in the Qing dynasty who settled in Hong Kong after the 1911 Chinese Revolution, together with businessmen who loved traditional Chinese culture.

"I knew well how important these recordings were," Chau says. "I also knew that it would be an onerous task to organise, digitise and archive them in our Library. Still, I summoned up courage to take it on. Fortunately, the University Librarian at that time supported the project." With funding from the Bei Shan Tang Foundation, the recordings have been digitised and are being uploaded online in phases for public access.

After the establishment of Hong Kong Studies in 2002, the University Library set up the Hong Kong Literature Collection and the Hong Kong Literature Database the following year. Chau shared a view held by some among the learned, that Hong Kong literature should include classical as well as contemporary works; however, few classical works had been documented. She felt the urge to fill this gap. So she started to collect, study and organise classic poetry and prose created in Hong Kong.

The effort culminated in *An Annotated Bibliography of the Classical Writings of Hong Kong Poets* published in 2011, and its sequel, about the city's poetry societies, in 2020. Between them, Chau's two books described 514 Hong Kong authors, 808 titles and 150 poetry societies active locally from the late Qing dynasty to 1997, and came to be recognised as pioneering compilations and invaluable additions to the research tools of Hong Kong literature.

Yet another of Chau's archival projects was the *University Library Series*, begun in 2000. The series consisted of books about the paintings,

calligraphy, letters, manuscripts and literary works of cultural figures, such as former officials of the late Qing government, educators, scholars and poets. Many of the items were donated to the Library. Among them was a batch of ink-brush handwritten letters penned by Qing scholar Lai Chi-hsi's distinguished contemporaries and addressed to him. His son, Lai Tim-cheong, initially agreed only to loan his late father's letters to the Library for an exhibition in 2008, having reservations about donating them.

"I offered to compile the collections into a book while putting the items on display, so a wider audience could see them," she recalls. "Mr Lai was so pleased with our work that he donated all the letters to our Library after the exhibition ended."

Apart from managing collections, Chau has also worked on improving services for library users to keep up with the times. "In the past, users would be reminded not to talk loudly in the library. Since the turn of the century, we have been encouraging them to hold more discussions and have given them a lot more space for that, including group study rooms."

In 2013, the University Library basement was expanded to become a Learning Garden—and Chau was the one who came up with its Chinese name, which denoted a space for hard work and progress. The literary label was taken from the title of a famous piece of prose written by Han Yu, a leading essayist in the Tang dynasty.

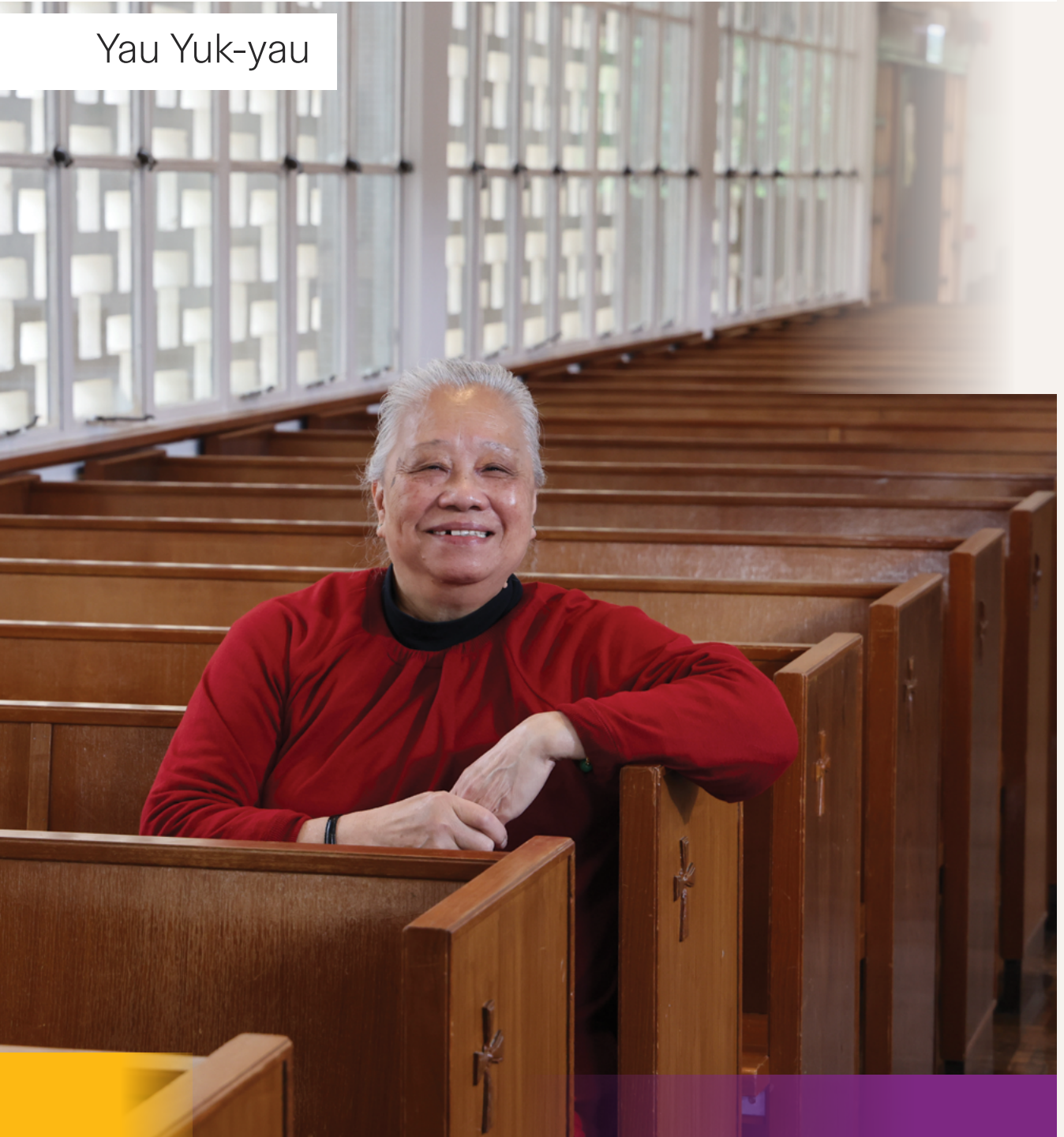
On an ending note, Chau stresses that Hong Kong has a rich cultural heritage, but many records have been scattered and lost over time due to social changes and the displacement of the literati. The Library is duty-bound to collect and preserve valuable pieces of culture and share them with the public.

Summing up her days at CUHK, she says: "A senior colleague once joked, 'People who work at the reference desk can answer any questions from readers.' This gave me lots of inspiration. I feel so lucky to have immersed myself in the sea of knowledge. The pursuit of knowledge can never end, and it's important to stay humble. The library is a treasure trove of knowledge, and knowledge develops every day.

"I believe in lifelong learning and the wisdom of seniors. May these words encourage my colleagues in the journey of learning."

Child of CUHK who paid it forward as 'Chung Chi Nanny'

Yau Yuk-yau



PROFILE

Yau Yuk-yau started working at the Chung Chi College Staff Club and Ming Hua Tang in 1969. During the 1970s and 1980s, Yau provided domestic and childcare services to staff members. She worked at Hua Lien Tang from the late 1980s to 1990, then returned to Chung Chi College in 2000 and served at the Chapel until her retirement in 2008. Now, she works part-time while being a Chapel volunteer.

Imagine CUHK being one's childhood home. Having a stone house on a campus hilltop for a humble abode. And the undulating slopes for a children's playground with pineapples sprouting up all round.

That idyllic experience is owned by Yau Yuk-yau, now retired and volunteering at the Chung Chi College Chapel. As a nine-year-old child, she started calling the Sha Tin campus home. It was to be the beginning of three generations of the Yau family intertwining their lives with the University.

The inseparable bond between the Yau family and CUHK all began with a simple invitation by Dr Lin Daoyang, the second head of Chung Chi College. Dr Lin knew Yau Yuk-yau's father, Yau Wah, from

Fanling Tsung Kyam Church and was aware that his friend was seeking stable employment.

"Yau Wah, would you like to join me at Chung Chi College?" asked Dr Lin. Yau Wah accepted the job offer, which was to work on a construction project of the College.

As newcomers to the campus, the family settled in temporary housing on a hill. Yau Yuk-yau recalls: "There were 12 stone houses on the hilltop. Unfortunately, they have been dismantled and we can no longer find them now." Local residents named the hill "the mountain of pineapples" because of their abundant planting of the tropical fruit in the area. For Yau, it was a special place where she played for hours on end.

"I grew up in an underprivileged family and did not have the chance to go to school. Living in Chung Chi allowed me to attend evening classes organised by university students," Yau says. She studied for two years, then went about looking for work—and what better place to start than in CUHK, right on her doorstep.

"My first job was to handle administrative tasks for Tse Chiu-kit, the first Registrar of Chung Chi College. In 1969, I was formally employed by the College to work at the laundry department in Ming Hua Tang... I stayed there for about four years."

She got married at the age of 18, and when she started her own family, her husband and daughters became part of the CUHK community as well. The College allowed Yau to bring her newborn daughter to work. Her husband also joined CUHK, serving at the College Office for more than 40 years until his retirement at 60. From Yau's father to her daughters, the bond between the Yau family and the University is one spanning three generations.

While working at Ming Hua Tang, Yau supplemented her income by offering domestic help. She remembers Chang Ta-ch'ien, one of the most prolific Chinese artists of the 20th century, who was invited by Chung Chi College to stay in Block B of the staff quarters.

"Chang had to pay for his cleaning, ironing and laundry services. When I told him my monthly salary was HK\$30, he said he had no money for that, but could give me one of his paintings





Chung Chi College is a sweet home. I used to have all household keys.

instead. He then took out several paintings, each the size of a computer screen, and I requested that he pick one for me.

"I didn't know back then that Chang was a famous artist," Yau says. "After I brought home the painting, I told my children to be careful and not to cause any damage to it. Of course, they couldn't care less as they did not know how valuable the painting was. After playing with it, they just left it somewhere in the kitchen!"

Later when Chang held a solo exhibition, Yau's brother-in-law asked art experts to verify the painting's authenticity and concluded it was

worth between HK\$2,000 and HK\$3,000 at that time. "Well, my pay per month was only HK\$30!" Yau chuckles.

She was also regularly hired by professors to clean their flats and take care of their children. "I worked at Professor Fu Yuen-ko's home for nine years. He used to live on the ground floor in Block A," Yau says. The children of Professors Fu, Tam Shang-wai, Ng Pak-tao and Ng Kung-fu all came under her care then, giving her the moniker, "Chung Chi Nanny".

Since nine years old, Yau has spent most of her time at CUHK. "I used to have all household keys. Chung Chi College is like home. My mother worked at Chung Chi Chapel and Ming Hua Tang too. A few years ago, a colleague of hers visited the Chapel and was able to recognise me—how amazing! That's why I always say Chung Chi is a sweet home."

Now that she has retired, Yau still lives a purposeful life at Chung Chi, serving as a Chapel volunteer. She is always happy to be home, the place where she grew up, started a family and formed the most heartwarming CUHK memories.

Audio-visual help at the ready

Ho Yuk-wing

PROFILE

Ho Yuk-wing joined the University Instructional Media Services in 1983 and is now technician of the Audio-Visual Division. One of the founding members of the Staff Football Club, he still sits on its board 30 years on. In 2019, he was conferred the 35-year Long Service Award.

The early 1980s was a time when electric trains were replacing Hong Kong's diesel locomotive fleet. Kowloon-Canton Railway Corporation was on an electrification drive, and the change, a transport milestone for the city, coincided with the start of Ho Yuk-wing's job at CUHK. Thanks to the technological advancement, he would hop on the new electrified rail service every day for a short ride from home in Fanling to campus. Right from the beginning, Ho was mesmerised by the unassuming natural beauty and tranquillity of the University. He says: "It was an unforgettable scene; the blooming rhododendrons were so beautiful. Flowers of the *bauhinia blakeana* and *bauhinia variegata* were lining the University Mall. Coupled with the rhododendrons in springtime, the campus made for a magnificent sight."

His work was at the University Instructional Media Services, making videos of large ceremonies, academic conferences and other



events. Ho and his colleagues also provided student activities with technical support and equipment. The workload was lighter and the pace more relaxed in those days, he said, there being only Chung Chi, New Asia and United Colleges to serve.

On the teaching side, the technicians' main job was to duplicate audio and video tapes as part of the Instructional Media Services' role of producing class material. Owing to their good work, language teaching units were able to play audio tapes of Cantonese, Mandarin, French, Spanish and German in class. Among the frequent users of their service was the New Asia-Yale-in-China Chinese Language Centre, now known as the Yale-China Chinese Language Centre.

Another duty was to print overhead transparencies—plastic sheets to place on the projector—for teachers and students.



"Back then, people would put a transparency on the projector and write on it, and the words would get projected on the screen," he says. "Now we can type directly on a computer."

The teaching material was plentiful; copying everything on the blackboard would have been a taxing and time-consuming exercise, so transparency production was in high demand. Teachers submitted their material ahead of time to the technicians, who would then create the slides on a first-come, first-served basis, taking one to two days per task. As much as possible, they catered to urgent requests, though fortunately these were rare as teachers had good time management and planning.

Founded in 1978, the Instructional Media Services underwent restructuring in the early 1990s. "We split into two teams. Some of us were assigned to the CUHK Press to handle audio-visual production. Gradually, this team morphed into today's Audio-



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Visual Division," the long-serving technician recalls. Audio-visual equipment and technical support for teaching, on the other hand, came under the purview of the Audio Visual Services Unit.

The outbreak of SARS in 2003 was an indelible memory in Ho's four decades in CUHK. "A deadly silence fell on campus. No students were coming

Through the club, we hope to bring together colleagues who feel a sense of belonging to the University and are passionate about football.



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here as all classes had been suspended. The 2003 epidemic dealt us a devastating blow, with many contracting the virus," he recalls.

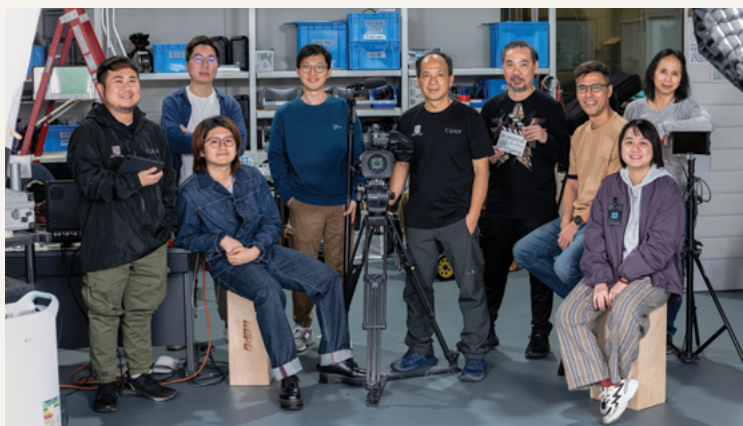
"I can never forget the massive wave of infections in Prince of Wales, our teaching hospital, where some of our colleagues were working. I empathised with the immense pressure they were facing and their resolve in fighting the virus."

On a lighter note, Ho has been a key member of the Staff Football Club, which arose from a sports craze that took hold on campus in the 1980s. Lots of students and staff members were participating in all sorts of sports. Outside of work, co-workers would meet up and play football.

Ho says: "In the beginning, there were more than a dozen regular players and everyone was excited. Then someone proposed that since we all shared a love of football, why not set up a staff football team?" The idea was at once greeted with much enthusiasm. In 1992, the Staff Football Club was born.

The Club charged members a modest annual fee of less than HK\$100 at its inception to make football shirts. Thirty years later, the sum has risen to HK\$180, but this now covers the costs of pitch booking and the Club's essential operations. Many professors and senior executives are patrons. Ho was one of the drafters of the Club's constitution, and still serves on the board today. He says: "Through the Club, we hope to bring together colleagues who feel a sense of belonging to the University and are passionate about football."

Skills, not seniority, count on the pitch. Ho believes that football can tear down walls between people, with senior executives, professors, officers and janitors uniting as one in the game and treasuring one another's company beyond the field. The deep bonds and affections he has gained throughout the years on the team are some of the crowning moments of his time at CUHK.



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- 1 Filming a student cultural activity in 1993 (courtesy of interviewee)
- 2 Staff Football Club members in the 2000s (courtesy of interviewee)
- 3 Ho Yuk-wing (5th left) with colleagues in the Audio-Visual Division

The watchful guardian of CUHK behind the scenes

Chan Shu-pui





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PROFILE

Chan Shu-pui joined CUHK in 1983 and spent seven years as a security officer before opting to become a school bus driver, transferring to the Transport Office. As a security officer, he had the arduous tasks of catching goats, dousing fires and administering first aid on top of his daily patrols; as a bus driver, he delivers passengers around campus safely and on time. He was awarded the 35-year Long Service Award in 2019 for his continual devotion to the University.

His face has, for years, been a comforting presence to generations of the CUHK community. His name is Chan Shu-pui, and to the University he has been many things: firefighter, first-aider, even goat-catcher. Albeit always staying in the background, Chan can lay claim to more than 40 years of faithful service.

His story in 1980s Hong Kong, before joining CUHK, was typical of those days: a garment production worker whose trade became a sunset industry when many factories relocated their assembly lines to the mainland. It was then that the University ran a recruitment advertisement in the newspaper for a position as security officer, and he duly applied for it.

Back then the Security Office had a fire department complete with a fire engine; Chan

Every evening there'd be three or four (goats) from Chek Nai Ping village next door. Whenever you got the call, you had to go and catch them...

recalls having to train every Saturday after getting off the morning shift. "We would go to the Science Centre, and underneath the 'rice cooker' we'd march in formation, and learn how to use hoses and hose reels to fight a fire. The water was even turned on sometimes—that way we wouldn't fumble when there was an actual fire." First-aid training provided by Hong Kong St John Ambulance at the University Health Centre (now University Medical Service Office) was also compulsory; so strict were the requirements that even after receiving their certificates of completion, the security officers had to renew it every three years.

Chan recalls: "Once, a student in the Adam Schall Residence turned on their hairdryer but left it on the bed and walked out to take a call. The hairdryer overheated and set the latex mattress alight! We had to drive the fire engine to the scene. The Fire Services Department came before we could fully put it out, so we left them to finish the job." Owing to the vastness of CUHK, he explained, government firefighters would take time to arrive, so it was vital that the security officers got a hold on the fire before things spiralled out of control.

There were three rotating shifts at the Security Office: morning, afternoon and night. Back in the day, the workload was heavy with multiple errands, whereas night shifts invariably entailed patrolling various buildings. With so much work on their hands, they took turns having lunch. Those were the days when CUHK would hire people to provide cooked lunches, and midnight snacks for night-shift workers. "We'd eat from 2am until 2.30am and they would send us our snacks using

the patrol cars," but he says those snacks were key to giving them energy to work. Chan describes the 1980s campus as almost Elysian, with colleagues mingling like one big family.

As security officers, they had a "special mission": goat-catching. "Every evening there'd be three or four of them from Chek Nai Ping village next door. Whenever you got the call, you had to go and catch them with a net shaped like a hula hoop. It was like a game at the funfair: you would see the goat, and then you'd throw the net. But it never worked."

The Security Office was especially on edge during typhoon season, and those on "typhoon shift" would have to be on standby. Chan says this shift was the toughest sort: not only did they have to check for fallen trees, but their prompt assistance was also required if a residence or hostel had broken windows, or was taking in water.

Built into a hillside, CUHK's scattered buildings all over the expansive slopes necessitated the creation of a connecting bus service. Chan was



stuffy, and dozens of people would be gasping for air when we had warm weather." He recalls how, in the 1990s, the school buses were all British imports. Two buses from Bedford Vehicles were especially hard to drive, always giving him sore arms after work. Their wheels were situated in a more forward position than a normal bus and had a wooden bench across them, so if a couple of students sat on it, their weight would make turning impossible no matter how hard he rotated the steering wheel. Eventually, they had to ban students from sitting on that particular bench.

Chan emphasises that school bus drivers are not confined to campus routes. He says: "In previous years, following a convocation, the University management would hold a farewell banquet, so I would drive the bus that took them there, and then do the return trip as well. There'd be 30 to 40 people making that trip, from CUHK to the banquet hall and back again."



2

always an avid driver, and in 1990 he decided to switch to driving campus buses—a job he still does to this day. When he joined the Transport Office, only about 10 people were directly employed due to the fewer routes and lower frequency; all "meet-class buses" were subcontracted to outside drivers. Compared to security work, Chan feels that driving is a much lighter job—with only morning and night shifts, the latter ending at 11pm, he no longer needed to be a night owl.

School buses nowadays have automatic gears and air conditioning, giving both driver and passengers a comfortable ride. "Years ago, none of the buses had air-con," Chan says. "It was very

The University's periodic invitations of luminaries and scholars also provided special opportunities. In 2004, CUHK awarded China's first astronaut Yang Liwei an honorary doctorate in science, and it was Chan who had the privilege of driving him in a VIP vehicle. They did not speak much, but the close encounter with China's first man in space was, for Chan, a moment in his decades-long career he could never forget.

1 Chan Shu-pui drives a fire engine while working at the Security Office, 1980s (courtesy of interviewee)

2 Chan Shu-pui poses with a school-bus, 2003 (courtesy of interviewee)



Appointments

New Council members



Mrs Ann Kung Yeung Yun-chi



Mr Eric Ma Siu-cheung



Professor Poon Wai-yin



Mr Eric Chan Cho-biu



Mr Charles Leung Ying-wai



Ms Lina Yan Hau-yee



Mr Clement Fung Siu-to



Ms Sonia Cheng Chi-man



Mr Peter Kung



Dr Luk Che-chung



Mr Albert Wong Hak-keung



Mr Stewart Cheng Kam-chiu



Professor Nelson Chen



Professor Wong Wing-shing



Professor Kwan Mei-po

New Council members



Professor Anthony Chan Tak-cheung



Professor Chiu Chi-yue



Professor Anthony So Man-cho

	Name	Period
New Member	Mrs Ann Kung Yeung Yun-chi	27.11.2023 – 26.11.2026
	Mr Eric Ma Siu-cheung	27.11.2023 – 26.11.2026
	Professor Poon Wai-yin	14.12.2023 – 30.4.2026
	Mr Eric Chan Cho-biu	8.12.2023 – 7.12.2024
	Mr Charles Leung Ying-wai	8.12.2023 – 7.12.2024
	Ms Lina Yan Hau-yee	8.12.2023 – 7.12.2024
	Mr Clement Fung Siu-to	8.12.2023 – 25.1.2024
	Ms Sonia Cheng Chi-man	14.12.2023 – 13.12.2026
	Mr Peter Kung	14.12.2023 – 13.12.2026
	Dr Luk Che-chung	14.12.2023 – 13.12.2026
	Mr Albert Wong Hak-keung	14.12.2023 – 13.12.2026
	Mr Stewart Cheng Kam-chiu	26.1.2024 – 7.12.2024
	Professor Nelson Chen	2.2.2024 – 1.2.2025
	Professor Wong Wing-shing	2.2.2024 – 1.2.2025
	Professor Kwan Mei-po	19.1.2024 - 18.1.2025
	Professor Anthony Chan Tak-cheung	19.1.2024 - 18.1.2025
	Professor Chiu Chi-yue	22.1.2024 - 21.1.2025
	Professor Anthony So Man-cho	22.1.2024 - 21.1.2025

University officers and senior staff



Mrs Amelia Wong Chan Wai-ping













Professor Philip Chiu Wai-yan



Professor Tsang Hon-ki

		Name	Period
New	University Secretary	Mrs Amelia Wong Chan Wai-ping	13.12.2023 – 31.12.2024
	Dean of the Faculty of Medicine	Professor Philip Chiu Wai-yan	1.2.2024 – 31.1.2029
	Dean of the Faculty of Engineering	Professor Tsang Hon-ki	1.5.2024 – 30.4.2029

Emeritus professors

1.11.2023	25.1.2024	1.3.2024
		
Professor Chan Kalok Department of Finance	Professor Lan Hui-yao Department of Medicine and Therapeutics	Professor Yeoh Eng-kiong The Jockey Club School of Public Health and Primary Care
1.8.2024		
		
Professor Tam Wai-lun Department of Cultural and Religious Studies	Professor Gladys Tang Wai-lan Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages	Professor Michael Cheng Kwok-keung Department of Electronic Engineering
		
Professor Paul Chan Kay-sheung Department of Microbiology	Professor Wan Song Department of Surgery	Professor Liu Zhifeng Department of Chemistry
		
Professor Chan Wood-yee School of Biomedical Sciences		



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The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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