

## Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Social Science, *honoris causa* A Citation



### **Chow Kwen-lim, MBE, JP**

Mr. Chow Kwen-lim is the Chairman and President of the Chow Sang Sang Holdings International Limited. A native of Shunde in Guangdong, Mr. Chow was born into a family of jewellers, his late father having started the family firm in Guangzhou. The name Chow Sang Sang, which literally means "incessant growth", was adopted for its connotation of self-renewal and perpetual development. Mr. Chow has certainly brought his father's wish to fruition. During the years of Japanese invasion, Mr. Chow, at the age of ten, moved to Macau to help operate the family business while continuing with his education. He then came to Hong Kong in 1948 and, together with his brothers Messrs Chow Kwen-ling and Chow Kwen-yam, founded Chow Sang Sang as a goldsmith business. The Chow brothers soon expanded their business and today the Chow Sang Sang Holdings is a large, diversified and international conglomerate with a staff of over 1,300. It is a leader in the jewellery industry in Hong Kong and its success is well-known to all.

Under the leadership of Mr. Chow Kwen-lim, the Chow Sang Sang Holdings grew rapidly and the quality of its products improved day by day. Not only is the firm a household name in Hong Kong, but it is also well-known abroad. Mr. Chow established a jewellery business in Guangzhou as early as 1958 and the sales contributed to the building up of the country's foreign currency reserve. Currently Chow Sang Sang has 13 establishments on the mainland and ten mainstream outlets in Taiwan. To meet the demands of a younger market the company has made efforts to modify its products, and as a result the "Emphasis" has been set up with great success. The company also revamps its production strategy to bring in western techniques which blend well with the traditional art of the Chinese jewellers, and complements the high reputation of the company with innovative design concepts. Mr. Chow's vision and foresight are much praised by his peers, as is evidenced by the outstanding achievement award bestowed on him by the jewellery industry.

While his business is firmly rooted in Hong Kong, Mr. Chow casts his eye on the wider world. In addition to managing and developing his substantial business interests, he also actively supports community services, bilateral trade between Hong Kong and the Mainland, as well as the promotion of education. Over the years he has held innumerable public offices, paying special attention to youth services, educational enterprises, the Community Chest, the Po Leung Kuk, Caritas Hong Kong and the Lok Sin Tong Benevolent Society. He was also a member of the Sham Shui Po District Board, the Honorary Vice-President of the Hong Kong Girl Guides Association, the Vice-President of the Scout Association of Hong Kong, the First Vice-President and Honorary Treasurer of the Lion Club of Bayview Hong Kong,



and a member of the Board of Management of the Chinese Permanent Cemeteries. Mr. Chow has been presented with many awards, among them the Silver Carp Award of the Girl Guides and the Golden Dragon Award of the Scouts. A Justice of the Peace, Mr. Chow was a Hong Kong District Affairs Adviser and, in recognition of his significant contribution to the community, was made a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Mr. Chow also actively promotes trade and commerce and supports education for young people in Mainland China. In Shunde, the place his family hails from, he founded schools, preserved ancient monuments, introduced ecological measures and developed tourism as practical ways to bring prosperity to the people of his native place. Mr. Chow's devotion to his homeland and country is well acknowledged, and he now holds honorary citizenships of the cities of Guangzhou, Shunde, Foshan and Changle. Furthermore, he is also a delegate of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference of Shunde.

Mr. Chow is an enthusiastic supporter of higher education in Guangdong and beyond. In his typically practical and low-key manner he chose to be an anonymous donor of the Award for Students/Teachers Sponsored by a Hong Kong Citizen at Fudan University in Shanghai. He holds the view that while human pursuits are finite, a nation's capacity for development is infinite and that to nurture and educate the young is fundamental to the future of China. With his broad vision and perspective, Mr. Chow has made invaluable contributions to Fudan University in his capacity as Honorary Professor and University Council Member.

Blessed with a generous mind and a pleasant character, Mr. Chow is known for his warmth as a person. Despite the resources at his command he is not extravagant in his life style, and he has friends all over the world. He is a major collector of antiques and enjoys travelling with his friends. An accomplished photographer, he has published several very substantial collections of photographs taken during his travels abroad. These include *Chow Kwen Lim's Travels in Europe: A Photo Album* and *Chow Kwen Lim's Travels in Pictures*. Both publications are full of vivid and varied colours, as Mr. Chow captures cities large and small, and moods rustic and romantic, with his camera, and records them for posterity.

Mr. Chow has led a perfect life not only because of his considerable wealth but, more importantly, because of a happy marriage of over 50 years. Mr. and Mrs Chow have four children who are all putting their fine education to good use. A cultured man, Mr. Vincent Chow, his eldest son, Justice of the Peace, and was made a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire. In addition to being the General Manager of the Chow Sang Sang Holdings, Mr. Vincent Chow is the Chairman of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, in which he plays a pivotal role in the development of the arts in Hong Kong.



Apart from his many commitments to community service, Mr. Chow Kwen-lim is also a supporter of higher education in Hong Kong over the years. He is a voting member of the University of Hong Kong Foundation of Educational Development and Research and a member of the Board of Trustees of New Asia College of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. During his term he made substantial contributions to the construction of a student hostel, to the foundation of scholarships which enabled Mainland students of quality to pursue higher studies at the Chinese University, and for the development of language training facilities at the New Asia College. In recognition of his outstanding achievements in the realm of business, and his exemplary acts of benevolence, Mr. Chancellor, it is with great pleasure that I present Chow Kwen-lim for the award of the degree of Doctor of Social Science, *honoris causa*.