

Honorary Doctor of Laws

Mr Norman LEUNG Nai-pang, GBS, JP

Citation written and delivered by Professor Edmond KO

Chairman:

As City University of Hong Kong celebrates its 20th Anniversary, it is only fitting that we are here to honour someone who has made a significant contribution to the development of the institution over most of its history. Mr Norman Leung Nai Pang became a member of the Council in 1985 and served for nineteen years, the last seven in the capacity of Council Chairman. Over that period, Mr Leung was one of those who steered the growth of the institution, from Mongkok to Kowloon Tong and from polytechnic to university — in short, from a humble beginning to a leading university in the Asia-Pacific region.

The first twenty years of Mr Leung's life is no less compelling a story. He was born into a wealthy family, but the family fortune took a turn for the worse when they moved to Hong Kong in 1949. As a young boy growing up in Cheung Chau Island, Mr Leung started working at the tender age of twelve. He did not have a chance to study English and taught himself through self-study, part-time tuition, and regular contact with the English-speaking guests during his first job — as a page boy in a hotel. Eight years later, he finally had the chance to pursue full-time studies, starting as a Form 3 student at the age of twenty. Despite these early challenges, Mr Leung went on to study Economics and Political Science at the University of Hong Kong and then law at the College of Law in Guildford, England.

The fact that Mr Leung, with a non-law background, took less than four years from studying law to obtaining qualifications as a solicitor is an inspiration to young people in Hong Kong and to our students in particular. It is just as admirable that Mr Leung spent twenty-two years of his legal career in a single firm, Woo and Woo. Mr Leung played a significant role in the growth of the firm, from a staff of 20 to 120, and took pride in the firm's commitment in providing legal assistance to their clients. From Cheung Chau to Central, from page boy to senior partner — in short, from a humble beginning to a leading public figure in Hong Kong.

Mr Leung has pursued a second career as a business executive after his illustrious legal practice. Currently he is Executive Deputy Chairman of Television Broadcasts Ltd., Deputy Chairman of Kowloon Motor Bus Holdings Ltd. and Director of Wing Lung Bank Ltd.

Mr Leung learned from his formative years several lessons which he still holds dear today. First, Hong Kong is a place of opportunity where one can accomplish almost anything through perseverance and hard work. In Hong Kong the future lies in our own hands. Second, education empowers people and having a well-educated workforce enables the society to advance. Third, we all can benefit from a helping hand. The fact that there were people who stood by Mr Leung at moments of need meant a lot to him, so much so that he has devoted much of his life and career to helping others.

It is easy to document Mr Leung's significant contribution to public service. Among other duties, he has served as Member of the Electoral Affairs Commission, Chairman of the Broadcasting Authority, Commissioner of Civil Aid Service, Member of the University Grants Committee, and Member of Hong Kong Housing Authority. But perhaps even more impressive than these appointments are his personal acts of kindness extended to those in need. It is not at all unusual for Mr Leung to send a personal cheque to people in difficulty whose stories he has read about in the newspapers.

Grateful for the educational opportunities given to him, Mr Leung has helped create such opportunities for others. Besides his association with this University, Mr Leung played a central role in the planning and founding of Dongguan Polytechnic, and donated funds to support the establishment of a primary school and a kindergarten at his birthplace. He was named an "Honorary Citizen" by the City of Dongguan.

It is often said that behind every successful man there is a woman. In the case of Mr Leung, there are two — his mother, who instilled in him integrity, aspiration, a fighting spirit, and a caring heart; and his wife, whose unfailing support has enabled him to accomplish what we are here to recognize today.

Mr Chairman, in recognition of Mr Leung's outstanding contribution to the development of higher education in Hong Kong and to public service, I now present to you Mr Norman Leung Nai-pang for the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.