

# Honorary Fellow Mr Simon Hui Hing-tak

*Citation written and delivered by Professor Dou Wenyu*

Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of the Council and President:

Mr Simon Hui Hing-tak, Class of 1991, is the founder, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of E.P.S.A. Corporation Limited. Printed on the wall facing the reception desk in his company is a sentence that proclaims, “The passion of one ignites many.” Hidden from public view but prominently displayed in one of the meeting rooms is another that seems to have been extended from it: “Our business materializes the science of creating customers’ satisfaction and joy.” Together, these two statements spell out not only the principle by which Mr Hui runs his business, but also a life’s creed that makes him an innovative business entrepreneur.

Mr Hui has been known for initiating a series of inventive measures in his business life. With his fertile imagination, he has been able to discover opportunities where others have seen none. Sensing the need for logistical efficiency across business sectors in the late 1980s, he started a courier service in 1988 at the same time he began his studies at CityU.

When the economy became lethargic in 1994, he capitalised on the experience he gained from his courier service and started a wholesale and distribution business in electronic products. He stimulated sales by means of an entirely new business model at the time, a monthly redemption programme. Customers were able to enjoy greatly reduced prices at hundreds of convenient redemption points. In 1998, he launched the first watch vending machine in Hong Kong, which was second to none in the world. In 2002, he recognised the potential of the Octopus Card well ahead of others, patented two of his associated inventions and brought a line of Octopus-related products to the market. In 2011, he consolidated most of his products into his new wholly-owned retail chain and expanded it to almost all districts in Hong Kong in three years. Today, E. P. S. A. specialises in the direct sale of small appliances, beauty and fitness

equipment as well as lifestyle products, which Mr Hui bulk buys and sells under the categorised brands owned by his company, thus obviating the need for wholesalers.

Mr Hui marked the beginning of his long involvement with his alma mater after he reconnected with CityU in 2000. Over the years, he has participated in CityU programmes as a sponsor, mentor, committee member and advisor. He is a member of the University Court and the Board of Advisors of the Alumni Ambassador Scheme. In 2012, he was recognised as a Pine Awardee and Honorary Member of the CityU Alumni Giving Club for his generous donations. In 2011 he was the co-founder and now the Chairman of the CityU Eminence Society, which benefits its members and the University by organising exchange tours, fundraising campaigns, forums, University-related projects and special events in which members of the University can interact with people in industry.

Mr Hui is just as generous with the larger community in terms of his time and energy. He was the President of Lions Club of Metropolitan Hong Kong in 2011 and is currently Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Entrepreneurs Organisation and Executive Director of the Hong Kong-Hunan Youth Exchange Promotion Association, among his other roles.

Mr Hui is quick to stress the important role that passion plays in his life. “Passion is what makes life *guoyin*,” he explains with a colourful colloquialism that means “immensely enjoyable”. That he approaches his work every day as if it were a new adventure is attributable to his strong zest for life. Young students these days, he observes, can be broadly divided into two types: those who do nothing other than studying and those who spend all their time playing. While they cannot be more different on the surface, they both act in response to what they have been told. Rather than being guided by what they are passionate about, they merely react, either positively or negatively, to the demands of others. Consequently, what they do lacks conviction and verve. Truly successful people take the time to find out what motivates them. Only then will one’s passion ignite many, bringing true satisfaction and joy to oneself as well as others.

Mr Pro-Chancellor, Mr Chairman of the Council and Mr President, the business practices of Mr Simon Hui Hing-tak are testimony to his originality and imagination. He has served CityU and the larger community with great generosity, while his insistence on living by his passion is an inspiration to all. In recognition of his contributions, I request the University confer upon him the title of Honorary Fellow of the University.