

HIGHER LEARNING

A timely donation gives a boost to PolyU's initiatives of providing life-long learning opportunities.

By Cynthia Wan



On a sunny morning on December 4, 2001, students, academics and honoured guests gathered in the shade of Hong Kong Polytechnic University's newest building to officially name the 18-storey tower after one of its chief benefactors.

Located at the heart of the campus, the Li Ka Shing Tower forms the centre-point of PolyU's Phase VI development project, blending in seamlessly with the campus' signature redbrick outlook, yet standing out as a distinctive architectural landmark. The overall design incorporates two basic forms prevailing on campus: blocks and cylinders, with interlocking geometrical glass and brick forms creating a sense of symmetry and solidity.

The naming came in recognition of a HK\$100 million (approximately US\$12.8 million) donation made by the Li Ka-shing Foundation in support of the University's mission to achieve "academic excellence in a professional context". The building provides a total



Students will benefit from the new facilities.

gross floor area of about 22,500 sq. m., greatly increasing the facilities available on campus. It accommodates 500 computer workstations, classrooms, lecture theatres, administrative offices, academic departments and staff restaurants while the top floor will serve as the Campus Headquarters, occupied by the University President, council members and the senate.

The tower stands on the former site of the Main Building, which was

opened in 1957 at the then-Hong Kong Technical College. The HK\$500-million construction fee was sponsored by the University Grants Committee, the funding allocation agency for all public universities in Hong Kong.

Construction commenced in early 1999 and the building was opened for occupation in phases from October 2000.

Students at PolyU were delighted with the new addition: "The 500 new computers will make a tremendous difference," said English major Natalie Cheung. "Demand for work stations has been exceeding supply, especially during exam periods. This will help us all do better."

Alex Leung, a first-year Tourism student, said he was eager to check out the new software available and to attend classes in the new lecture theatres. "Excellent facilities help produce excellent results," he said.



The PolyU campus with the landmark Li Ka Shing Tower at its centre.

University President Professor Poon Chung-kwong said Mr Li was well known for his views that education and a society's economic development are closely linked. "His donation is a demonstration of support for PolyU's goal of forging 'dedicated partnerships with business and industry' and its motto 'to learn and to apply, for the benefit of mankind'."

The working class of Hong Kong previously had few opportunities to continue their education. The financial support provided by Mr Li Ka-shing is a donation not only to the PolyU, but also to Hong Kong as a whole, Professor Poon added.

"With the donation going to life-long learning and the development of small- and medium-sized enterprises, we believe the community will benefit both directly and indirectly."

The HK\$100 million from Mr Li—the biggest personal donation ever received by PolyU—came as a godsend to the University's ongoing, self-financed initiatives to provide education opportunities for mature and working students, as well as to enhance the competitiveness of business and industry.


The money will directly benefit the University's School of Professional Education and Executive Development (SPEED) and the Institute for Enterprise (IFE), which together offer over 1,170 programmes each year to more than 26,000 working adults.

SPEED is taking steps to expand its Associate Degree programme offerings and has submitted a proposal to the Government to establish a Community College, which, if approved, will be able to draw on the donation to assist students whose tuition is not subsidised.

The IFE offers professional services to enhance the competitiveness of business and industry. It provides a self-financed one-stop-shop for companies and organisations wishing to make use of the University's professional services in new technology

and product development, management and executive training, and enterprise and business development.

Professor Poon said Mr Li's support was particularly meaningful in a changing economic environment. "As Hong Kong heads towards a knowledge-based economy, Mr Li has

enthusiastically donated towards the development of higher education to help strengthen its pool of talents. His vision and support for us thus means much more than sponsoring PolyU and tertiary education, it is about enhancing the competitive edge of Hong Kong as a whole." 

THE 3Qs OF SUCCESS

Mr Li Ka-shing's Naming Ceremony Speech

WHEN MY COLLEAGUES learned of today's topic, they offered an abundance of diverse opinions. Some thought 5Qs would be more encompassing than just 3Qs and some said an infinite number of Qs would be required to cover everything.

Well, everybody knows that I am neither a scholar nor am I presenting a paper today. I just want to share some of my observations and knowledge, drawn from reading and filtered through my experiences in life.

Is there a QED (*quod erat demonstrandum*) formula for success that holds true everywhere and always?

Each and every one of us may have grandiose visions and dream great dreams. The demarcation, of course, is whether we are able to turn our dreams into reality.

When we triumph, will we continue in our pursuit of excellence? When we fail, will we become fixated by nostalgia and fall into a dark abyss of despair?

In life we all have to face tough impositions that at times cut right through us like chilling winds. That goes for the most learned and the most successful, and likewise for me. Like everyone else, I also have my share of unfulfilled dreams, disappointments, disillusionments and anger. And I have wept when sadness has taxed my soul.

Life, with all its complexity and ever-changing nature, is a perennial challenge.

Our IQ helps us gauge problems cerebrally, logically and analytically, enabling us to acquire the technical skills and professional expertise that helps us navigate our course.

Our EQ (emotional quotient) guides us through self awareness and empathy, strengthening the "esprit de corps" in the

family and in school as well as at work.

Our SQ (spiritual quotient) is the compass that guides our quest for values and beliefs as we encounter life's qualitative differences with independence of mind, critical thinking and creativity. SQ transforms experiences into sagacity, empowering us with perseverance and countenance.

For me, all three Qs are equally important. Together they add up to much more than the sum of their parts.

Today, the global economic outlook is certainly not encouraging. This downturn makes life more difficult. Unfortunately there is no perfect solution in such times of change, which adds to the hardship, and there is no reassurance that our problems will ease shortly.

The wise have long realised that today is no longer yesterday; change, whether desirable or not, is inevitable. Even if devoid of immediate solutions, these wise individuals will not be paralysed into malady and inertia.

Their focus is not myopic; they seek out the positive over the petty and paltry. They know that facing life's vicissitudes proactively is part of what makes life worth living and that accumulating experiences fortifies the foundation of success. Even if their trials and tribulations persist they will prevail, because they are enterprising and ready for all possibilities.

Dear friends, we all at times wish for a magic wand that will bring us success by a mere wave of our hands. Some are totally consumed by this thought, yet the best of what we are lies in what we hope to be. In the book of life, each of us is the author of the chapter of our success.

Thank you very much.

COURTESY HK POLYU (2)