

Honorary Fellow A Citation

Mr Yau Ying-sum, William, BSSc, MBA

In the chapter 'Chang Gong Pian' of the ancient classic *Lüshi Chunqiu*, it says, 'Whilst a good farmer is able to tell a good farm and is attentive to farming, there is no guarantee of a harvest; when there is a harvest, however, he is sure to reap the rewards. The timely rain is pivotal to the harvest; whether there is timely rain is decided by the universe instead of good farmers.' It describes ancient people's belief that to accomplish great feats takes perseverance as well as good fortune. Only through these two things will one know when to act and when to wait to gain the help of natural forces.

Mr William Yau came from the grass roots. Through dedication and determination in his academic pursuits, however, he graduated from United College of The Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1975 with a bachelor's degree in Economics, and went on to complete CUHK's part-time MBA Programme in 1984. After graduation, Mr Yau launched his career in the garment industry, making an impact early on. In the 1980s, he took up the position of Far East Managing Director of The Arrow Company, specialising in merchandising. Through frequent site visits to Southeast Asian countries, Mr Yau gained a good insight into the manufacturing market there. In the 1990s, he served as the Vice President of the Sales and Production Department of Crocodile Garments Limited. He later took over the sales management role for the TY Wong family's textile factory in Indonesia. In 1995, Mr Yau founded Ongood Industrial Limited (Ongood) and has since served as its Managing Director. Headquartered in Hong Kong, Ongood has now developed into a multi-national company with branches in mainland China, Vietnam and Bangladesh. The company's garment products are exported to overseas markets including the United States. In addition to running a business, Mr Yau also stands out in his ability to keep promises. Even amid market adversities, Mr Yau would fulfil his commitments by completing orders and arranging shipments on time. This helped him gain his customers' trust, enabling him to build a long-lasting customer base. Mr Yau treats people with sincerity and is a man of his word, which is why he has been so successful in his career.

Loyal and reliable, Mr Yau also has vision, ambition and an instinct for innovation. In the 1990s, when process manufacturing took off in China, Mr Yau had already spotted Vietnam's potential to be Asia's largest export processing base behind China. After decades of reform and opening up, China has been witnessing a persistent rise in manufacturing costs, which is not conducive to the development

of process manufacturing. The United College song says, 'When it's time to stop, stop; when it's time to act, act.' As a graduate of United College, Mr Yau clearly understands this well, and has applied it to his business practices, leading to his bold decision to invest in Vietnam. This decision put him among the first-generation of Hong Kong garment businessmen in Vietnam, and soon paid dividends. Thanks to Vietnam's low labour costs and the concessions on exports to the United States, Ongood received a large amount of orders. This proved Mr Yau right, and is a testament to his farsightedness.

Throughout his career, Mr Yau has dared to take risks and has fittingly accomplished much. When it comes to dealing with people and matters though, he is modest and unassuming. When asked about his key to success, Mr Yau said, 'Being successful in business requires 30% strength and 70% luck.' In fact, he believes personal achievements are helped by good timing and fortune, which aligns with the philosophy echoed in the *Lüshi Chunqiu*: 'one thrives with the right timing, the right place and the right people'. The chapter of 'Da Yu Mo' of the classical Literature *Shangshu* tells us, 'Complacency leads to losses and modesty brings gains. This is a natural law.' A modest and low-key person, Mr Yau has naturally received help from nature. It is only reasonable that he has also reached success.

Over the years, Mr Yau has devoted himself to the development of Hong Kong's garment and textile industry, taking up numerous public service positions including Member of the Executive Committee of the Hong Kong Garment Manufacturers Association since 1991, and Member of the Textile and Clothing Training Board of the Vocational Training Council between 2004 and 2008. He also actively represents the industry in public affairs, making enormous contributions.

Mr Yau grew up in a poor family. Only through determination and hard work has he achieved his many feats. Memories of his difficult childhood have fuelled his enthusiasm for education. In order to help disadvantaged students complete their education and attain bright futures, he has made significant donations to United College. With these donations, the 'Yau Ying Sum Hostel Residence Grants' was established, which provides financial assistance to cash-strapped students for their hostel residence. The grant has benefitted a large number of deprived students, providing them with more opportunities to participate in campus and college activities and a better environment to concentrate on their studies. Mr Yau also helped set up the 'Yau Ying Sum Scholarships', which provide opportunities and financial support for poor mainland students to study in CUHK and enjoy the campus life, carefree. His kindness and benevolence certainly have had profound influences.

Over the years, Mr Yau has made generous donations to CUHK, United College and the Federation of Alumni Associations of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK FAA) to set up numerous scholarships and to support various student development programmes. He has been very supportive of the education services provided by CUHK FAA, including the establishment of several primary and secondary school scholarships. He is also a staunch supporter of his *alma mater*, making significant donations to support events such as subsidising the 'Xiao Bian Dan Operation' and publishing the CUHK Alumni Book Series. From his generous donations, his passion for CUHK has extended to his participation in college and alumni affairs and his invaluable advice on college development. Mr Yau is now a member of the Board of Trustees of United College and an Honorary Adviser of the United College Alumni Association, as well as Manager of the CUHK FAA Thomas Cheung School. He has also helped in the establishment of and the fund raising for the CUHK Alumni Torch Fund to support the long-term development of the University.

Mr Yau is a remarkable alumnus of the University and has made immense contributions to the textile industry. His benevolence and selfless contributions, which have benefitted students extensively, epitomise the spirit of United College. Mr Chairman, it is my great honour to present to you Mr Yau Ying-sum, William for the award of an Honorary Fellowship of the University.