

New President Takes the Helm at PolyU



On 8 April, Prof. Timothy W. Tong was formally inaugurated as President of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He has assumed the post since 1 January this year.

"I am confident that Prof. Tong has the wisdom, experience and ability to lead this great university through the challenging time and the University will successfully land on where we aspire to be in the future," said Mr Victor Lo Chung-wing, Chairman of the University Council, at the ceremony.

Mr Lo then presented the Presidential Medallion and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University Ordinance to Prof. Tong.

The ceremony was attended by about 1,000 guests, including community leaders, friends from the academic,

business, professional and public sectors in Hong Kong, the Chinese mainland and abroad, outstanding alumni, PolyU students and staff.

The guests included Ms Yan Junqi, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress; Mr Li Gang, Deputy Director; and Mr Pan Yong Hua, Director General of Education, Science and Technology Department, both of the Liaison Office of Central People's Government in the HKSAR; Mrs Rita Lau, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development; Ms Florence Hui, Under Secretary for Home Affairs; Mr Raymond Wong, Permanent Secretary for Education; Mr Eddy Y.T. Chan, Commissioner for Innovation and Technology; and Miss Margaret Fong, Commissioner for Tourism.



The Presidential Medallion charts the history of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University by incorporating the logos of the Government Trade School founded in 1937, the Hong Kong Technical College in 1947, the Hong Kong Polytechnic in 1972, and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University from 1994. Linking up these logos signifies that while the names and the roles have changed over time, the University remains firmly committed to the motto 開物成務 勵學利民 (translation: "To learn and to apply, for the benefit of mankind").



Vision for the Future

In his inaugural address, themed “Proud of our Past, and Primed for the Future”, Prof. Tong said: “The presidency is not just a title, but a great privilege and an opportunity to make a difference. I am truly thankful for this opportunity to serve PolyU and Hong Kong.”

He paid tribute to his predecessor, Prof. Poon Chung-kwong, and praised the Faculties and the Schools for making steadfast advances on different fronts. Citing the motto of PolyU, he said: “We take pride in supporting our academics to conduct research that has impact and practical value, and in providing educational programmes that nurture quality professionals for our society.”

Outlining his vision for PolyU, Prof. Tong said: “The over-arching goal of this University is to prepare our students to meet the needs of the region and rise to the challenge of the new global age.”

He also called upon PolyU students and graduates to become “practical dreamers”, capable of devising innovative solutions to meet “our practical everyday needs and solve our everyday problems”.

Prof. Tong stressed that “PolyU carries a different mission from other universities” as it has always soared to great heights by staying close to the practical needs of our community and our country. During his term of office, “this application-oriented research culture and capability will be further promoted and strengthened,” he said.

Since Prof. Tong took office on 1 January, he has visited almost all the academic and numerous administrative units of the University. He has also engaged colleagues and students in many small-group discussions to listen to their concerns and ideas for improving and advancing the University.

“I have heard about the challenges and opportunities brought about by the development and implementation of a four-year undergraduate curriculum, the requirements of an outcome-based education, our positioning in research and the job prospects of our graduates in the

current economic situation,” said Prof. Tong.

He assured that these issues will receive attention from his administration as he strives to take PolyU to a higher level of excellence.

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He also set out priorities for PolyU in the years ahead. These are: sustainable urban development for the well-being of the community; innovation and entrepreneurship

against a backdrop of global competition; advanced executive education to enhance the skills of the working professionals; and support for the development in the Pearl River Delta Region.

“I want members of PolyU to find personal fulfillment in the larger community beyond its boundaries. We are global, yet firmly grounded in the local; we are practical, yet driven by our dreams to make our life and our world better,” said Prof. Tong.

He stressed that education is a labour-intensive and capital-intensive endeavour and called for continuous support from the Government and the community at large.

Prof. Tong also thanked his parents for the values they instilled in him and the opportunities they provided him. This prompted a rousing round of applause from the audience for his parents who were sitting in the front row.

The ceremony was attended by representatives of several student bodies. “We are impressed by Prof. Tong’s approachable style. We had a chat with him when he attended our pun-choi dinner and found him very willing to listen to us,” said Mr Winston Leung, President of the PolyU Students’ Union. His views were echoed by other members of the executive committee.

“We were touched when the President called upon us to become ‘practical dreamers’. I’ll be graduating this year and am proud to be a graduate of PolyU,” said Miss Karmen Cheung, Local Committee President of AIESEC at PolyU. “We are confident that Prof. Tong will lead PolyU to achieve further excellence.”

About Prof. Tong

- Born & raised in Hong Kong
- Obtained Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Oregon State University in 1976
- Obtained Master of Science & PhD in Mechanical Engineering from University of California at Berkeley respectively in 1978 & 1980
- Completed doctoral study under the tutelage of the pre-eminent educator, the late Prof. Tien Chang-lin
- Served in different capacities at University of Kentucky, Arizona State University, Colorado State University, Sandia National Laboratories and National Science Foundation
- Served as Dean of School of Engineering and Applied Science at The George Washington University before joining PolyU
- Elected Fellow of American Society of Mechanical Engineers and International Thermal Conductivity Conference
- Specializes in heat transfer research
- Provided consultancy services for Lockheed, McDonnell Douglas, Motorola, FMC, Oakridge National Laboratory
- Voted Teacher of the Year for three consecutive years from 1994 to 1996 by the Arizona State University Chapter of Pi Tau Sigma
- Received Ralph R. Teetor Educational Award from the Society of Automotive Engineers in 1985

To celebrate the inauguration of Prof. Tong, a series of activities were held from 6 to 9 April on the campus. Apart from strengthening its ties within the PolyU community and with its stakeholders, the events also provided valuable learning opportunities for undergraduates.

Hours of Power by Outstanding Alumni

Four distinguished PolyU alumni spoke at a Forum entitled “Hours of Power” on 7 April to share with students and staff members their success stories. They were Prof. Ng Sai-ho, Consultant at DLS Management Ltd; Ir Otto Poon Lok-to, Founder and Managing Director of Analogue Group of Companies; Mrs Yvonne Law Shing Mo-han, National Chief Knowledge Officer and Partner of Deloitte



Touche Tohmatsu; Mr Freeman Lau, Partner of Kan & Lau Design Consultants.

At the forum, Prof. Tong urged students not to just look at the achievements the

alumni had made, but their efforts; not to just enjoy the well-provided education opportunities, but saw how one could give back to the community.

Mainland Delegation Shows Support

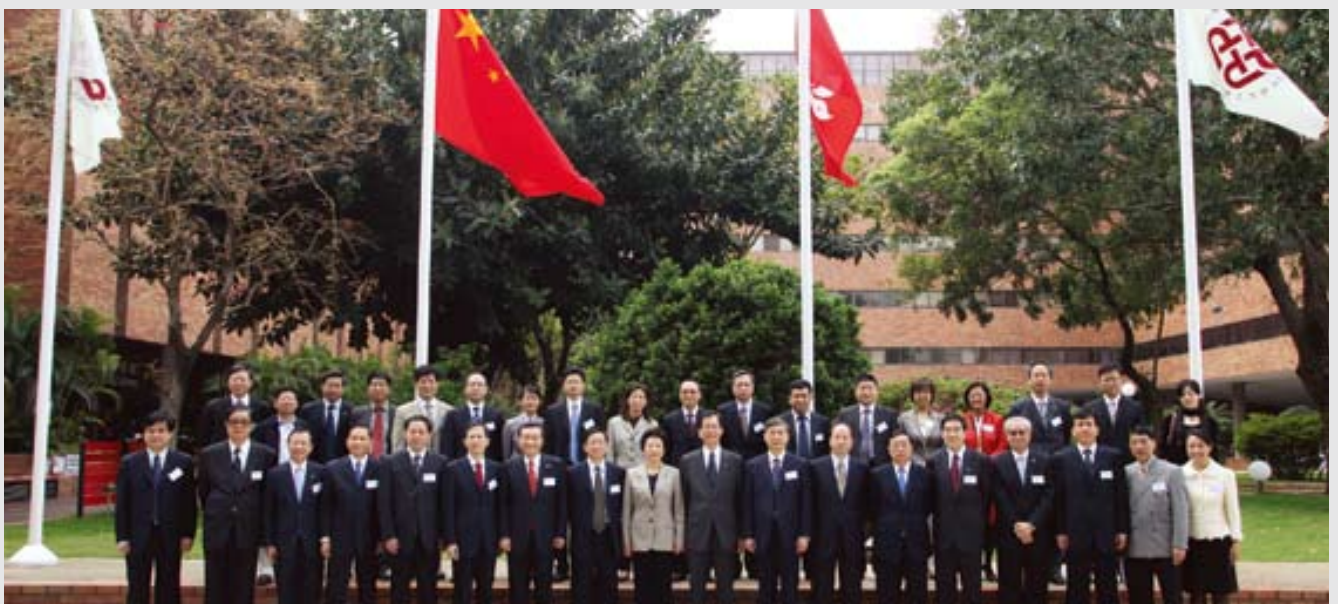
About 50 representatives from 18 mainland and Macau universities and government bodies visited Hong Kong to participate in the Presidential Inauguration Ceremony. They included Ms Yan Junqi (front row, ninth from left), Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress; Prof. Zhou Qi-feng,

President of Peking University; Prof. Li Peigen, President of Huazhong University of Science and Technology; Prof. Liu Chuansheng, Party Secretary General of the Beijing Normal University; and Prof. Chiu Wai, President of the University of Macau.

Before the ceremony, Prof. Tong met Ms Yan and the mainland delegates and

briefed them on the development of PolyU and explored opportunities for future collaboration.

Prof. Tong said: “We look forward to having further collaboration with institutions on the mainland and nurturing more talents for the motherland in the future.”





Heavyweights Grace the Occasion

Two Nobel Laureates in Economics, Prof. Robert Mundell and Prof. John Nash Jr., visited Hong Kong to share their insights at the “2009 Nobel Laureates Forum”, a highlight of the inauguration activities on 7 April.

Response to the forum, with “The Global Financial Crisis” as its theme, was overwhelming. Prof. Mundell spoke on “Financial Crisis and International Monetary Reform”, while Prof. Nash spoke on “Ideal Money and Asymptotically Ideal Money”.

The Graduate School of Business hosted a DBA Nobel Laureates’ Dinner and a luncheon to bring together leaders in the local financial and business sectors, alumni and students of its Doctor of Business Administration and Doctor of Management programmes to exchange views on currencies and financial systems in relation to the current economic crisis with the two Nobel Laureates. The guests included Prof. K. C. Chan, Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury of the HKSAR Government; and Mr Eddy Fong, Chairman of the Securities and Futures Commission.

Prof. Judy Tsui, PolyU’s Associate Vice President and Dean of Faculty

of Business, said: “The occasion has provided a platform for fruitful exchanges between the two distinguished scholars and the business leaders in Hong Kong.”

To further enrich students’ exposure through learning from great minds, Prof. Nash also spoke at the Open Dialogue organized by PolyU and The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups, sharing his legendary life experiences with about 1,000 secondary and university students.

Showcasing PolyU’s Achievements

Over the years, PolyU has carried out numerous research projects which are of enormous value to the community. To tie in with this memorable occasion, a “PolyU Achievements Exhibition” was held on the campus from 6 to 9 April.

The projects on display included Electric Vehicle, Non-Invasive Blood Glucose Meter, High Precision Plastic Micro-Injection Molding Machine, Nano-technology on Wastewater Treatment and recent breakthroughs in cancer drugs.

A book entitled ‘*Reaching for the Stars: Knowledge Transfer at PolyU*’, covering 60 cases of applied research and innovations which have been successfully commercialized or put to good use, was also launched to commemorate the efforts and contribution of PolyU researchers to the community at this important occasion. ❖

