



Congregation: Time for celebration



The University held its Seventh Convocation at the Hong Kong Coliseum on November 21 to confer academic awards upon some 7,300 graduates, including more than 100 excited mainland graduates who made a special trip to Hong Kong to attend the ceremony.

The Convocation was presided over by Chairman of the University Council Dr Sir Gordon Wu. Among the graduates this year, there were 69 Doctor of Philosophy, 15 Doctor of Business Administration and 95 Master of Philosophy award recipients. At the same time, 14 PolyU academic awards were conferred for the first time.

The mainland graduates included the first batch of 38 graduates from the highly acclaimed Master of Science in Project Management programme, offered in collaboration with Chongqing University. The University also presented awards to the second cohort of graduates from the International Executive Development Centre co-founded with Zhejiang University. They included 24 Master of Science in Quality Management and 54 Higher Diploma in Enterprise Management graduates.

During the Convocation, PolyU also conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Business Administration on four distinguished personalities. They are:

- Dr Chan Sui-kau, founder and Chairman of Yangtzekiang Garment Mfg. Co. Ltd. and Member of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
- Dr Patrick Fung Yuk-bun, Chairman and Chief Executive of Wing Hang Bank, Ltd, Hong Kong, and former Deputy Chairman of the PolyU Council
- Dr Charles Lee Yeh-kwong, member of the Executive Council, Chairman of Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited and Chairman of the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority
- Dr Lu Guanqiu, Chairman of the Board of Wanxiang Group.

◀ From left: Dr Fung, Dr Lee, Dr Chan and Dr Lu.



Pledge to build talent for knowledge



The President addressing the Congregation.



To help Hong Kong turn into a knowledge-based economy and get back on the growth track, PolyU will take positive steps to upgrade the quality of the SAR's human resources and further strengthen its all-round education.

President Prof. Poon Chung-kwong made this pledge at the Congregation, adding however that reduced government funding might undermine these efforts.

As Hong Kong's future hinges on the quality of its human resources, Prof. Poon said he welcomed the Chief Executive's support for converting the current three-year university degree structure to four, as outlined in his latest Policy Address. "We will work closely with the SAR Government, the University Grants Committee, sister institutions, secondary schools as well as other educational institutions to speed up the conversion process."

He also expressed strong support for the Chief Executive's plan to double the number of secondary school leavers receiving tertiary education to 60 per cent. He urged that while the Government works to expand Hong Kong's multi-level and multifarious higher education system, continued public funding should be provided for the University's Higher Diploma programmes.

"About 30 per cent of our students take two-year professional Higher Diploma courses. Time-honoured and application-oriented, these courses cater for the needs of businesses. Their academic qualifications and standards are also highly regarded in the respective fields."

"We believe government funding is essential to maintaining the quality and standard of such courses to groom professionals for our society and help Hong Kong turn into a knowledge-based economy. However, should government funding for these popular programmes be reduced or even removed in future, it would come as a serious blow to our professional training efforts," he cautioned.

In support of the expansion of tertiary education, PolyU has launched its first associate degree programme and submitted to the Government a proposal to establish a community college, through which more associate degree places can be offered.

In its Strategic Plan 2001-2007, Prof. Poon stressed, the University has clearly stated that its first and foremost mission is to provide an all-round education for its students, helping them become professionals of wide and expert knowledge, so that they would be able to contribute not only to society, but also to their country and the world.

In particular, he cited the summer leadership training which PolyU recently introduced for 160 students as an extremely fruitful

economy 7th Congregation



placements to 1,500 annually starting from the year 2003-2004. The Programme has benefited more than 2,400 students over the past few years.

To build its campus into a multicultural one and to develop students with a global outlook, Prof. Poon said that apart from continuing to admitting mainland students to its undergraduate programmes, the University will systematically enrol outstanding students from overseas by expanding its student exchange programme and activities upon the completion of the student hostel mid next year. A number of scholarships will be offered as financial support to help those overseas students in need.

“Obviously the success of the above measures depends on the support of the SAR Government and the community at large. Particularly in terms of financial support, we hope the Government will adjust the funding amount according to needs and provide us with the necessary funding,” Prof. Poon observed.

In closing, Prof. Poon cited the Finnish people and disabled Taiwanese painter Hsieh K'un-shan as exemplary models for graduates, the former for their fighting spirit and patriotism and the latter for positively taking destiny into his own hands. He encouraged PolyU graduates to face up to future challenges, deepen their understanding of their mother country and build a sense of pride for being Chinese.

endeavour towards this end. Entitled “Leadership and Competence for Success 2001”, the programme gave a boost to the students’ self-confidence and encouraged the development of their innovative ideas, independent thinking, leadership and teamwork.

Prof. Poon said the mother of one participant even wrote to PolyU to express her gratitude to the University for teaching her son well, saying that if his son should be successful in life, she would definitely urge him to repay his alma mater. “I was deeply moved by all these comments. The University Management has decided to expand the training programme to benefit as many PolyU students as possible.”

Furthermore, Prof. Poon disclosed that the University was planning to further expand its ‘Preferred Graduate’ Development Programme, increasing the number of student intake for local, mainland and overseas summer work

