

## Honorary Fellows – Ms Laura Chen Lok-ye

- Citation -

Ms Laura Chen Lok-ye was educated in Hong Kong and the US before settling back in Hong Kong to embark on a successful career in international finance and investments. Having established Sterling Asset Management on a sound footing and gained extensive experience in the financial services and investment industry in Hong Kong and the US, Ms Chen and her siblings established the ZeShan Foundation in 2001. The growing Foundation of which she is currently Executive Chair is truly family-based, with siblings involved in the funding of various strategic initiatives, following the footsteps of their parents who had founded a separate philanthropic organization earlier, and who have instilled in their children a spirit of giving back to society.

The Foundation's involvement with Lingnan stemmed from a firm belief in our liberal arts mission and a good relationship with former president Prof. Edward Chen. As a result, our university benefitted not only from the Foundation's financial generosity but also from Ms Chen's strategic planning and hands-on involvement. In addition to donations, the ZeShan Foundation believes in continuing involvement and participation, which is achieved through a team of professional staff, advisors and facilitators collaborating with government, quasi-government and non-government organizations, as well as beneficiary institutions such as our own. A pivotal principle of the Foundation's approach is their insistence on strategic reciprocity between the grant providers and grant receivers. Consequently, a genuine partnership can be developed in contrast to the conventional practices – either impersonal or excessively personal - of many charitable institutions and their patrons. Ms Chen's belief that strategic philanthropy (rather than charity) and mutual respect between grantor and grantee (as opposed to condescension) provide the key to more dynamic co-operation and better results for all. Presented on one occasion with unnecessary expensive gifts during a visit to Mainland China several years ago, she was struck by the thought that the educational aims of the charitable trust in question could have been better achieved by allocating the resources spent on gifts to students' educational expenses. 'How many lives can you touch?' is for her a simple question that goes to the heart of Zeshan Foundation's goals.

A major commitment of the Foundation lies in the area of public health, specifically to help alleviate the Hepatitis B and HIV/AIDS blight in China. According to official data, Hepatitis B still affects over 8.5% of the Chinese population — up to over 17% in certain regions — between the ages of 15-59, despite universal vaccination plans

for all newborns since 2002, and for young people up to 15 years old as of July 2009. The lack of medical care, basic health education and preventive vaccinations as well as the issue of mother-to-child transmission particularly in poor, rural areas, are concerns that the Foundation has been keen to address. Emphasizing good governance, transparency, accountability and a dynamic relationship between the funding agency and fund recipients, the ZeShan Foundation has sought to influence attitudes at both government and grassroots levels concerning the sufferers of diseases such as Hepatitis B and AIDS. A clear and strategic focus, proper due diligence, and understanding of leveraging and synergy creation - these are all key elements to ensure successful development. Despite Hong Kong people's generous response to global and regional needs and emergencies, there seems to be a general lack of vision and leadership from the top, partly due to a laissez-faire government attitude. Ms Chen sees ZeShan's role in helping to rectify this situation as crucial.

The Foundation's current involvement with Lingnan involves three initiatives: supporting the visiting tutors' scheme, overseas exchange programmes, and educational seminars and lectures to promote and advocate the importance of liberal arts education and to enrich our curriculum. Ms Chen is keen to see further development taking place in the liberal arts domain at Lingnan.

Mr Chairman, in recognition of her tremendous contributions to Lingnan and to philanthropic work in Hong Kong and Mainland China, may I now present Ms Laura Chen Lok-yee to you for the conferment of an honorary fellowship.

*Written and delivered by Dr. Michael Ingham*

## 榮譽院士 – 陳樂怡女士

### - 贊辭 -

陳樂怡女士在香港及美國接受教育後，返回香港投身於環球金融及投資工作，為常興投資管理有限公司建立了穩固的基礎，並在香港及美國的金融服務及投資業累積了豐富經驗。近十年來，陳女士積極參與慈善事業，目前擔任日漸壯大的家族基金會的執行主席。陳女士整個家族都熱衷於慈善事業：父母早年創辦自己的慈善組織，兒女們則追隨父母的典範，幾位兄弟姊妹於 2001 年創立擇善基金會。

陳女士的家族基金會支持嶺大，源於大學的博雅教育使命及基金會與前任校長陳坤耀教授的良好關係，使嶺大不但受惠於基金會的慷慨資助，更得益於陳女士的策略理念及親身參與。除了捐款外，擇善基金會強調持續的跟進工作及參與，因此，陳女士透過一隊專業人員、顧問及支援人員，與政府、半政府及非政府組織，以及如嶺大的受惠機構進行合作。基金會的大原則之一，在於堅持捐贈機構與受惠單位之間的協調及平等互對，使雙方能夠建立真正的夥伴關係；此舉與眾多慈善機構及資助者的慣常做法不同，令捐助既不欠缺人情味，亦不會過度個人化。陳女士相信有策略性的捐贈，與及捐贈者及受惠者之間的互相尊重，能使運作更靈活，及更能提升效益。這種想法源於數年前到中國內地作慈善探訪的經歷。那次，陳女士獲贈一些不必要的昂貴禮物，令她想到假如花在禮物上的款項撥作學生教育開支，應該更能配合那個慈善信託基金的教育宗旨。「你可以幫助多少人？」這個簡單的問題，正是擇善基金會的根本理念。

公共衛生一直是基金會的重點工作之一，特別是減低國內乙型肝炎及愛滋病病毒／愛滋病的禍害。根據官方資料，縱使國家已於二零零二年起為所有初生嬰兒注射疫苗，亦於二零零九年下旬實踐為全國十五歲或以下的人口注射疫苗的計劃，乙型肝炎病毒仍影響國內 15 歲至 59 歲人口的 8.5% 以上，在某些地區更高逾 17%。醫療設備、基本健康教育及防預疫苗的缺乏，以至母嬰傳播問題，都是擇善基金會的重點工作。擇善基金會強調良好管治、透明度和問責制度，講求捐贈機構與受惠單位間的互動關係，致力在政府及草根層面上，改變公眾對乙型肝炎及愛滋病等病患者的態度。清晰的策略重點、盡職審查和對協同效益的理解都是項目開展的主要成功元素。儘管香港市民對國家及其他地區的危難事故一向慷慨捐助，卻仍欠缺遠見及一個由上而下的全盤計劃，部份原因是因為政府的不干預態度。陳女士認為擇善在矯正這情況方面擔當重要的角色。

基金會目前在三個項目上支持嶺大：支持訪問導師計劃、海外交流計劃以及博雅教育座談會及講座，令嶺大的課程更為豐富。陳女士熱切期望嶺大的博雅教育有更長遠的發展。

主席先生，為表揚陳女士對嶺大以至對香港及內地慈善工作的傑出貢獻，本人謹恭請 閣下頒授榮譽院士銜予陳樂怡女士。

*由 Michael Ingham 博士撰寫及宣讀*