

Mr David Kwok Sek-chi

Honorary Fellow

Citation

Hong Kong has remained rock solid through the international financial turmoil in recent years, retaining its pre-eminence as a regional and world financial centre. This is due in no small part to the professionalism and conscientiousness of the banking and finance community here, and notably to the efforts of certain individuals within that community who have dedicated themselves to their profession and to the people of the SAR. Mr Chairman, we have one such individual with us today: Mr David Kwok Sek-chi, recipient of the title of honorary fellow of Lingnan University.

Born and raised in Hong Kong, Mr Kwok studied science until he found his true calling when he joined the Shanghai Commercial Bank in 1971. This was the start of an association which has continued for over five decades. Originally placed in a junior position, he possessed a keen desire for knowledge, and was able to steadily accumulate both broad and deep experience in banking, giving him the confidence to move forward. His talent was soon recognised, and he was promoted to manager of the Bank's overseas branches in San Francisco, New York and London. It was during this time that he learned the importance of risk management in banking, knowledge which has served him well throughout his career.

Returning to Hong Kong in 1997, Mr Kwok served the Bank during some tumultuous times: the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997, the SARS epidemic of 2003, the Global Financial Crisis of 2008, and the social unrest in Hong Kong in 2014 and 2019. He helped keep the Bank on an even keel through these rough waters, as Director from 2001, as General Manager from 2004 and as Managing Director and Chief Executive from 2007. He currently holds the post of Deputy Chairman of the Bank in Hong Kong. He is also a director of the Bank of Shanghai in Mainland China.

Outside of the Bank, Mr Kwok has served on the boards of a variety of business entities, professional associations and quasi-government bodies. He has also acted as a board member of a charity for the underprivileged in the SAR, in particular the elderly and the indigent.

Mr Kwok attributes his success to the principles that have guided him in life: integrity, commitment and a sense of social responsibility. In spite of his significant professional achievements, he remains a humble person at heart, grateful for the opportunities he has had to contribute meaningfully to the development of Hong Kong society.

Mr Kwok cares deeply about nurturing talented youth in banking and finance. In addition to serving on the Banking Industry Training Advisory Committee, he spent six years as Chairman of the Banking and Finance Training Board of the Vocational Training Council (VTC), helping to establish new programmes in financial technology. Recognising that young people today have difficulty in getting work experience due to stiff competition, he regularly arranges mentorships, scholarships and internships for potential banking professionals studying at university, including at Lingnan. He advises students to work in a variety of fields to find their true passion, and once they have embarked on a certain path, to proceed along it with a logical mind-set and with an end goal in mind. He stresses that any path a young person might choose today should lead overseas and through new realms of potential created by the dynamic forces of globalisation and digitalisation.

Mr Kwok holds many professional recognitions: he is a Fellow of the Chartered Banker Institute in the UK, a Fellow Certified Banker and Honorary Secretary of The Hong Kong Institute of Bankers, and an honorary fellow of the VTC.

Mr Chairman, for his outstanding services to his profession and to the community, I present Mr David Kwok Sek-chi for the award of the title of honorary fellow of Lingnan University.

Citation written and delivered by Professor Richard Stanley Simmons