HKU confers first Endowed Professorship in Dentistry

The University of Hong Kong has conferred its first ever Endowed Professorship in Dentistry, to support excellence at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry.

The Tam Wah-Ching Professorship in Dental Science was established at an HKU Dedication Ceremony on 10 February 2010 and formally bestowed at HKU's Fourth Inauguration of Endowed Professorships on 13 April 2010. The Endowed Professorship is the first one for Dentistry among HKU's total of 41 Endowed Professorships to date.

The benefactor of the Tam Wah-Ching Professorship in Dental Science is Dr Wah-ching Tam, a well-known local industrialist and philanthropist (second photo, right, with Prof Lakshman Samaranayake).

“This historic development is a testament to the rising reputation of dental education and research at the University, and of the dental profession in the community of Hong Kong,” says Prof Lakshman Samaranayake, Dean of the HKU Faculty of Dentistry, and holder of the Tam Wah-Ching Professorship in Dental Science. “I am privileged, and deeply humbled, to receive the inaugural Endowed Professorship of Dentistry. Indeed, I realise that I am merely a transient holder of the torch of the endowed professorship, to be passed on to those who follow me for years to come, in perpetuity.”

“I truly consider this honour not only a mark of recognition of my research and administration, but also an appreciation of the superb academic and clinical work, teaching excellence, and commitment to community engagement and public education among my
colleagues at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry,” adds Prof Samaranayake. “I am conscious of the fact that Dr Tam has a deep-rooted sense of serving the Chinese community through this endowment, and I shall ensure that his wish is realised to the fullest extent.”

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An Endowed Professorship is one of the most significant awards bestowed upon eminent academics at HKU. Each generous donation for an Endowed Professorship becomes a perpetual endowment in a designated discipline, and the Endowed Professor upholds a proud tradition of excellence. An Advisory Committee ensures the appointments to HKU’s Endowed Professorships are made in accordance with established University procedures.

**Lakshman Samaranayake**

Professor Lakshman Samaranayake has served with distinction as the Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry as well as the Director of the Prince Philip Dental Hospital for more than 6 years. Trained and qualified as both a dentist and an oral pathologist, he has held the Chair of Oral Microbiology at HKU since 1997. Professor Samaranayake is an internationally renowned researcher and educator, especially in the field of oral infectious diseases, and has been an invited speaker at seminars, workshops, and symposia in more than 30 countries. His research interests include oral infections, infection control in dentistry, and oral oncology. According to Biomedexperts.com, Professor Samaranayake is currently the world’s foremost expert in oral candidiasis, the most common fungal infection of the mouth. He was recently bestowed with the highly coveted *Distinguished Scientist Award* by the International Association for Dental Research for his significant contributions to the field of dental research. In particular, among his research output during the past 3 decades are more than 400 scholarly publications including journal manuscripts, monographs, and textbooks. He has also been honoured by HKU, having received the Outstanding Researcher Award, Outstanding Research Student Supervisor Award, and Research Output Prize.

*An HKU video about the Tam Wah-Ching Professorship in Dental Science can be found at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4WVd4kyZbk&hd=1](www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4WVd4kyZbk&hd=1)*

*For more information about the HKU Faculty of Dentistry, please visit [http://facdent.hku.hk](http://facdent.hku.hk)*

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