HKU confers first Endowed Professorship in Clinical Dentistry

The University of Hong Kong has conferred its first Endowed Professorship in Clinical Dental Science on Professor Li-jian Jin, Professor in Periodontology at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry.

The professorship was bestowed at the University's Fifth Inauguration Ceremony of Endowed Professorships on 12 April 2011. It had been formally created at a Dedication Ceremony on 8 December 2010 at the HKU Vice-Chancellor's Lodge.

The benefactor of the Endowed Professorship is the Modern Dental Laboratory Co Ltd, deemed to be one of the world’s largest dental laboratory conglomerates. “We are honoured to support The University of Hong Kong with this Endowed Professorship,” says Mr Godfrey SK Ngai, the Director and CEO of Modern Dental Laboratory. “It is our shared vision that the Endowed Professorship will enrich the resources available at the Faculty of Dentistry and help uphold its high standard of scholarship, research, and education.”

Professor Li-jian Jin (pictured, standing left with Mr Ngai) was selected as the recipient of the Modern Dental Laboratory Professorship in Clinical Dental Science in recognition of his 25 years of contribution to the field of periodontology (the study of the tissues surrounding and supporting teeth).

“Severe gum disease is a major cause of tooth loss in adults worldwide,” says Professor Jin. “Recently, evidence has shown that gum disease affects not only oral health but also general health such as heart disease or diabetes, so periodontal care benefits both oral health and general well-being.” His current research group has identified a series of immunity molecules naturally present in the body that are related to gum health. “I hope our findings will contribute to the development of new vaccines for the prevention of gum disease,” says Professor Jin.

The Modern Dental Laboratory Professorship in Clinical Dental Science is the University’s second endowed professorship in dentistry, but the first one in clinical dentistry and the first to be donated by a dental company.

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I’m truly honoured to receive the second endowed professorship for the HKU Faculty of Dentistry, and I’m very grateful to the donor, the Modern Dental Laboratory, for making this a reality,” says Professor Jin.

Professor Lakshman Samaranayake, HKU Dean of Dentistry and holder of the first endowed professorship in dentistry, as the Tam Wah-Ching Professor in Dental Science, says, “Professor Jin has researched the interactions between bacteria causing gum disease and the human immune system, and his discoveries are very important for the prevention of gum disease in future generations. I wish to sincerely thank the Modern Dental Laboratory and Mr Godfrey Ngai, and also Professor Tak-wah Chow and his External Relations team for the wonderful work done in securing HKU’s first two endowed dental professorships.”

An Endowed Professorship is one of the most significant awards bestowed on eminent academics at HKU. Each generous donation of HK$10 million or more is matched by the University with an equal amount and becomes a perpetual endowment in a designated discipline. An Advisory Committee ensures the appointments are made in accordance with established university procedures. HKU has established a total of 54 Endowed Professorships, including three Distinguished Visiting Professorship Schemes, since 2005.

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Li-jian Jin

Professor Jin is an internationally renowned expert in periodontal disease, the most common form of disease in humans. He has built a distinguished record of commitment to education, innovative research, clinical service, and community engagement over the past 25 years. He joined HKU in 1994, having obtained doctoral degrees from Peking University (PKU) and the Karolinska Institutet in Sweden. He is currently Professor in Periodontology, Postgraduate Programme Director in Periodontology (HKU-PKU Conjoint Programme), and Associate Dean for Research, Innovation, and Enterprise at the HKU Faculty of Dentistry.

His research team’s studies have been frequently funded by the Research Grants Council of Hong Kong, and recently by the National Institutes of Health in the USA through international collaboration. Professor Jin and his team have received numerous international awards, including the Best Paper Award in Periodontology & Microbiology Research from the International Association for Dental Research (IADR), South-East Asia Division, in 2004, and the IADR/GlaxoSmithKline Innovation & Oral Care Award in 2006. In 2007, he was honoured by the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh with its Fellowship in Dental Surgery ad hominem. In recognition of outstanding service to the dental community in Hong Kong and mainland China, he received the Professional Exchange & Collaboration Award from the Chinese Stomatological Association in 2010.

Professor Jin currently serves on several major international bodies including the IADR as the Chair of its Periodontal Disease Task Group and the FDI World Dental Federation as the Vice-Chairman of its Science Committee; he is the President-Elect of the Asian Pacific Society of Periodontology. He is also the Founding Member and Secretary of the Periodontology Specialty Board of the College of Dental Surgeons of Hong Kong. He serves as an associate editor or editorial board member of numerous international journals in dentistry and periodontology. In addition, he has been primary supervisor to 20 Master/PhD students and has published more than 120 journal papers and book chapters. Since 2000, Professor Jin has delivered more than 100 scientific presentations as an invited speaker in more than 15 countries.

For more information about the HKU Faculty of Dentistry, visit [http://facdent.hku.hk](http://facdent.hku.hk)
For more information about HKU’s Endowed Professorships, visit [http://www3.hku.hk/ephku](http://www3.hku.hk/ephku)

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