

# HKUST *Alumni*

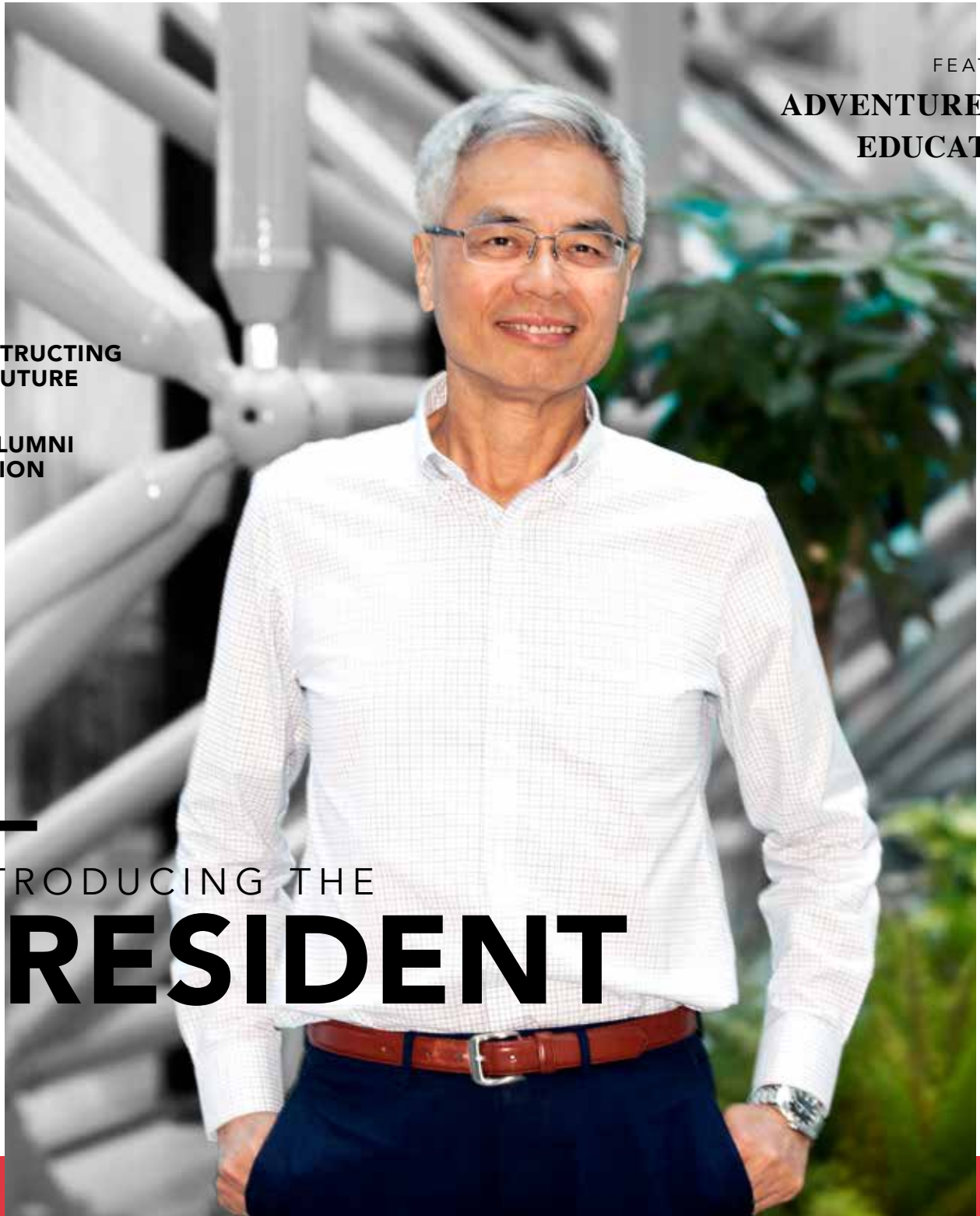
FEATURES  
**ADVENTURES IN  
EDUCATION**

EDGE  
**CONSTRUCTING  
THE FUTURE**

**ON ALUMNI  
REUNION**

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INTRODUCING THE  
**PRESIDENT**



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“Working at a homeless shelter during my exchange program at Harvard University allowed me to experience diversity. It was a truly life-changing experience.”

“When I returned to HKUST, my friends and I started Rainbow Bird, a group serving minority students with funding from the 1-HKUST President’s Life Award. Helping people from different backgrounds be more understanding of one another is by far my proudest achievement so far.”

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# CONTENTS

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## 02

Introducing the President



## 04

Features



## 10

Edge



## 12

World Stage



## 14

In the Frame



## 16

Happenings



## 19

Class Notes



## 22

Alumni Reunion





## — FOREWORD By Professor Shyy

Greetings Fine Alumni,

Many of you may already know me from my role as provost and acting president. For those of you who don't, I'm honored to introduce myself as the newly inaugurated fourth president of HKUST.

It's always a pleasure to communicate with you, our fine alumni. I am of the firm belief that you are the living proof of HKUST's great achievements. Therefore, I seize the opportunity to meet in person whenever I can.

Over the past couple of months, I've had several chances to meet up with alumni in both Hong Kong, Beijing and the San Francisco Bay Area. In fact, on the first day of my term as president, I had the rare opportunity to meet with several alumni group leaders.

I was delighted to hear about what they've been up to since graduation and even more delighted to hear about the strong bond they still feel with HKUST. It's heart-warming to see many among you giving back to your alma mater, not only financially, but by supporting and inspiring our current students.

Speaking of achievements since graduation, in this issue we meet three noteworthy alumni making waves as entrepreneurs in the field of education. Samuel Wu is opening a highly-anticipated international school, Shum Chit Yan is equipping primary students with computational thinking and technological skills, and Gerald Wong shares the joy of dance with people of all ages and backgrounds.



You will also find details about our upcoming Alumni Reunion on November 24. The event will draw together a number of schools and offices and is set to be the largest gathering to date. I wholeheartedly encourage you to come along, and bring your families, to reconnect with your former classmates.

See you there!

Yours,

**Professor Wei Shyy**

President



■ A bird takes flight, with both power and grace. Image captured by Professor Shyy

## — INTRODUCING Professor Wei Shyy

### HIGH FLYER AND THE NEW PRESIDENT OF HKUST



Professor Shyy's own version of his story, from reluctant student to president of one of the world's leading universities, is full of happy accidents and good advice from mentors. He never mentions his hard work or his fierce intelligence. However, those things can be assumed because Shyy has enjoyed a distinguished career at the cutting edge of aerospace engineering. He is sought after in both the academic and commercial sectors, a published author, and the recipient of several awards.

Professor Shyy does, however, admit to a perpetually curious mind. When he began his undergraduate degree at National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan, he was an uninspired student who rarely attended class. However, a curious spirit would not allow him to sit idly. Instead, he read.

As a freshman, one day in the library, he found a book titled "Theory of Flight". Although much of the content was beyond him at the time, he was fascinated by the beauty and elegance of the mathematics and its ability to predict certain phenomena. That was the start of a lifelong fascination with flight, a fascination evident not only in his work but in his love of birds and of avian photography.

Having attained his BSc from Tsing Hua, Shyy went on to the University of Michigan, where he completed his MSE and PhD degrees in Aerospace Engineering, returning later in his career as chair of that same department. Then in 2010, he was offered the position of Provost at HKUST. He was intrigued and decided to make the move back to Asia. Very soon after taking the role, he knew he had made the right decision and he was where he was meant to be.

"Hong Kong is a remarkable place and HKUST is a remarkable institution," explains Shyy. "Its founding members were a distinguished and truly dedicated group. They did something very special when they founded the University. HKUST has already come a long way since its inception, but I see there is still great potential."

So what does the next chapter hold for the University and how does Professor Shyy intend to captain the ship? Shyy's plans for the future include establishing particular areas of expertise and earning global recognition in those fields. "We cannot be good at everything, but we can choose a few things and be the best at those," he expounds.

However, Shyy is keen to point out that a university cannot be run like a company, with regulations and targets. He has no intention of dictating to either staff or students. "We are a modern, progressive university with an open mind and independent spirit. That is the heart and soul of HKUST. We simply ask if you are exceptional at what you do. If the answer is yes, we let you get on with it," he shrugs.

Shyy also questions some of the ideals expounded by other institutions. He queries the idea, for example, that we should all be leaders. "Who will follow then?" he asks. Shyy believes that followers also make important contributions and are just as valuable. He is equally dismissive of the idea of social responsibility, not because he doesn't agree with the concept *per se*, but because he feels it should be a given.

Most notably, grades are not the number one priority in Shyy's mind. "We all know there is little correlation between grades and later success, but we ignore that fact," he says. "My aim is for HKUST to produce happy, self-respecting, contributing citizens. University should treat the whole person. This is where students grow into themselves and mature as people, not just academics. I believe in diversity, freedom, and room to play. All these things are vital to growth."

And how is the success of a university gaged? Professor Shyy believes it is by the alumni. "Our alumni are the proof. We have to be good in order for them to be good. How well our alumni

**“ How well our alumni are doing is direct reflection of how well we are doing. ”**



are doing is a direct reflection of how well we are doing. And one sure measure is how connected our alumni stay to the University."

Tellingly, a great many alumni are still deeply involved with HKUST. Over the years, their financial contributions have enabled a number of student initiatives that will make a lasting difference to those involved, from sports to community service to emergency aid, and many more.

However, contributions are not only financial. "Our alumni are role models for our students. Having a positive example and a source of support at this tender age is very powerful. I know that from my own experience," explains Shyy. "Our alumni have so much to offer and we're delighted by the strong connections between alumni, students, faculty, and staff."

Professor Shyy's love for HKUST is plain to see. It's clear he feels he is very blessed to have this new role. In this case, fortune is a two-way street, and it's equally clear that HKUST is very blessed to have Professor Shyy. 🍷

## — FEATURE

# ADVENTURES IN EDUCATION

Entrepreneurial life is not for the faint-hearted. Recently, however, we have seen more and more alumni taking the leap and starting their own ventures – with great success! Here, we talk to three of these bold entrepreneurs, all determinedly building their start-ups within the education industry.

Samuel Wu has just opened a highly-anticipated international school, nurturing young minds with the best in IB education. Shum Chit Yan is equipping primary students with the skills they need to succeed in a technology-driven world. And Gerald Wong is teaching people of all ages and backgrounds to improve the quality of their lives through the creative medium of dance.

A chat with

### SAMUEL WU



Alumnus Samuel Wu is the co-founding executive director of Malvern College Hong Kong (MCHK), which opened in August with 960 places for both primary and secondary students. Malvern College UK is one of the most highly regarded IB schools in the country, and the new school aims to emulate that in Hong Kong.

In addition to providing quality academic education, Malvern focuses on developing the personality of its students. “We teach children how to be resilient, open-minded, and kind,” explains Dr. Robin Lister, founding headmaster of MCHK. “The school recognizes and rewards eleven different attributes to ensure our students emerge with competent personalities as well as outstanding grades.”

Students are awarded pins for developing these attributes, whether they lead a debate team, win a trophy, or simply help a teacher carry textbooks. This is what attracted Samuel to the school. “When you acknowledge students for the little things that often go unnoticed, you see their confidence grow, and that helps them perform better academically, too. It’s a win-win cycle,” he says.

As director of Babylon Education Limited, Malvern College UK’s Asia Pacific partner since 2013, Samuel has opened schools in Qingdao and Chengdu as well. “The Hong Kong school is unique because we were awarded a greenfield site from the

government and hence operate as a charitable organization.”

Samuel is also a board member of Malvern College Chengdu, vice president of the ESF Island School Alumni Association, and director of a school sponsoring body, Shun Tak Fraternal Association.

As passionate as he is about education, Samuel did not start out in this sector. With a dual Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and East Asian Studies from New York University, he built a successful career in finance and currently serves as executive director of Tridel Capital Group Limited, a family investment fund, and Majestic Elite Property Development Limited in Hong Kong. After the financial crises in 2008, he decided to pursue something more stable and meaningful.





Parents often ask about how Samuel's finance background fits with his current role at Malvern. "Surprisingly, there are similarities between the two sectors," he notes. "In finance, we manage our clients' highly valued assets: their money. In education, we manage something even more valuable: their children. Both require stringent risk management – protecting their hard-earned money, and giving their children a bright future. The stakes are high."

Samuel graduated from the Kellogg-HKUST Executive MBA program in 2012 – a program which has been ranked number one in the world eight times – and attributes much of his success to the pioneering business techniques he learned there. "What HKUST is doing is beyond the times. They're leading the way to the future."

Because of the strong relationship between MCHK and the University, the board at Malvern donated a nomination certificate to HKUST, giving school places to faculty members' children. "We want to show our commitment to our neighbors and share resources with them in mutually beneficial ways," says Samuel.

Looking at the industry as a whole, he acknowledges there are several challenges facing education institutions today. "Firstly, kids are getting smarter. They're born to embrace technology and can obtain information faster than any generation before them. As a result, the competition at university level is more fierce than ever, and it starts as early as kindergarten. That's why Malvern takes it so seriously – we know it's important to get it right from day one," he explains.

Artificial intelligence is another challenge. "Who knows how advanced robots will be 18 years down the road? We need our students to harness technology, so they can program the robots of the future and create better ones. That's our aim."

Samuel believes that for students to succeed in a globalized, competitive world, schools need to take a more well-rounded approach to education. "Children need to be connected with current affairs so they can learn to respond quickly. We encourage students to get involved in what's happening around them."

"Too often, students learn skills for no other purpose than their CV," he observes. "Instead, they should be using those skills to interact with their communities. It's great if they have virtuoso piano skills, but are they playing in elderly homes or teaching underprivileged children? Universities want students with versatile competencies who are in touch with themselves, their society, and the world."

A great way for schools to provide a broader, more relevant education is to collaborate with other institutions and businesses. "At Malvern, our staff are friends with teachers from other schools and often exchange ideas. We hold activities with partner organizations, so our students can experience the real world."

He also urges parents to include their children in more of their daily lives. "If you work in an office, let your kids come and see you at work. Let them try the photocopier or sit in on a meeting. It's an experience they'll never forget."

Although there is much to change about education, Samuel remains optimistic. "If we keep an open mind and keep learning from our children, we have a much better chance of giving them the future they deserve." 🍷



## FEATURE

A chat with

### CHIT YAN SHUM



Chit Yan is the co-founder of Tech Cubie, an innovative STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education program for primary school students. She graduated from HKUST with a BEng in Computer Engineering in 2000 and an MSc in Investment Management in 2014. After 10 years in the investment banking industry, however, she wanted to try something different.

The idea for Tech Cubie came when she was chatting with fellow HKUST alumni, Connie Wong and Wilson Shum, both passionate about education. "We decided to start a new venture together," Chit Yan explains. "And we knew we had a lot to learn. Although we were well experienced in various areas of technology, we also needed to excel at STEM education for the business to be successful."

They began by holding private classes for friends' children in their homes, which gave them the insights needed to form a curriculum. "Now, we've developed a year-long course, plus summer programs and one-off day camps," says Chit Yan. They've also hired three HKUST students, Maple Wong, Jacky Wong, and Daniel Hui, to assist as part-time teachers.

"At Tech Cubie, our vision is to empower the next generation with computational thinking and technology competency. If we want our children to succeed in the digital economy, we need to teach them these skills while they are still young," she says.

Chit Yan and her team take a creative approach to teaching. "We use a mix of hands-on activities, fun outdoor games, parent engagement, and a variety of tools, from complex electronics to simple pieces of paper."

Tech Cubie is unique in several ways. Firstly, students learn through trial and error. "In my classes, I give students a task like, 'Get this robot to run a square on the floor,' without telling them how to do it. I'm always amazed at their creativity: a class of six students will often come up with four or five different ways of achieving the same goal. This teaches them that there is no one right answer in life – it's about finding what works for you."





"That's one of the most rewarding things for me: seeing their excited smiles when they succeed," Chit Yan smiles. "It's also enormously rewarding to coach students through their failures, reassuring them that it's ok to fail and helping them find the strength to persevere."

Secondly, students learn in daily life, not just in the classroom. "I get them to question the things they see every day, like automatic doors. How does the door open when someone comes near? Is it an infra-red or ultrasonic sensor? Then I teach them the science, engineering, and coding concepts behind it. But most importantly, I guide them to think about what problem is it solving. This is the true power of STEM education."

Once the students see how technology solves real needs, Chit Yan challenges them to think in reverse. "I start them with a problem, such as, 'Your grandmother needs a cane to walk. How can you use technology to help her?' At HKUST, I learned the importance of centering technology around the community. Unless it solves a human need, it is useless."

Thirdly, Tech Cubie encourages students to build things with their own hands. In the first Mbot class for example, they are given all the parts of the robot and asked to assemble them without seeing the robot first. "It's a lot of fun, as many have never used a screwdriver before. Plus, it teaches them important hardware skills."

One of the greatest challenges the trio faced with this new venture was finding a convenient, safe and affordable venue. "As a start-up, you have to keep adapting your vision to work around obstacles," says Chit Yan. So, instead of opening a center, the trio came up with an innovative solution. "We partnered with different organisations around Hong Kong, and tailored our curriculums to suit each venue."

For instance, parent-child day camps are held at Noah's Ark Solar Tower in Ma Wan, with outdoor games in the morning and island-themed tasks in the afternoon. The outdoor environment provides numerous opportunities for students to observe and create. "One student built a model of an automatic barrier for cars entering the island, complete with an electric motor and a light sensor – in only three hours!" By tailoring their classes



to different locations in this way, the team has transformed an enormous challenge into a unique advantage.

Another challenge facing STEM educators in Hong Kong is educating parents on the importance of the subjects. "We found that including parents in our day camps was the best way for them to experience the benefits of STEM education. They often enjoy it so much, they forget to let the kids have a turn!" Chit Yan laughs.

Encouragingly, the government is directing more funding towards STEM education and many schools are equipped with the latest technology. However, the training required to utilize it fully is still lacking. "It's not about what gadgets you have, it's about how you use them," Chit Yan explains. "Take this Mbot for example. Teachers who are not trained will only use it for four or five classes. Actually, it's possible to create a 30-hour curriculum based on just this robot!"

Chit Yan and her team believe the key is teaching students to integrate technology into their daily lives and create solutions to problems they encounter. "We need to teach kids to explore more, try more, challenge the status quo, and connect with society."

## FEATURE

A chat with

### GERALD WONG



Gerald Wong, founder of Infinity Dance Studio, did not always want to be a dancer. At eight years old, he was dragged along to ballet classes because his older brother was learning on a scholarship. "I didn't like wearing tights, but it was better than waiting outside," Gerald laughs.

He didn't discover a real love for dance until he enrolled at HKUST – as a biochemistry student. "On the first day, I bumped into a friend from ballet school, and she took me straight to the dance society." It was there that Gerald began to explore jazz, contemporary, hip hop, and latin styles, and decided this was something he wanted to do for the rest of his life.

Eventually, he went on to perform live with the likes of Aaron Kwok, Coco Li, Joey Yung, and Anita Mui, in addition to featuring in numerous music videos. He has choreographed shows for Ocean Park, the East Asian Games, the Miss Chinese Cosmos Pageant, and Miss Universe China, among others. He has also served as a judge at Astro TV's dance contest "Asian Battleground" in Malaysia, and as an advisor for the Hong Kong Tourism Board's Chinese New Year Parade.

Giving back to his alma mater, he coached the HKUST Dance Alumni Association for several years. "I wanted to inspire others like I was inspired. And I'm proud that the University is so supportive of dance."

He didn't plan to open a dance school; it only happened because the studio he was practicing at closed down. "In 2003, my partners and I decided to rent a small place in Tsim Sha Tsui just so we'd have somewhere to train." They held a few classes a week for students from the previous studio who wanted to continue learning, but teaching was never their main aim.

However, despite their lack of marketing, more and more students came. To accommodate them, Gerald and his partners had to find larger studios until eventually, they opened Infinity Dance Studio. By this time, he had passed the performing peak of his career and was ready to focus on teaching. The studio is now highly respected in the industry as a trusted top talent supplier. "We're celebrating our 15th Anniversary this year! It's hard to believe we've come so far," he says.

Their vision is to spread the joy of dance to everyone in Hong Kong. "I know dance has the power to transform lives," Gerald reflects. "Time and time again, we see kids who don't perform well academically – even those who drop out of school – finding a sense of purpose and fulfillment in dance. It gives them a community, a healthy way of expressing themselves, and a skill to master. We want to open those benefits up to everyone in Hong Kong."

The kids program gives 6 to 11-year-olds a solid foundation in posture, movement, and dance, and they've now opened Seed, a new school for primary students in Tseung Kwan O. "For us, every child is like a seed. We give them the nutrients they need to grow into talented dancers, whether they want to pursue it as a career or just for fun," Gerald explains.



Most importantly, Infinity Dance Studio offers a training program for aspiring commercial dancers. "When I graduated from HKUST wanting to be a professional dancer, there was no direct career path to follow," says Gerald. "I kept practicing and making connections while working other full-time jobs to support myself, but I didn't have much guidance."

The Team Infinity program provides that guidance for budding dancers. "We teach them all the skills they need to make it as professional dancers – not just technique, but image and persona too. We also provide connections with key industry players and opportunities to perform, like at the Chinese New Year Parade." Several Team Infinity graduates have gone on to perform with stars like Jacky Cheung, or open studios of their own.

However, running a dance school in Hong Kong has its challenges. "We're always looking for performance opportunities for our students, and while we get many invitations to corporate events, budgets are shrinking. It's

difficult to negotiate with clients because I don't want to lower the quality of our performances to match the tight budgets," says Gerald.

Plus, in such a small market, competition is fierce: more studios are opening every year. "We see this as a good thing," Gerald says. "Instead of competing with other studios, we focus on expanding the pool of potential students. We welcome people of all ages and backgrounds and encourage them to make dance a lifestyle. It doesn't have to be about performing, it's also a fun way to keep fit. We teach them how to apply that upbeat energy to the rest of their lives."

The loyalty that Gerald's students show is a testament to his genuine passion for dance and commitment to quality. "For us, it's not about becoming the biggest studio in Hong Kong. If we get more people dancing, we've achieved our goal." 🔥





## EDGE

# CONSTRUCTING THE FUTURE

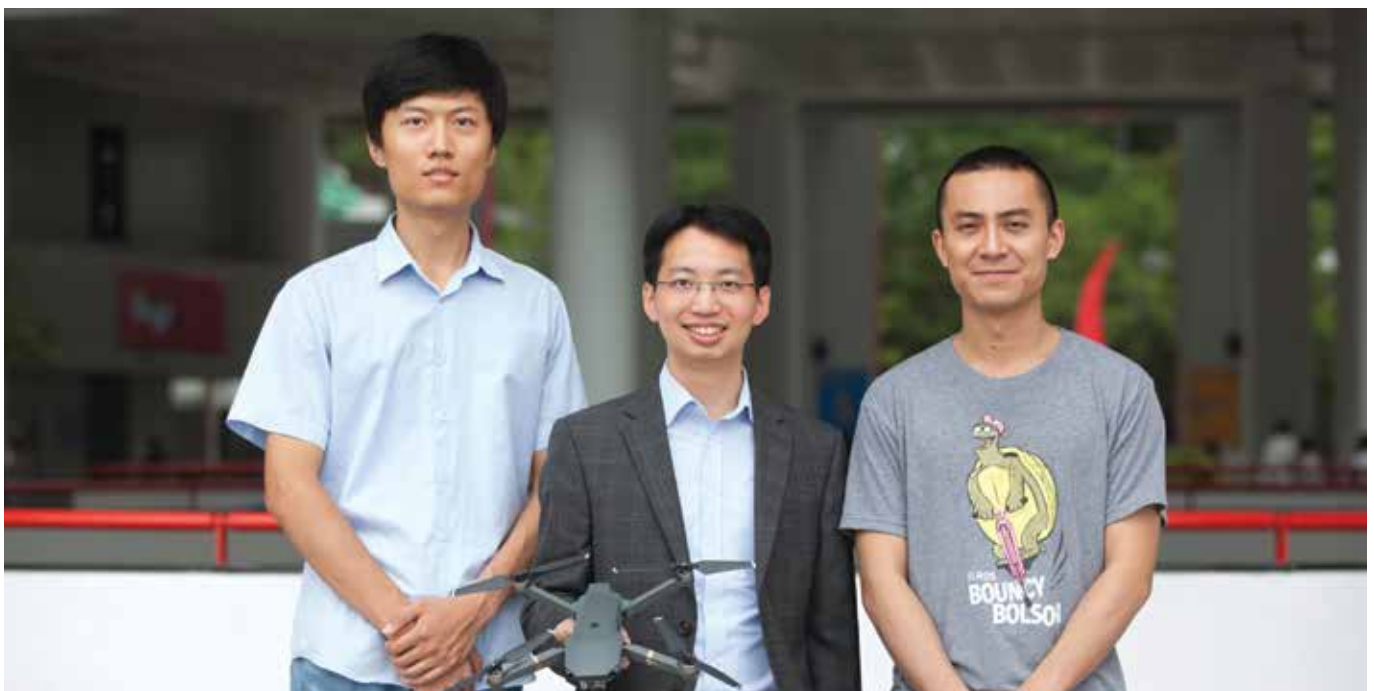
Professor Jack Cheng did his bachelor's and MPhil at HKUST before becoming a faculty member in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. Today, he leads research at the forefront of an industry playing catch-up in the technology field.

"The construction industry is among the least digitized," notes Professor Jack Cheng, Associate Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at HKUST. He gestures at a graphic illustrating the relative digitization of 22 sectors, according to the McKinsey Global Institute in 2016. Leading the pack are ICT, media, and professional services, while construction languishes in second-last place. "The only sector we're more digitized than is the agriculture and hunting industry," the professor adds with a chuckle.

Why this matters is because it translates to relatively low productivity across the construction industry as a whole. By "construction," Cheng means the entire lifecycle, beginning with programming (land zoning), detailed design, engineering analysis, documentation, and fabrication (procurement) – all of which precede work on a construction site.

"It's not that the industry is laidback or not hard at work," he says, "but rather, that the built environment is endlessly unique." For example, while common aesthetics prevail in Hong Kong's public housing, each building's design is unique, once you get down to the finer details. This explains why the construction industry cannot be automated in the same way as, for instance, the automobile industry or smartphone industry. You can't mass produce buildings or bridges.

But digitization, which is gradually transforming the industry, offers many benefits. "We can use simulations to predict situations before a building is constructed," notes the professor. "It might be costly to do real-life testing – for example, I can't hold a fire drill every week to test out different scenarios. But with a virtual environment, I can do many evacuation simulations at low cost, trying various scenarios to measure their effects. So





simulations help us move toward better design.”

Virtual models are also useful when it comes to facilities management (FM). “Say, a water pipe is broken. Traditionally, the FM team would need to carry out an inspection, then figure out how to repair the pipe. But with a virtual environment, you can immediately see where there’s congestion, what other pipes and furniture are near the damage, and whether the room is big or small. All this helps with decision-making.”



### Smarter Buildings

While a consistent theme, BIM – building information modeling – does not apply to every bit of Cheng’s research. “A better description of what we do would be: using computing on the built environment.” The professor’s résumé appears to present a dizzying array of research topics, but in fact they all fit under the umbrella of IT: “With computing, we can integrate AR, MR [mixed reality], AI, simulations, sensors, GIS [geographic information science], building management systems, mobile technologies, scanning, drones and so on, across the whole lifecycle.

“One project we’ve been working on analyzes sensing data on energy consumption; this enables us to see patterns, so we can maintain and operate buildings better,” the professor adds. He is a big believer in academic impact: “I like to know what problems there are in the industry, so we can do research leading to recommendations that will eventually be implemented.”

“A previous project involved integrating BIM with IoT [the internet of things], with sensors monitoring indoor air quality and energy consumption. I’ve been in touch with the MTR and the Airport Authority, and pilot projects are in discussion. Our work has also been used by EMSD [the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department] in one of their buildings.”

### Industry Connections

Besides serving as director of the University’s RFID Center, and associate director of the recently established GREAT Smart City Center, Professor Cheng maintains a high level of external engagement in the construction industry. He chairs the Construction Industry Council’s (CIC) BIM Standards Task

Force, and is director of the Hong Kong Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

The CIC designated 2014 as its BIM Year, and went on to name five BIMers as well as five Young BIMers of the Year. Of the ten awardees, Prof. Cheng – in the Young BIMer category – was the sole academic. And in 2017, BIM made it into the Hong Kong chief executive’s policy address – an unprecedented development, according to the professor, as the address is traditionally not a platform for advocating the use of specific technologies. So far, he says, “The government already has 40 to 50 projects requiring BIM.”

The government now mandates BIM for its own projects, but Cheng has been mandating it – for his engineering students – since 201X. “We were the first university to make BIM a compulsory element of the undergraduate curriculum,” he says. “And last fall, I started teaching BIM at MSc level.”

Cheng’s next goal is to offer short courses to people from outside the University: “People tell me they want university-level BIM training, but without doing the whole MSc program. Hopefully through the University, we can offer executive-level short courses on topics such as BIM and project management, or BIM and innovation management.”

Considering BIM’s ability to enable and integrate so many other technologies, it is surely only a matter of time. 🔥



Future

## — WORLD STAGE



### DISCUSSING BLOCKCHAIN

More than 220 alumni and friends gathered in Shanghai for their signature annual spring banquet with Vice-President for Institutional Advancement Professor Sabrina Lin to celebrate Chinese New Year. Before dinner, guests discussed the topic “Capital Markets, Blockchain, and Real Estate” in a forum hosted by several distinguished alumni. The inauguration of the Shanghai Chapter’s executive committee’s third session, headed by Han Yuze, was also announced. Other engaging forums and group activities were held during the year.



### TEA IN THE DESERT

In May, alumni reunited with former staff members of KAUST in Saudi Arabia, a long-time close partner of HKUST, and exchanged stories over refreshing cups of tea.



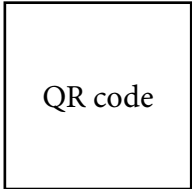
### A EUROPEAN TOUR

Executive Director (Career Development and Corporate Outreach) Professor Veronique A. Lafon-Vinai, met with alumni in Paris and Milan in January to share the latest news about the School.



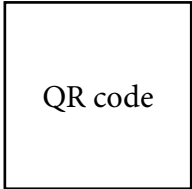
### CALIFORNIA DREAMING

Alumni in Northern California have enjoyed several gatherings in the past couple of months. They spent a wonderful afternoon with then acting President Professor Wei Shyy, at a weekend lunch in July, and the School of Engineering’s Alumni & Friends Reception was a great success. Professor David Zweig of the Division of Social Science hosted a memorable dinner, alumni soaked up the sun at the joint-university picnic, and attended the United Chinese Alumni Association’s 2018 annual meeting in May for the first time ever! Thanks to keen support from alumni mentors, the mentorship program was recently launched, helping exchange students settle in smoothly and learn from graduates. Plus, the HKUST Northern California T-shirts are in the making!



### COMMUNITY CONNECTION

The broad spectrum of events in Singapore has long been attracting many alumni and students. In January, the general annual meeting marked a milestone for the Singapore Chapter as they looked back on successes of the past year. In April, whiskey aficionados enjoyed a tasting session for alumni, and volunteers supported Love Our Community and Love in Action by joining several activities to help the less privileged. June saw lively discussions about blockchain at a forum jointly organized with alumni from other universities.







## EXCHANGES ABROAD



Before returning to Hong Kong, our exchange students at Georgia Tech in Atlanta were invited to a warm farewell gathering hosted by alumni, where they shared fond memories of the past semester together.



## A GLOBAL CITY



Korean alumni met up for the first time in Lan Kwai Fong to celebrate the festive season together in December 2017, thanks to their enthusiastic coordination efforts. HKUST continues to attract more international students and many are choosing to stay in Hong Kong after graduation.



## CANADIAN CHEER



The past couple of months have been particularly eventful for alumni in Ontario. The Chinese New Year celebration in March was a highlight of the year! They also met alumni from other universities in Hong Kong for a dinner party in April, and made the most of the good weather with a joint cruise down the Grand River in July.

QR code



## SPRING IN BEIJING



In March, Council Chairman Mr. Andrew Liao, then acting President Professor Wei Shyy, and HKUST senior management joined alumni and exchange students for a drinks reception in Beijing. Participants enjoyed meeting friends, both old and new, and catching up with the University's latest developments, including the upcoming capital projects on campus.



## THE BIG APPLE



Alumni from all backgrounds came together for a dinner organized by the Business School in New York. They spent a delightful evening making new connections and reminiscing about the good old days at HKUST.



## THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT



The first ever alumni get-together in Seoul was held just before Christmas in 2017. Graduates of different professions spent a joyous evening together and it was a wonderful opportunity for those living in the same city to reconnect. 🍷

## — IN THE FRAME

### GIVING FUTURE LEADERS A HEAD START

The HeadStart@HKUST (HeadStart) program partners with local and global companies to offer early workplace immersion and career development to first and second year students. This year, the program brought together BBA global management alumnus Arthur Chan, chief operating officer of leading big data company Vpon, and Sun Bin Mun, a data science and technology student from South Korea.



#### Why did you choose to participate in the HeadStart program?

**Arthur:** When the University approached me asking Vpon to join HeadStart, I jumped at the chance! The program is unique because it offers a mentorship in addition to an internship. Vpon is a young company: it's only 10 years old and the average age of our team is 32. Interns offer us valuable insights into the market – we need the youth perspective to get ahead in our business.

**Sun:** I didn't have a clear idea about what career to pursue. At first, I wanted to study physics, but after trying various courses, including math and computer science, I became really interested in data science. Luckily, the University had started a new major: Data Science and Technology. I applied to HeadStart to understand how the data analytics industry works, and if it's actually something I want to pursue. The program offers fellowships and mentorships across different fields, such as business and finance, so it's a great way to see what's out there.

#### What did the internship involve?

**Arthur:** At Vpon, we have a hiring committee for internships. This year, we interviewed 20 to 30 candidates from local

universities and hired four, all from different backgrounds. We allocated them to our marketing and campaign management departments according to their interests. While they are with us, we treat them the same as our full-time staff. We give them a mix of tasks, both small and large, and they have the freedom to motivate themselves and discover what's important to focus on. We want to give them a real taste of what working in a company is like.

**Sun:** Each department has two mentors that take care of us and answer our questions. We have daily, weekly, and monthly goals and a variety of tasks, like research and data reports, plus presentations for the larger projects. We also have to come up with an app as a side project, which is fun! The schedule is flexible, so I have a bit of free time to learn other skills, like HTML, CSS, and web applications.

#### What did you gain from the internship experience?

**Arthur:** Personally, I like working with young people. Our company has grown used to certain ways of working, and young interns disrupt that with new ideas, helping us keep in touch with the real world. Also, because Vpon has offices in China, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore – and soon Thailand and Korea – we need a diverse mix of people in our teams to understand our markets better. Sun has taught us a lot about the Korean culture, and his English is very good, so our team can practice their language skills with him daily.

**Sun:** Working at Vpon has taught me how to interact and communicate with people in a business setting. I learned everything from how to write a business email to how to apply a data tool to solve a problem, and how to visualize data so clients can understand it. I gained both soft skills and hard skills and feel a lot more confident about my future career. I know data science is what I want to do, and I'm going to take courses in entrepreneurship, business, and finance so I can apply data science tools to provide solutions for different industries. This internship has inspired me to start my own business one day!



## Would you recommend others to join HeadStart?

**Arthur:** Definitely. Mentoring students is a rewarding experience for me, as I can offer them advice on how to make the most of their time at university, and what employers are really looking for. It feels great to contribute to their future in that way. The internship offers a valuable opportunity for companies to get a fresh perspective and learn from the new generation. It's not about cost-effective labour, it's about bridging the gap between students and professionals, so we can learn from each other.

**Sun:** It's a valuable program. I find the executive talks very meaningful. Hearing CEOs from both large companies and small start-ups share about how they overcame challenges and failures is very inspiring. And the fellowship events are great opportunities to meet new people from different backgrounds. In addition to business skills, I have gained a much wider understanding of the world and how to succeed in the industry, thanks to HeadStart. 🍷



# Leader

## LEADING THE WAY, TOGETHER



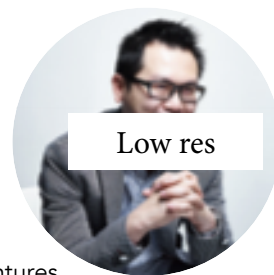
Throughout the year, the Convocation Standing Committee continued to support the HKUST community, promote entrepreneurship, and act as a bridge between the University and the public.

Committee members are all actively involved in their various roles, and regularly put on events that contribute to the University's initiatives. Chairman Alvin Lam hosted two workshops for students, helping them refine their business ideas and sharing his start-up journey at an E-Commerce Challenge in Seoul, co-organized by Uptown and the HKUST Entrepreneurship Center. Other members showed their dedication by, for example, serving on the selection panel for a Technopreneur Competition and an Entrepreneur Fund.

They also attended the inauguration of the City University Convocation's 6th Standing Committee, showing their support and sharing their experiences from the HKUST Convocation with the City University community.

The Convocation partners with the Development and Alumni Office to co-organize various programs from time to time, such as alumni entrepreneur sharing events, the "Survival Kit in Banking" panel for current students, and more.

To attend Convocation events and make the most of these valuable learning opportunities, please contact us at [convocation@ust.hk](mailto:convocation@ust.hk). 🍷



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### Alvin Lam Convocation Chairman

Managing Partner, T12M Ventures  
| Founder, PacificLink Group

Alvin is the epitome of a successful entrepreneur. In 1998, he founded PacificLink Group, which became a leading digital agency that was eventually acquired by Accenture. His entrepreneurial endeavours have been featured in the Harvard Business Review and are used as references in MBA and EMBA classes globally. He is the recipient of several awards: the Outstanding ICT Achiever Award 2012, the Top Outstanding Designer Award 2015 and Capital Leaders of Excellence Award 2016.

Determined to help other start-ups succeed, he serves as the director of the Hong Kong Business Angel Network as well as managing partner of T12M Ventures, an angel investor and accelerator fund for early stage companies. He also launched an educational portal, [www.18hall.com](http://www.18hall.com), for entrepreneurs in Hong Kong, and advises several university academic departments.

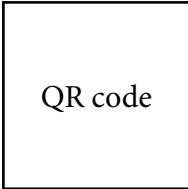
In 2016, he made a generous donation to the HKUST Alumni Endowment Fund (AEF), which helped establish the Student Start-up Grant. Thanks to his remarkable support, students with creative ideas now have a greater chance of turning their dreams into reality.

# HAPPENINGS



## A year of highlights

HKUST Alumni Association put together a scintillating array of events this year. In March, alumni had the privilege of visiting companies like Tencent and Admaster in Beijing to gain a deeper understanding of the technology industry in the Mainland and share their own experience, too.



The exclusive Young Master Brewery tour in May was a highlight of the Alumni Engagement Team’s calendar. The highly informative beer tasting session was a great way to experience the craft beer culture while cooling down on a hot weekend!

Enthusiastic volunteers rolled up their sleeves to serve the community by cleaning, polishing, and painting homes for the elderly and low-income families in Sau Mau Ping in May. The event was co-organized by the Community Service Team and Habitat for Humanity Hong Kong.

In August, they bid farewell to the former HKUST president, Prof. Tony Chan, and expressed their gratitude to him for his steadfast support over the years.



## Team spirit

Alumni, staff, faculty members, and students got their running shoes on to participate in various races at the Standard Chartered HK Marathon in January. Team HKUST again demonstrated their persistence and the “One-HKUST” spirit, congratulating each other at the booth near the finish line afterwards. A big thank you to Li-Ning Company Ltd for sponsoring the team T-shirts!



## Fun with the family

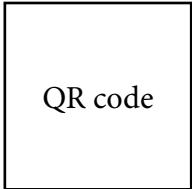
The Lee Shau Kee Business Building was filled with carnival fun and laughter on May 1 for Alumni Family Day, hosted by the Business School. Hundreds gathered to enjoy fun games, handicraft stations, photography workshops, a bouncy castle, and a colorful LEGO® brick-building area. Business School Dean Prof. Kar Yan Tam officiated the exciting lucky draw of LEGO®-sponsored gifts.

Two days later, the School invited MBA alumnus Oscar Lee, columnist and principal anchor of Now TV, to lead a parenting talk to more than 100 alumni parents and parents-to-be. Have a look at the photos here!



## Making a splash

This season was a rewarding one for the Alumni Dragon Boat Club. They relocated their training base to Tuen Mun and learned new techniques from a coach who used to be a fisherman in Tai O. Under his guidance, they achieved remarkable results – winning two championships and second runner-up at the Sai Kung and Stanley races. On the day of the Dragon Boat Festival in Sha Tin, they got their first ever gold medal, plus two bronze medals!



In July, members and their families celebrated the Club’s 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary on campus, cheering on another decade of success.





**Hole in one**

Members enjoyed an entertaining golf day organized by the Alumni Golf Club at Kau Sai Chau in November 2017. They played their favorite Texas Scramble and other games, such as Closest to the Pin and Longest Drive. Afterwards, they sat down to a well-earned seafood dinner in Sai Kung to wrap up the day.



**Across the border**

To strengthen relationships among members in the Mainland, the EMBA Alumni Association is introducing several programs and new chapters. They held inauguration ceremonies of the North China Chapter in Beijing and the Zhejiang Chapter in Hangzhou, and welcomed the 4<sup>th</sup> session of committee led by Xu Wenwei this year.



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**Bouncing to victory**

Members of the Alumni Table Tennis Club brought home the Outstanding Group Award, plus a bronze medal in the men's singles, at the National Business School EMBA Table Tennis Invitation 2017. Their hard work has paid off, and they are determined to achieve even better results in future!



**New faces, new plans**

The MBA Alumni Association's Annual Dinner in April welcomed 120 alumni, friends, and committee members from partnering organizations, including Prof. K C Chan. Together, they celebrated the inauguration of the new executive council comprising 12 members. The new president, Thomas Ng, presented the Association's mission and 2018-19 plan, which includes a series of engaging events, such as workshops, seminars, joint gatherings, and fitness activities. This spring, they hosted an advanced presentation skills training and a virtual reality industry seminar showcasing the latest games.

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**Wining and dining**

Glasses clinked in celebration of the Alumni Wine Association's first anniversary in April. At their annual general meeting, President Jennifer Luk highlighted the activities and achievements of the past year. Afterwards, they enjoyed a delectable menu, paired with a wide selection of wines sponsored by California Wine Hong Kong and Decanter Asia Wine Awards, at their Spring Dinner. They are looking forward to many more wine tastings and social events in the coming year – all HKUST wine enthusiasts are welcome!

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**Learning at lunch**

To provide alumni and students with insights about working in different industries, the Engineering Enterprise Management Alumni Association launched a "Luncheon with Professionals" series from February to April. Alumni of different walks of life shared their experience of job searching and career development in small group settings for in-depth discussion. In view of the overwhelming response, the Association plans to make it an annual signature event going forward.

# HAPPENINGS



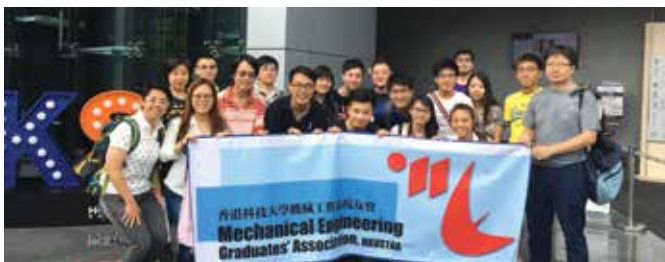
## A home from home

Over the years, the Mainland Alumni Association has been dedicated to bringing together alumni from the Mainland who have stayed in Hong Kong after graduation. The Clear Water Bay Forums on blockchain in February and biotechnology in June were a great success and the Association has organized monthly happy hour gatherings since July. September's exco inauguration ceremony marked a particularly big milestone. Join them and meet new friends from HKUST!



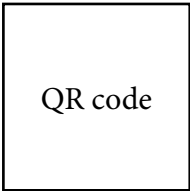
## Together again

The Alumni Career Sharing and Homecoming Day was held in March and saw alumni coming together for a fun night on campus and sharing valuable career development advice with students. This has been the Environmental Management and Technology Alumni Association's signature annual event since its inception in 2013.



## Venturing underground

Members of the Mechanical Engineering Graduates' Association learned about wastewater treatment at the Sha Tin Sewage Treatment Works in March, where an engineer from the Drainage Services Department talked them through the planned relocation to caverns. In June, they visited the Science Park to learn about the micro-algae bioreactor, the automatic refuse collection system, the cooling system, the service tunnel, and more. Stay tuned for upcoming events!



## Equipping the next generation

HKUST is dedicated to providing resources to advance STEM education in primary and secondary schools. In April, alumni teachers met with Prof. King Chow, who is leading a STEM@UST outreach initiative, to exchange ideas about how to better support schools in the area. An interactive platform was recently launched to help spark junior high students' inquisitiveness and support local STEM teachers in Hong Kong.



## Passing the baton

The Technology and Management Alumni Association has a new executive council! They are committed to continuing the excellent work of the previous council in bringing alumni closer together.



## CLASS NOTES

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### KEEP UP WITH YOUR CLASSMATES' NEWS

As families and careers grow and thrive, it can be difficult to stay in touch with old friends and classmates from your time at HKUST. Our Class Notes bring together news and updates from alumni scattered far and wide, so you can keep up with their lives – and share parts of your own!

#### MARRIAGES



**Wendy Chow & Kelvin Cheuk**  
2012 BSc BIOL / 2012 BEng ELEC

We first laid eyes on each other when we both burst into the same piano room at HKUST – a moment we'll never forget! Since then, we've been fortunate enough to make treasured friends and create countless memories together. We cannot wait to do more of the same as a couple after we marry on December 15, 2018.



**Pearl Lai**  
2012 BBA MARK

Henry and I tied the knot on November 18, 2017! We felt so lucky to have our families, teachers, friends, and colleagues come together to celebrate our special day with us.



**Vincent Ng**  
2007 BSc CHEM | 2011  
PhD CHEM

Wynnes and I began our new chapter together as man and wife on March 10, 2018. Here's to a future full of life, love, and color!



**Catherine Cheng**  
2007 BSc ECOF

On January 18, 2018, my partner Jared Tzeng became my husband! We have just relocated to Taitung in Taiwan to enjoy the next chapter of our lives together.

#### BIRTHS



**Cheng Yui Tat**  
1997 MPhil HUMA

We are delighted to share the news that beautiful Adele became part of our family in August 2017! She fills our lives and hearts with love, joy, and excitement every single day, and we look forward to watching her blossom into a happy and healthy little girl.



**Koji Suzuki**  
2009 MBA

We were thrilled to welcome our wonderful son Zen on April 25, 2017!

## CLASS NOTES



**Wei Zhuo**  
2009 BEng ELEC - HR  
2017 was the year I welcomed my first child!



**Sylvia Lau**  
2003 BBA FINA  
This little smiling face is my beautiful daughter Abby, born on November 27, 2017!

## CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS



**Nelson Chu**  
1999 BEng CPEG | 2001 MPhil COMP | 2007 PhD COMP

I am very proud to helm Expressii, an advanced digital painting software that creates organic, lifelike brushstrokes on screen – we were the only Asian team to feature in Microsoft’s 2017 video collage of its app partners, alongside giants such as Adobe, Autodesk, and Cor!



**A M Farhan Thaika Muthuwappa**  
2015 MSc ICDE

After graduating from HKUST, I joined City University of Hong Kong as a research assistant on an exciting project supported by the Hong Kong Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF). I am currently working on low-level microcontroller programming and circuit design for sensing devices and robotic modules, and as a research specialist in electronic circuits and embedded and robotic systems.



**Chan Hon Kit & Chan Yuen Cheung**  
2012 BEng COMP /  
2017 BSc BISC

Three founding members of our contemporary dance trio, The Devisers Company, have been offered the chance to undertake a Master of Arts program at the world-class London Contemporary Dance School in the UK. We are all from different backgrounds – IT and science, education, and dance and performing arts. To pursue our dream, we have launched a crowdfunding campaign – thank you so much for your support!



**David Wong & Brian Hui**  
1997 BSc MATH – SC

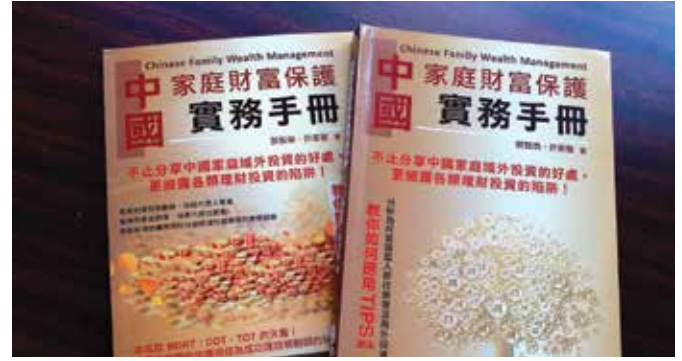
From university roommates to firm friends and successful colleagues: we are excited to announce that in January 2018 we officially launched our interactive app, StockBuddyPlus, which provides personalized, real-time information on the financial market in Hong Kong.





**Tinglong Dai**  
2006 MPhil IEEM

I have two pieces of news to share! Firstly, I was recently promoted to associate professor of operations management and business analytics at Johns Hopkins University's Carey Business School, USA – and secondly, my co-edited book, "Handbook of Healthcare Analytics", was published by John Wiley & Sons in September 2018. My research focuses on healthcare analytics, marketing and operations interfaces, and artificial intelligence, and I am delighted to have won numerous awards.



**Dennis Tang**  
1998 MPhil MECH

I work as a lawyer for major insurance and financial enterprises, and am pleased to announce the launch of my new book, "Chinese Family Wealth Management". It analyses how to explore potential business opportunities with mainland clients, and shares key knowledge on how to become a successful financial planner.



**Gautam Khattak**  
2013 MBA

I am very pleased to share news of my recent promotion to chief information officer of Artesyn Embedded Technologies, Inc. We work with a wide range of industries and specialize in designing and manufacturing highly reliable power conversion and embedded computing solutions.



**Tony Ngai**  
2006 MSc TELECOM

Having worked in the film industry for nearly half a century, I was overjoyed to receive The Hong Kong Society of Cinematographers' Professional Achievement Award on March 5, 2018.



**Danny Chau**  
2006 MSc IBTM

In August 2017, I made the exciting leap of relocating to Sydney, Australia, to work on metro projects for MTR (Sydney) SMCSW Pay Ltd.



**Tim Tse**  
2000 BBA ECON  
2002 MPhil ECON

I was honored to be named an Asian Chinese Leader as part of the 2017 Nobel Laureates Honorary Awards from the Asian College of Knowledge Management. I have over 15 years of experience in the finance industry, and am presently CEO and executive director of Head & Shoulders Financial Group.



# ALUMNI REUNION

## HKUST *Alumni* REUNION 2018

November 24 (Saturday)

**DON'T MISS THE  
BIGGEST REUNION  
IN HKUST HISTORY!**

We are thrilled to announce HKUST's largest ever alumni reunion will be held on November 24, 2018. It promises to be a spectacular affair, bringing together alumni of all generations and professions to spend a Saturday together on campus. Don't miss it!

The Development and Alumni Office has an exciting program of events planned for you and your family, including exhibitions, workshops, mini lectures, sports, videos, tours, and an entrepreneur market showcasing innovative start-ups created by HKUST graduates. There will also be lots of fun activities to keep your kids entertained while you catch up with old friends and make new connections.

This is a rare chance to reconnect with your alma mater, celebrate the progress you and your peers have made, reminisce about the good old days, and make memories you can treasure forever.

Register now to secure your place in the program of events and for a chance to win fabulous lucky draw prizes! 🎁

**REGISTER NOW**



[alumreunion.ust.hk](http://alumreunion.ust.hk)

