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Press Release

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HKIEd to Confer Honorary Doctorates on Four Distinguished Individuals

The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) will confer honorary doctorates on four distinguished individuals from countries across the globe – Dr Ela Ramesh Bhatt, Ms Ann Hui On Wah, Professor Sharon Lynn Kagan and Professor Victor Henry Mair – at its 16th Congregation on 19 November 2010.

The Honourable Donald Tsang Yam-kuen, Chancellor of the Institute and Chief Executive of HKSAR, will preside over the Conferment Ceremony at the HKIEd Tai Po Campus.

Pioneer in grassroots development helps uplift the poorest in India

Dr Ela Ramesh Bhatt
~Doctor of Social Sciences *honoris causa*

Dr Ela Ramesh Bhatt has dedicated her life to improving the circumstances of India's poorest and most oppressed women workers amid other distinguished accomplishments in grassroots development. She is the founder of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) of India, a trade union based in Ahmedabad that has helped to change the lives of 1.2 million poor women. Formed in 1972, SEWA's main goals are to organise women workers for full employment and economic self-reliance. In 1974, Dr Bhatt founded the SEWA Cooperative Bank, which provides loans to self-employed women for use in economic activities to reduce their dependence on loan sharks and make them rightful contributors to India's economy.

Dr Bhatt was a member of the upper house of Indian Parliament and subsequently a member of the Indian Planning Commission. She was also the founder and chairperson of Women's World Banking, the International Alliance of Home-based Workers, International Network of Street Vendors, and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing, Organizing.

A follower of Mohandas Gandhi's ideals, Dr Bhatt is a respected lawyer who has educated women to be leaders in their own movements so they can become strong and visible. She argues that poverty is violence and the poor women are central to building peace. She has also worked for cooperation among different sectors like agriculture and craft with the joint actions of unions and cooperatives.

Dr Bhatt was granted honorary doctorates by Harvard University in 2001 and by Yale University in 2002. In recognition of her dedication to uplifting poor women in India, she was awarded the 27th Niwano Peace Prize for 2010.

Renowned film director helps raise public awareness of the underprivileged

Ms Ann Hui On Wah, MBE
~Doctor of Humanities *honoris causa*

Ms Ann Hui On Wah is a veteran director and producer in Hong Kong who, through her films, demonstrates care and concern for the underprivileged.

Having gained a Master's degree in Comparative Literature at the University of Hong Kong and studied filmmaking at the London Film School, Ms Hui returned to Hong Kong in 1975, working in television for four years before turning to feature films in 1979. After her debut work *The Secret*, she went on to make 23 features including *The Boy from Vietnam* (1978), *The Story of Wooviet* (1981) and *Boat People* (1982), which form her famous "Vietnamese trilogy" examining the trials and tribulations of Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong. *Boat People* was an Official Selection at Cannes and Best Film at the Hong Kong Film Awards.

Ms Hui also directed the semi-autobiographical *Song of The Exile* in 1990, featuring the loss of identity, disorientation and despair of an exiled ethnic Japanese mother and her daughter suffering discrimination from Chinese parents-in-law in post-war China. The film won the Best Film prize at both the Asian Pacific Film Festival and the Rimini Film Festival.

Highly praised for her concern about the underprivileged in Hong Kong, Ms Hui was named Best Director at the 28th Hong Kong Film Awards in 2008 for *The Way We Are*, which features a small group of residents in Tin Shui Wai, dubbed the "city of sadness" by local media due to its social problems.

Distinguished educator has profound influence on early childhood education

Professor Sharon Lynn Kagan
~Doctor of Education *honoris causa*

Professor Sharon Lynn Kagan is globally recognised for her work related to the care and education for young children and their families. She has made remarkable contributions to global early childhood and family care issues. As a frequent consultant to the White House, Congress, the National Governors' Association, the US Departments of Education and Health and Human Services and over 40 national boards and panels, her unique ability to advance thinking, practice and policies have affected literally millions of children around the world. She has been a part of major national and international research teams exploring the nature, quality and delivery of early childhood services.

Professor Kagan is the Virginia and Leonard Marx Professor of Early Childhood and Family Policy, Co-Director of the National Center for Children and Families at Teachers College, Columbia University, and Professor Adjunct at Yale University's Child Study Center.

Renowned for being the only woman in the history of American education to have received its three most prestigious awards, Professor Kagan was recognised with the 2004 Distinguished Service Award from the Council of Chief State School Officers, the 2005 James Bryant Conant Award for Lifetime Service to Education from the Education Commission of the States, and the Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education.

Her links to Hong Kong date back 20 years, when she first worked with the government, early childhood organisations and the public and private sectors. She is currently working around the globe with UNICEF to establish early learning standards in America, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Ghana, Jordan, Mongolia, Paraguay, Turkmenistan and Vietnam.

Eminent Sinologist contributes to advancing the interconnection of cultures

Professor Victor Henry Mair
~Doctor of Humanities *honoris causa*

Professor Victor Henry Mair receives the honorary degree of Doctor of Humanities for his remarkable contributions to, and accomplishments in, Sino-Indian and Sino-Iranian cultural contacts and Chinese script reform. He is currently Professor of the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Pennsylvania, where he has been teaching since 1979.

Professor Mair is an internationally renowned Sinologist specialising in the study of ancient Chinese culture, especially Dunhuang Studies, archaeology, the history of cultural exchange and medieval Chinese languages. His deep interest in the interconnection of cultures led him to investigate the spectacular Caucasian mummies found in Xinjiang, China. He thus invigorated Silk Road Studies in their manifold aspects, including the support and training of young foreign scholars in the US. His studies of the Xinjiang mummies also earned him an outstanding reputation in Western academia.

Professor Mair is the committed editor of Sino-Platonic Papers, a forum for innovative and controversial discussions on all aspects of Chinese civilisation. He is also a prolific author, translator and anthologist, with a number of his articles and books having been translated into Chinese, Japanese and German. Among his many interests are the Bronze Age and Early Iron Age of Eastern Central Asia, popular Buddhist literature, the rise of the written vernacular, and the origins and evolution of the Chinese script.



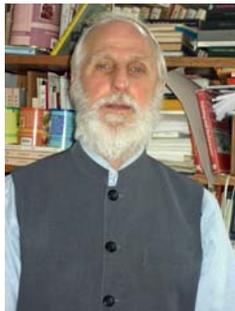
Dr Ela Ramesh Bhatt



Ms Ann Hui On Wah



Professor Sharon Lynn Kagan



Professor Victor Henry Mair

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