

HKIED Confers Honorary Doctorates on Five Distinguished Individuals

At its 18th Congregation today (16 November 2012), The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIED) conferred honorary doctorates on five distinguished individuals in recognition of the significant contributions they have made to their respective fields in advancing education, social progress and humanity. They are:

Professor Brian Caldwell – Doctor of Education, *honoris causa*

Dr Rebecca Lee Lok-sze, MH – Doctor of Humanities, *honoris causa*

Mr Edwin Leong Siu-hung – Doctor of Social Sciences, *honoris causa*

Professor Geoff Whitty, CBE – Doctor of Education, *honoris causa*

Professor Zhong Binglin – Doctor of Education, *honoris causa*

Mr Leung Chun-ying, Chancellor of the Institute and Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, presided over the ceremony held on HKIED's Tai Po Campus.

Speaking at the Congregation, Professor Cheng Yin-cheong, HKIED's Acting President, paid special tribute to the five honorary doctoral degree recipients, lauding their achievements and lifelong dedication to advancing social and human betterment.

Professor Cheng also extended his congratulations to the assembled bachelor, master and doctoral graduates on their successful completion of academic studies. He called upon them to pursue the greater good for the community. "Apart from gaining knowledge, what is precious in university education is the awareness of horizons beyond one's immediate surroundings. By turning a concern and empathy for the underprivileged into action, our graduates could bring a huge change to the world," he said.

Professor Cheng stressed that high-quality creative talents with a broad global vision, English language proficiency, critical thinking and problem-solving ability are much sought after around the world. He suggested that through holistic learning experiences, supported by well-rounded academic and professional programmes, and exposure to General Education, Co-curricular Learning, Overseas Learning Opportunities, and Language Enhancement under the new 334/5 academic structure, HKIED students will become "professionally competent, intellectually active, socially caring and globally aware".

As professional teachers, HKIED's alumni have been well received by the education community, with over 98 per cent of graduates employed or engaged in further studies over the past five years. In 2011/12, 87% of those who received the Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence (CEATE) were graduates of HKIED or its predecessor colleges of education. Since the Award's inception in 2003, 448 of the total 590 recipients have been graduates of HKIED.

Another noteworthy development is HKIEd's significant transformation in recent years, especially in terms of research excellence. "Apart from being recognised as a leader in teacher education, we are glad to report that the Institute has become increasingly strong in research in the education, humanities and social sciences disciplines," Professor Cheng added.

Among many other accomplishments, the Institute has achieved a nine-fold increase in the number of research projects and a twelve-fold increase in research funding supported by competitive research grants from the Research Grants Council (RGC) since 2007. The Institute has 60 ongoing research projects with international impact in the areas of education, the humanities and the social sciences, supported by HK\$50 million of RGC funding.

In the Education panel, HKIEd topped the 2012/13 exercises for both the General Research Fund and Early Career Scheme among the eight institutions funded by the University Grants Committee -in terms of awarded projects and total awarded amount. In Psychology and Linguistics, HKIEd was also ranked first in the Early Career Scheme. In the entire Humanities and Social Sciences Panel, the HKIEd was ranked third in both the General Research Fund and Early Career Scheme exercises.

The Institute has also been awarded a Chair in Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Lifelong Learning by UNESCO, the first UNESCO Chair in the education field awarded to a Hong Kong institution.

"Operating as a university in every sense," said Professor Cheng, "HKIEd has indeed been transformed into an education-focused, multidisciplinary institution with research capacity. The Institute definitely has a key role to play in the macro education landscape."

Following the conferment of its first batch of Doctor of Education (EdD) degrees in 2010-11, HKIEd conferred a second batch this year (for five in total), together with 478 master's degrees and 1,195 bachelor's degrees. Another 563 Postgraduate Diplomas were conferred, as were 353 Higher Diplomas/Certificates in Early Childhood Education.

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