

Honorary Doctor of Science

Professor Rosie Tse-tse YOUNG

Citation written and delivered by Professor Frances F YAO

Chancellor:

It is my privilege to read the citation for Professor Rosie Tse-tse Young, a most distinguished scientist, dedicated educator and an inspirational role model.

Professor Young is an Honorary Professor of Medicine at the University of Hong Kong and Honorary Consultant at Queen Mary Hospital and Hong Kong Sanatorium and Hospital. She received a Bachelor of Medicine and a Bachelor of Surgery in 1953 and a Doctor of Medicine in 1959 from the University of Hong Kong. She was a Pro-Vice-Chancellor and held other senior positions at the University of Hong Kong before she retired in 1999.

Professor Young is a world ranking researcher in medicine, specializing in the study of endocrine disorders including thyrotoxicosis, diabetes and primary carcinoma of the liver. Her research has led to important new understandings of these diseases which were published in international medical journals and, even more gratifying to her, led to treatments that help save lives and reduce the suffering of patients.

In her long and distinguished career, Professor Young has received numerous honours in recognition of her scientific achievements and contributions. These include Fellowships at the Royal Colleges of Physicians of Edinburgh, London, Glasgow, Australia and at the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine; Honorary Degrees in Doctor of Science from the University of Hong Kong and Open University of Hong Kong in 1995; and Commander of the British Empire in 1996.

Although research and teaching are her primary loves and keep her quite busy, Professor Young does not hesitate when called upon to serve the community. I live by the dictum “Never pass the buck”, says Professor Young. She was Chair of the Hong Kong Medical Council between 1988 and 1996, and brought about changes on issues such as doctor’s accountability to patients, universal licentiate examinations and increasing the openness of hearings. This is but one of many examples of public service provided by Professor Young over the years. She also

chaired the Education Commission, an influential advisory body to the Hong Kong Government on education policy, between 1993 and 1998. In this role she took up the challenging problems of education reform in Hong Kong. Once again, she made an indelible mark by designing strategies for enhanced language proficiency and quality education, while advocating greater autonomy and more equitable funding for the schools. For her contributions Professor Young was awarded a Gold Bauhinia Star by the Hong Kong Government in 2002.

Professor Young's dedication to education and the pursuit of knowledge might be linked to her own unusual background. She recalls that, due to the Pacific War she lost nearly four years of schooling and was taught at home by her father. This led to a bumpy start after she entered university at age 16. However, she quickly adjusted and, with the encouragement and inspiration of her mentor Professor Alec MacFadzean, she not only excelled as a medical student but was ready and eager to embark on research. She also remembers vividly how Professor MacFadzean cared so much for his patients that he often helped to pay for those who had financial hardship.

Professor Young says these early experiences taught her to be resilient in life. They also instilled in her a deep sense of compassion for the disadvantaged. She has worked tirelessly on making educational opportunities accessible, and is also a great believer in the idea of continuing education.

Despite having passed the official age of retirement, Professor Young continues to teach medical students and visit hospital wards. She wants to pass her experiences down to each new generation of students. Professor Young believes that everyone must give back to society and as she says, "Giving is a blessing".

In recognition of her outstanding contribution to learning and the well-being of our society, it is my great honour to present Professor Rosie Tse-tse Young to you, Mr Chancellor, for the award of the degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*.