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\$10 Million Donation to Establish Chair Professorships

Dr Helmut Sohmen, a Council member and founding Court member of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST), and his wife, Prof Anna Pao Sohmen, have graciously donated HK\$10 million to HKUST to support its academic development with an endowed professorship program. The donation was presented to Prof Paul Chu, President of HKUST, at a ceremony held on campus today (19 December 2003).

The gift will be used to set up two chair professorships: the Helmut Sohmen Professor of Environmental Studies, and the Anna Sohmen Professor of Finance.

"We're building for the future and I believe HKUST deserves every bit of support," says Dr Sohmen. "Because HKUST is so young its needs are obviously greater, and every dollar donated is a dollar well donated."

The generous contribution was the first major donation made to the University after the launch by the government of its dollar-for-dollar Matching Grant Scheme earlier this year. It will therefore attract an additional \$10 million in matching funds from the Scheme.

President Chu expressed his gratitude to Dr Sohmen and Prof Sohmen for their generous donation: "I am grateful to our two loyal friends whose assistance and friendship have contributed to HKUST's growth in a crucial period of the University's development."

"Talented people are the key to a university's success, and their gift will help the University recruit and retain first-class scholars from around the world."

Dr Sohmen is the Chairman and President of the World-Wide Shipping Group and has been a staunch supporter of HKUST since its establishment. He has worked tirelessly to promote dialogue between academia and business, encourage student exchanges, and develop arts and culture on campus.

Dr Sohmen is the host of the University's Business Roundtable Series, inaugurated in 1993, which acts as a forum for HKUST professors to exchange views with business leaders, government officials and diplomats.

In 1997 he established the Sohmen Foundation Austria Summer Program Award, providing sponsorship for HKUST students to participate in a summer cultural program at the University of Vienna, Austria.

He donated US\$2 million (HK\$15.6 million) to establish the Y K Pao Visiting Chair in Cultural Studies Fund in 2000, through which internationally renowned scholars are invited to teach at HKUST.

Furthermore, when HKUST celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2001, Dr Sohmen sponsored the installation of the One-World-Fountain, a renowned water sculpture that has considerably augmented the University's artistic standing.



Dr Sohmen (right) and Prof Sohmen present the cheque to President Chu

