

Hong Kong Jockey Club “Giftedness Into Flourishing Talents” Project : A Cross-Institutional Effort for School-Based Talent Development and Gifted Education in Hong Kong

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The Program for the Gifted and Talented (PGT) at the Faculty of Education, the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) has organized a 3-year initiative titled the Jockey Club “Giftedness Into Flourishing Talents” Project (Project GIFT). The aim is to promote school-based talent development and gifted education in Hong Kong. This new project, funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust with a sum of HK\$48.5M, is a cross-institutional effort by research investigators from CUHK, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, City University of Hong Kong, and the Education University of Hong Kong. It also receives great support from the Hong Kong Academy of Gifted Education, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and the University of Hong Kong.

Based on previous experiences in providing university-based gifted enrichment and accelerated gifted programs and services for students, PGT will organize Project GIFT in close collaboration with local primary and secondary schools. The following three aims will provide the framework :

1. to discover and identify the talents of students, and develop a local school-based talent search model that informs school-based gifted education policy
2. to develop appropriate curricula to nurture students’ talents and giftedness
3. to enhance the professional competence of school personnel in talent development and gifted education in schools.

Project GIFT will recruit 20 schools to join the program in 2017-18 and 2018-19 academic years. The recruitment exercise will start in late-March 2017. After completing the procedures of initial screening of school applications, the project team will visit schools to understand their needs before finalizing the project school list.

The first major event of Project GIFT is the Gifted Education Lecture Series cum Launching Ceremony for the project from 18 to 25 February 2017. The following world-renowned scholars and pioneers in gifted education were invited to share their views and experiences on gifted education with gifted students, parents and educators: Professor Jose G. ASSOULINE, Professor Susan G. ASSOULINE, Professor Ching-chih KUO, Professor Sally M. REIS, Professor Joseph S. RENZULLI, and Professor Joyce VANTASSEL-BASKA. The topics covered included research on brain development, models of school-based gifted education, enriched and differentiated curriculum and teaching pedagogy, and strategies to nurture talents and giftedness of students. This event was intended to integrate past experiences with current practices and updated research studies in the U.S. and Taiwan. The purpose was to advance our knowledge in gifted education and provide insights for us to bring talent development and gifted education in Hong Kong to a higher level of theoretical development and professional practice.



Professor Jose G. ASSOULINE



Professor Susan G. ASSOULINE



Professor Ching-chih KUO



Professor Sally M. REIS



Professor Joseph S. RENZULLI



Professor Joyce VANTASSEL-BASKA

The Launching Ceremony was held on Thursday, 23 February, 2017, and officiated by Mr Eddie NG Hak Kim (Secretary for Education, Education Bureau, The Government of HKSAR), Professor Joseph SUNG Jao Yiu (Vice-Chancellor and President, CUHK), Mr Leong CHEUNG (Executive Director, Charities and Community, The Hong Kong Jockey Club), Dr Catherine CHAN Ka Ki (Deputy Secretary for Education of the Government of HKSAR), Dr Rebecca LEE Lok Sze (Founder of Polar Museum Foundation), Professor Isabella POON Wai Yin (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President, CUHK), Professor Alvin LEUNG Seung Ming (Dean of Education, CUHK), Professor Alan CHEUNG Chi Keung (Director, Centre for University & School Partnership, CUHK, and Co-Chief Principal Investigator of Project GIFT), and Professor Daniel SHEK Tan Lei (Associate Vice President, PolyU, and Co-Chief Principal Investigator of Project GIFT).

The Launching Ceremony also provided an opportunity for students to showcase their talents. Students of three pilot schools of the Project demonstrated different talents with outstanding performance. At the beginning of the ceremony, students from Yan Chai Hospital Choi Hin To Primary School accompanied the guests of honour to make the entrance with a colourful dancing dragon and the Chinese drum ensemble. The dragon, made from recycled bottles, is the creative product of the students. The unicycle team from Heung Hoi Ching Kok Lin Association Buddhist Chan Shi Wan Primary School performed to express their happiness and gratitude of being nurtured, and ended their performance with a slogan "Everybody is a super star, nothing is impossible! Every child is talented, let them shine!" Students of Queen's College also showed their musical talents. The audience enjoyed the light music by the string quartet before the ceremony and during the intermissions.



The Gifted Education Lecture Series cum the Launching Ceremony, involving more than 1200 participants, was a great success. To learn more about the focus and expected outcomes of Project GIFT, please visit the project website (www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/gift).