



Press Release

The 3-Year “Giftedness Into Flourishing Talents” Project by CUHK and HKJC A cross-institutional effort for school-based talent development and gifted education in HK

(Hong Kong, 2 March 2017) The Program for the Gifted and Talented (PGT), Faculty of Education, the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), has announced the launch of a 3-year initiative, the **Jockey Club “Giftedness Into Flourishing Talents” Project (Project GIFT)**, 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 total sum of HK\$48.5M, is a cross-institutional effort by research investigators from the CUHK, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), 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 the experiences of providing university-based gifted enrichment and accelerated gifted programs and services for students, the PGT will organize through **Project GIFT school-based gifted education in close collaboration with local primary and secondary schools in the following three aspects**: 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; and 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 as project schools 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 the Launching Ceremony of the project from 18 to 25 February 2017. World-renowned scholars from the U.S. and Taiwan were invited to share their views and experiences on gifted education with gifted students, parents and educators on different topics, including the research on brain development, models on school-based gifted education, enriched and differentiated curriculum and teaching pedagogy, and strategies to nurture talents and giftedness of students. The Launching Ceremony of the project, held last Thursday, 23 February, 2017, was 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).

Professor SUNG delivered his welcoming remarks with high expectation of the project, “I would like to thank The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for its generous funding to establish this Project. It is indeed a generous GIFT to the field of gifted education and the gifted population in Hong Kong. The project is perhaps the first of its kind in Hong Kong with cross-institutional collaboration to promote school-based talent development and gifted education in Hong Kong through an effective model of university-school partnership for sustainable professional development.” Despite the challenges ahead, he expressed his firm belief in the meanings and rewards of the project for gifted education in Hong Kong.

Mr NG, in his speech, pointed out that the HKSAR government has always emphasized the importance of developing gifted education in Hong Kong. “In the 2016 Policy Address, the Chief Executive announced the setting up of an \$800 million Gifted Education Fund. We are currently setting up an Advisory Committee on Gifted Education to tap the views and expertise of relevant stakeholders. I am sure the keynote speakers will enlighten us of the possible means to achieve the goal of nurturing creativity and excellence from different perspectives.”

“The Club started to explore funding opportunities to support pilot programmes on curriculum development around 10 years ago, aligning with the Education Bureau’s efforts. Examples include the ‘PATHS to Adulthood’ project which is a scientific and holistic development programme in the Chinese communities designed for adolescents; ‘READ & WRITE’, the first-known programme designed for dyslexic children to boost their reading and writing abilities. This project for our gifted children takes our efforts a step further.” **Mr CHEUNG** told the guests, noting that gifted students also had special educational needs even though they were often thought to have an advantage over other children.

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 of the project, involving more than 1200 participants, was a great success.

===== About the Program for the Gifted and Talented (PGT), Faculty of Education, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

To unfold the potential of gifted and talented students and meet their special educational needs, PGT was set up in 1995 to promote quality education for local gifted and talented students through specially designed out-of-school programs and services. PGT also has a research component which aims to conduct scientific research to understand the needs of gifted students and develop curriculum resources best suited to their needs. The role of research is highly emphasized as research findings can advance our knowledge and inform practice on the areas of gifted education and talent development. To learn more about PGT, please visit the program website (www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/pgt).

To learn more about **Jockey Club “Giftedness Into Flourishing Talents” Project**, please visit the project website (www.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/gift) or contact our project team at 3943-3360.