

## THE GIFT OF EDUCATION

*Ricky Cheng joined the United Board in October 2010. As Vice President for Development, he strengthens the community of supporters for the United Board's mission and programs.*



### TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND.

I have always had an interest in education. I believe that the best way to help people is to give them an education, so that they can choose their own path. Give them an education, and they will have a lot more options in life. And there is a ripple effect; education not only changes their life, but also the lives of their children, grandchildren and many people around them.

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I worked in the commercial field for 21 years before joining The Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2003. That was a great opportunity for me to combine my business skills with my personal interest in education. I established the Office of Institutional Advancement to help raise funds for the university. And we had great success — we were able to substantially increase financial support and renew the commitment of alumni.

### HOW DID YOU FIRST LEARN ABOUT THE UNITED BOARD?

I got to know the United Board through its programs. While I was at Chinese University, I was invited to share my experience in fundraising at seminars for the United Board Fellows Program and the Asian University Leaders Program. Over the years, as I met many of these current and future leaders, I came to admire the work the United Board is doing in Christian higher education.

Most of the colleges and universities in the United Board network are smaller than the Chinese University. That appeals to me, because if I can help the United Board raise money, it will have a significant impact on these smaller institutions even with modest amounts of money.

### WHAT IS YOUR ROLE AT THE UNITED BOARD?

My foremost role is fundraising for the United Board's programs that greatly benefit some 80 partner institutions. But to do that, I need to communicate

with our current and potential donors and friends the achievements and the significant impact of our work. The United Board has done marvelous work in Christian higher education in Asia for nearly 90 years, but it is only known to a small community! Our newsletter, our website, and personal visits give us opportunities to tell our story. This helps us expand our circle of friends and hopefully increase the much-needed resources for our work.

### DOES THE UNITED BOARD NEED RESOURCES?

We are fortunate to have built up an endowment over the years. But the need is far, far greater. By raising more resources from our donors, our programs can have much greater reach both in breadth and depth. We can welcome more colleges and universities into our network. We can have more promising young Asian scholars in our programs. We can increase our impact, at a time when the needs and potential of higher education in Asia are growing exponentially.

### WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE DONORS TO KNOW?

The United Board's work focuses on building great Asian educational institutions through leadership and faculty development, and also providing much-needed resources for our program initiatives. I would like every donor to know that their donation or bequest will go a long way to help nurturing future Asian leaders with

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# THE GIFT OF EDUCATION

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good values and principles who will be an integral part of the global community.

They should also find comfort in knowing that the United Board does not apply administrative charges on these gifts: 100 percent of every donation benefits institutions in Asia. And we will look after these funds as carefully as the donors themselves! Donors can support

us in other ways as well. They can help spread the story of the United Board to their friends. They can help build our reputation and let more people know the good work we are doing.

Mostly, I want a chance to get to know our donors! I am based in Hong Kong, but I am often in the United States. Whether our donors are in Asia or North

America, I am never more than a day away. So I look forward to meeting more of our donors and friends. **UB**

## Go Online

Go to [unitedboard.org](http://unitedboard.org) for more information on ways of giving to the United Board.

## UNITED BOARD FELLOWS PROGRAM ASIAN FELLOWS, TEXAS WELCOME



*United Board Fellow Zhang Hanbo enjoyed Texas hospitality at Baylor University.*

**WHEN** Baylor University representatives greet arriving United Board Fellows at the airport, it's almost like seeing a familiar face. "What makes it special is that we have already been communicating with them for months," says Treva Hall from Baylor's Center for International Education (CIE). "Now we can give them a big Texas welcome and introduce them to staff and faculty."

Baylor, a private Baptist university in Waco, Texas, has been hosting United Board Fellows since 2005. Meticulous preparation is just one reason the experience has been so rewarding for Fellows and hosts. Baylor's "Texas welcome" extends from logistical arrangements, to intellectual pursuits, to social activities. The Center facilitates

the logistics of housing, immigration processes, banking and shopping, so that Fellows can hit the ground running. At the same time, a faculty or administration mentor stands ready to introduce them to academic life.

"This program is an opportunity for an individual to grow," says Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Policy James Bennighof, who selects the appropriate mentor for the Fellow and, on occasion, serves as a mentor himself. "So if I'm working with a Fellow, I want them to witness as broad a range of issues as possible." With this mission in mind, he might set up appointments for the Fellow to meet the dean of graduate studies or the vice provost for research, or encourage them to observe interviews of prospective faculty members or watch a meeting of the faculty senate. Fellows can attend large lecture classes or small seminars, within their academic specialties or in the realm of general education. It's a formula that's proven effective for Fellows in recent years at Baylor with interests as diverse as theology, family medicine, literature, finance and ecology and from places such as China, India, Indonesia, Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines.

Far from home, Fellows seek a sense of community as well. "It's a tribute to the

Baylor community and the individual Fellows that they get involved in Baylor life so easily," Dr. Bennighof notes. CIE's weekly newsletter guides Fellows to a wealth of opportunities to connect with faculty and students. CIE hosts "Popcorn and Culture" lectures to introduce international students and visitors to faculty from different departments and their research interests. "Fellows want to learn about American culture and embrace opportunities to do so," Treva Hall of CIE says. So they might attend church services or family meals, or take a trip off campus to see a rodeo or to tour NASA.

The Fellows Program prepares mid-career Asian faculty and administrators for future leadership at their home colleges and universities through four-month placements at institutions in Asia and in the United States or Australia. Since 2002, over 110 Fellows have benefited from the program. It also gives faculty, administrators and students at host institutions the opportunity to connect with educators from Asia and, in the words of Baylor's International Student Advisor Alexine Burke, to rediscover that "we are alike in so many ways." **UB**

## Go Online

Go to [unitedboard.org](http://unitedboard.org) for more information on this program.

### MISSION

The United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia works to support a Christian presence in colleges and universities in Asia.

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## PARTNERS

### LADY DOAK COLLEGE: NURTURING STUDENT INTEREST IN THE ENVIRONMENT

**AT** Lady Doak College, students find an academic ecosystem that nurtures their interest in the environment. “The environment is not only a focus for the sciences at Lady Doak College,” according to Dr. Mercy Pushpalatha, the principal of this women’s college in Madurai, India, “it’s also part of the humanities and business programs.” As importantly, environmental issues connect the classroom with the local community through service learning programs that bring students and local residents together to look at common concerns.

Dr. Pushpalatha’s enthusiasm for environmental studies is understandable: prior to becoming principal in 2008, she was a chemistry professor and taught a course on environmental chemistry. As principal, she sees the value of an interdisciplinary approach and opportunities for hands-on learning. “With support from the United Board, we have undertaken a project on ‘Environment and Health in Sellur,’ a local slum area,” she said. “Students from many departments, not just environmental studies, are involved. The maths department did statistical analysis of the surveys conducted. The physics department did the geomapping. The chemistry department did an analysis of water quality. The students from the department of botany did the microbial analysis of water. And our environmental awareness program (EAP) set up a medical camp to provide information about health risks.”

The Centre for Environmental Studies at Lady Doak College is currently involved with another United Board-supported project entitled “Carbon Footprinting in Thathanaeri,” which focuses on the cremation ground in their city, Madurai.

Faculty and students are seeking remedies in other areas as well. Another project focuses on parthenium, a plant that can aggravate respiratory ailments, like asthma. Lady Doak College’s EAP put together an exhibit to show residents what the plant looks like and raised awareness about its health effects. Students are planning to undertake some projects to eradicate the plant in Thondaimanpatti, the adopted village of the college.

This style of learning coincides with the goals of the United Board’s Environment Initiative, which encourages colleges and universities to “put principles into action.” In India, an initial focus of the United Board’s support for environment and health, a network of about 20 colleges and universities is sharing experiences in putting students “in the field,” conducting environmental audits on campus and looking at solid waste problems in surrounding communities. “Local people want remedies to environmental problems, so they appreciate our efforts,” Dr. Pushpalatha said. The experience also enriches undergraduate teaching and learning.

At Lady Doak College, students are interested in starting an eco-club, which they plan to call “Seed.” “This name will show that there is life in the club,” explains Dr. Pushpalatha, “and this life can be spread.” **UB**



*Environment and health awareness program at Lady Doak College.*

### UNITED BOARD FRIEND A SINCERE HEART: MRS. THERESE WANG (YANG CHI-YING)

**THERESE WANG** arrived at Tunghai University in the fall of 1956, one of 200 members of the new school’s Class of 1960. “It was such a small campus,” she recalled, “but I received a big education.” Fifty years after graduation, the lessons from her undergraduate years at Tunghai continue to guide her. “Tunghai equipped me at a human level, as well as intellectually. It inspired me to contribute to the community, not only at the time, but throughout my life,” she said.



Tunghai’s liberal arts education “broadened my mind,” she explained, as it introduced her to eastern and western cultures, music, art and philosophy, in addition to her major in economics, “and gave me the beginning of a global idea. All this enriched my life.” She was a shy girl when she arrived, but became a confident student. She earned pride in her work as well as a degree, lessons she later carried to the United States where she received her graduate degree in accounting and raised her family.

All this was possible because she received a scholarship at Tunghai. At the time, the source was anonymous, but she later learned that Elsie Priest, who worked in the Tunghai administrative offices, was the benefactor who paid scholarships from her own pocket.

Tunghai University has grown in the years since Mrs. Wang’s graduation: it’s now a comprehensive university with 17,000 students. Yet she knows there have always been Tunghai students like her, in need of financial assistance. “At the end of my first year, I had the idea that I wanted to give back in the future,” she said. “But my wish did not come true until the year 2000.” After an illness that year, she committed herself to providing scholarship money to her alma mater. It was not an easy step, as she and her husband were paying college tuition for one of their children and had other family responsibilities. But Therese

#### Go Online

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## PROGRAM CALENDAR

### ASIAN UNIVERSITY LEADERS PROGRAM (AULP)

February 6-11, 2012

Regal Riverside Hotel, Shatin (Hong Kong)

### ASIANETWORK SPRING 2012 CONFERENCE

March 30-April 1, 2012

Double Tree Hotel Portland, Oregon (United States)

### INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN ASIAN CULTURES AND THEOLOGIES (IASACT)

June 9-July 14, 2012

Chung Chi College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (Hong Kong)

### GENERAL EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM REFORM IN HONG KONG: GATEWAY TO ASIA'S FUTURE

June 12-14, 2012

City University of Hong Kong (Hong Kong)

Wang, her husband, her beloved friend, the late Dorothy Hwang (Wang The-hsin), and her husband, Emilian Hwang, pledged that “we will make it happen.”

That decision helped her reconnect with the United Board. “I first knew the United Board as a student — with a grateful heart,” as the United Board donations helped build and nurture Tunghai University from its founding in 1955 through its early years. Then, in 2001, she turned to the United Board to help administer the Tunghai Alumni and Friends Scholarship, an endowment to help students in need. The fund’s first scholarship was awarded in 2003.

Mrs. Wang fulfilled her wish to help young students. Now she has another wish: that her fellow Chinese and other Asians, who have earned wealth through their hard work, will donate funds to education. “It is our turn to help,” she said, “and I hope that, with a sincere heart, I can persuade them.”

Mrs. Wang recognizes that success is best accomplished by individuals working together. “May I express my great appreciation to my Tunghai University Class of 1960 classmates, friends, and all other Tunghai University Alumni for their generous donations to our alma mater over the years. I also would like to salute all the people who have contributed to education and other charities with their donations and kind service.” **UB**

## DID YOU KNOW?

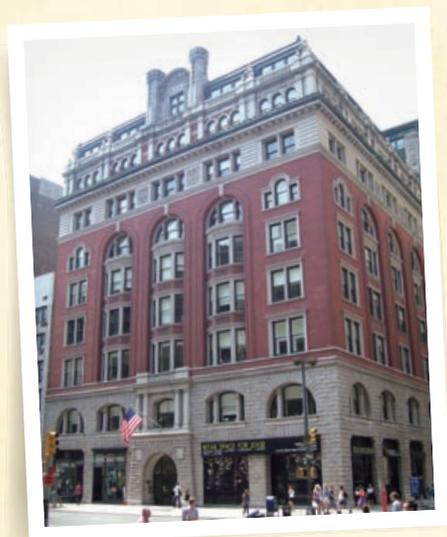


Photo credit: Beyond My Ken

**ON** October 1, 1922, new tenants opened the door of a one-room office located at 150 Fifth Avenue in New York City (see *contemporary photo at left*). The Central Office of the China Union Universities, as it was called, was established by the trustees of three Christian colleges in China: University of Nanking, Shantung Christian University and Yenching University. The trustees recognized that they could draw strength by coordinating their North American activities, such as record keeping, purchasing and shipping supplies to China, and raising financial support for the colleges. Fukien Christian University and Western China University joined this arrangement soon afterwards.

The Central Office was the precursor to the United Board. Over the years, the organization’s name changed, its governance structure evolved and its geographic focus spread to other Asian countries. Most importantly, the dynamics in Asian countries and within its institutions of higher education changed significantly. Yet an underlying principle has remained constant and is evident in the United Board’s work today: by working in supportive partnership, the United Board can help Asian colleges and universities secure the intellectual and financial resources they need to thrive.

(Source: *Ever New Horizons: The Story of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, 1922-1975*, by William P. Fenn.)