



HKUSTConnect

Celebrating 10 Years of Community Engagement





“ President’s Message

As a globally-oriented university, HKUST’s ultimate wish for its graduates is that they can apply what they have learned here to fulfill their dreams while contributing to the greater good of the world we live in. We can no longer consider universities as ivory towers of academia—we are not secluded, but interdependent; not confined, but connected. Whatever we teach, we do so in a societal context because we live in a time where only mutual influence and inspiration can move the society forward.

In celebrating the 10th anniversary of HKUST Connect, I am encouraged to see that our University has been connected with the community in multiple, meaningful ways in the past decade, providing myriad service learning opportunities that enrich all participants and bring positive impact to all stakeholders. Looking forward, I hope to see our students reaching out further and deeper. As the University continues to advance in academic research, we are in better position to use technological innovations to respond to social needs than ever before. With an open mind and insatiable curiosity, let us observe the needs around us and implement practicable solutions to those needs—locally as well as globally. By looking beyond borders, our connections will truly make a difference.

Professor Wei Shyy

President
HKUST



“ Dean’s Message

I feel extremely encouraged that HKUST Connect has engaged thousands of our students in the past 10 years. At this juncture, it has touched tens of thousands of people, young and old, in the community, too. In an ever-changing academic and social context, we need to think about actionable ways to use our knowledge and assets to serve the community we live in. That is exactly what HKUST Connect aims to achieve—to transform our community.

Sometimes students ask me: “Prof. Chow, how can I be successful?” I often ask them back: “What do you mean by being successful?” Living with a purpose that touches others’ hearts with compassion may be the universal definition of a successful life. I hope students serve others not to collect service hours, but because they see it as the right thing to do, taking pleasure to explore while following their heart. That should be the purpose. Even small acts of love in our daily life are acts of service that help each individual see a very different world. In return, serving others defines oneself.

HKUST Connect has been working towards one of the University’s prime objectives of advancing our society. We are making good progress; our footprints can be found everywhere in our community. Looking forward, I hope to see further expansion of our reach—having our efforts seeded in a global landscape beyond Hong Kong and the region.

Professor King Chow

Acting Dean of Students
HKUST



“ Program Director’s Message

As a founding staff of HKUST Connect, I am proud of our students’ efforts and willingness to serve the community. Nothing makes me happier than to see our graduates become committed global citizens who use their unique talents to contribute back to society. I am especially encouraged to see some of our staff, who are HKUST graduates, going on to pursue their career in social work. That is a testament to our success in nurturing young people to believe that passion and conviction can indeed make a difference.

Over the years, we have bridged faculty and students with the community to encourage the application of academic innovations to address community needs. My appreciation goes to all our donors and partners who have made our service programs possible, and to the staff and students who have given back to society through our programs. The last ten years have reinforced my belief that the whole is always greater than the sum of its parts. I have every faith that through purposeful connection, we can all be effective changemakers in the next ten years.

Ms Helen Wong

Program Director of HKUST Connect
Head (Co-curricular Programs)
Dean of Students’ Office, HKUST





HKUST Connect Established

Facing a new wave of educational demands, HKUST Connect was established to connect students with the community for learning experience outside classroom. In partnership with community stakeholders and faculty members, we facilitate community engagement opportunities to nurture students in becoming responsible global citizens. We believe that the University's academic excellence and talents can directly benefit our society.



Scan the QR code next to each event to find out more.



Service Learning Went Global

After our first service learning trip responding to the Sichuan earthquake, our services went global in 2011. With preparation and reflection being crucial components of service learning trips, the intensive experience foster personal and social growth and enhance the participants' identity as engaged global citizens. We have supported 35 destinations in more than 100 trips over the years, demonstrating our commitment to providing continuous support to areas in need.

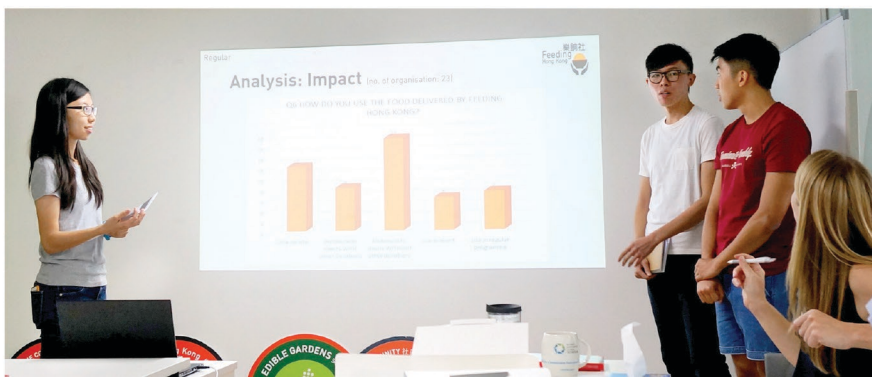
2009

2011

2010

Partners as Co-educators

We align our strengths and priorities with partner organizations to develop opportunities that promote student growth while serving genuine community needs. In 2010, we developed our first partnership project with the Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong and launched The University YMCA (Uni-Y) program, which aims at fostering students' whole-person development through service learning and leadership activities. Since then, we have collaborated with over 280 community organizations to co-educate students and drive positive changes in society.





Developing Service Leaders

Connect Ambassadors for Community Engagement (Connect ACE) was launched to equip students committed to impacting the community with tangible skills to initiate their own service projects, mobilize their peers, and increase civic awareness among them. Support is also given to these students to sustain their community engagement or continue to serve their communities beyond the program.



2012

2013

2014



Taking on the Leadership Challenge

We aligned the Public Service Leadership Program with the Student Leadership Challenge Model to attain our objectives more consistently across different units within the University so that students have a well-rounded service leadership training experience.



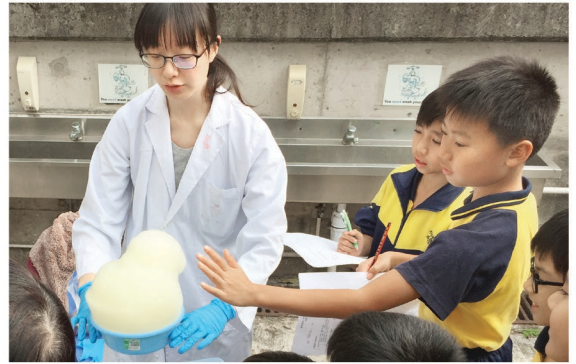
Donors Enriching Student Experience

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, students in different financial situations are able to benefit from overseas learning opportunities through the Overseas Learning Experience Sponsorship Scheme. The donations have also funded the creation of service projects, awards and Students' Holistic Development Scheme that help students to become change agents.



Spreading Happiness – Serve 25

In celebration of HKUST's 25th anniversary, we launched the Serve 25 campaign where students volunteered 7,372 hours during the academic year. The campaign raised civic awareness in HKUST and allowed students to learn about some of the most pressing social issues in Hong Kong, encouraging them to be a part of the solution.



Digitizing Community Service

We teamed up with Social Career to enhance students' volunteering experience by using a centralized online platform—making us the first Hong Kong university to do so. This partnership provides our students with access to more volunteering opportunities outside of campus, and helps foster a lifelong spirit of volunteerism.



2015

2017

2016



Experiential Learning Applied



Having supported the Wat Opot Children's Community in Cambodia since 2011, we took our impact to the next level by installing solar panels in the community to boost local self-sufficiency. With help from faculty, students applied classroom concepts in the field in this experiential service learning activity. We also support faculty members to create service learning projects and community-based assignments.

Supporting UN SDGs

Committed to linking students with the wider community to develop global citizenship, our service opportunities contribute to the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In 2016, HKUST was in the forefront of supporting the SDGs in our community service framework by matching service activities to corresponding goals.



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Rebranding to Global Days of Changemaking

In the past decade, we have facilitated 22,486 student-time to give back to society. To better reflect our ambition to create positive social change, the flagship HKUST Service Learning Day is rebranded as HKUST Global Days of Changemaking, where we mobilize the entire HKUST community, local or overseas, to take creative action to solve social problems and make a bigger impact.



2019

2018

Partnering with International Organizations

Our global network of partners expanded with the partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which would help cultivate a global vision and mindset in our students. The ICRC provides a traineeship program that expose students to international humanitarian work.





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