

UMDF Receives Widespread Support

Donations to UMDF reach the MOP 280 million mark within 6 months

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Being a public university, the University of Macau (UM) has to follow the government's accounting systems in the operation of its financial affairs. This causes a lack of flexibility in formulating plans that span more than a year and hinders the university's pursuit of becoming a world-class university, especially when considering the ongoing new campus project. It is out of the desire to obtain more financial support and secure greater financial autonomy for the university that in 2006 UM's top management began to consider the possibility of establishing a foundation following the example of world-renowned universities.

Due to the concern that a foundation affiliated with the university would still have no financial autonomy because of the need to follow the government's accounting systems, the decision was made that UMDF should be registered as a private organization in the name of four individuals, namely Dr. Stanley Ho, Dr. Tse Chi Wai, Mr. Wong Chong Fat, and Mr. Lam Kam Seng. All the donations received by the foundation will be deployed for the sole purpose of supporting the university's development.

The establishment ceremony for UMDF was held on 7 December 2009. Mr. Edmund Ho Hau Wah, the then-Chief Executive of Macao SAR, presided over the ceremony. More than 400 dignitaries and UM staff and students attended the ceremony. Establishment of UMDF is a new endeavour on the part of the Macao SAR Government to support the development of higher education in Macao, and the generous donations received so far demonstrates the great support for UM from the society.

UMDF is a non-profit organization. Its purposes include supporting UM in the pursuit of its teaching, academic and research goals; enhancing UM's international competitiveness; and obtaining sufficient financial resources to support the realization of the university's established goals. It is the hope of the founders that the foundation can serve as a lasting and well-regulated donation mechanism to cultivate a wholesome culture of giving in the society. The foundation will also provide a

channel for the public to contribute suggestions, thereby strengthening the university's ties with the community and enhancing the university's educational quality. The generous donations from the benefactors will also sow the seeds of goodness in the students' hearts, and such seeds will blossom in the future as more and more UM alumni follow the example of these benefactors.

It's been only six months since the establishment of UMDF, but already it has received donations of over MOP 280 million, including the first batch of donations of over MOP 10 million from Stanley Ho, Lam Kam Seng, Wong Chong Fat, Tse Chi Wai, Vitor Ng, Or Wai Sheun, António Ferreira, Wong Chi Seng, Kong Tat Choi, Siu Yin Wai and Lao Ngai Leong. On 9 February 2010, the Wu Yee Sun Charitable Foundation Limited donated HKD 150 million to UMDF. As a token of appreciation, UM will name the central library—the most important landmark building on the new campus—after Dr. Wu Yee Sun.

On 12 April 2010, Dr. Stanley Ho, Lui Che Woo Foundation Limited, Henry Fok Foundation, and Ms. Susana Chou each donated MOP 30 million to UMDF to support the development of four residential colleges on the new campus. UM will name the four residential colleges as “Stanley Ho College”, “Lui Che Woo College”, “Henry Fok College”, and “Cao Guang Biao College” respectively in recognition of their contributions.

Dr. Tse Chi Wai, Chair of the University Council of UM, notes that the establishment of UMDF will enable greater flexibility in the operation of financial affairs at the university and will also make long-term planning easier. He further adds that donors made donations out of confidence in the university's future; therefore, UMDF will ensure that all donations are used for intended purposes to support UM's development towards a world-class university.