

For release
20 November 2000

HKUST COUNCIL ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF NEW PRESIDENT

The Council of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology is very pleased to announce the appointment of Professor Paul Ching-Wu Chu (朱經武) as the next President of the University to succeed Professor Chia-Wei Woo.

Prof Chu is currently the T. L. L. Temple Chair of Science, Professor of Physics and the Director of the Texas Center for Superconductivity at the University of Houston.

Aged 58, Prof Chu obtained his BS degree (1962) from the Cheng-Kung University in Taiwan, MS degree (1965) from Fordham University in New York and PhD degree (1968) from the University of California at San Diego. After two years of industrial research with Bell Laboratories in New Jersey, he entered the academic world and progressed rapidly to full professorship, which he attained in 1975. In 1979, he joined the University of Houston as Professor of Physics. Prof Chu served as Director of the Solid State Physics Program at the National Science Foundation in 1986-87. He also served at various times as consultant and visiting staff at Los Alamos National Lab, the Marshall Space Flight Center, Argonne National Lab, and Dupont.

A distinguished physicist, Prof Chu gained international renown with his outstanding achievements in the field of superconductivity. In 1987, he discovered stable superconductivity above the boiling point of liquid nitrogen, an epoch making discovery both in basic science and in applications, which opened the door to subsequent developments in high temperature superconductivity.

Recognizing the enormous potential of his research breakthrough, the legislature of the State of Texas created the Texas Center for Superconductivity at the University of Houston in 1987 and appointed Prof Chu as its founding Director. The Center is home to the largest university superconductivity research effort in the world, with major funding provided by the State of Texas. On taking up the presidency at HKUST, Prof Chu will maintain an association with the Center in a non-paid capacity to continue his research on high temperature superconductivity.

Prof Chu is a member of the US National Academy of Sciences, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Academia Sinica (Taiwan), and Third-world Academy of Sciences. The numerous awards he has received include the National Medal of Science (the highest honor for a scientist in the US), the NASA Achievement Award, the Comstock Award, and the International Prize for New Materials. In 1990, he was selected Best Researcher in the US by the *US News and World Report*. He was an Invited Contributor to the New Millennium Time Capsule of the Great Discoveries of the 20th Century by the White House, and was selected as one of the 100 most influential people in gas and electricity of the century by the Century of Power, 2000. Prof Chu has received seven honorary doctorates and five honorary professorships.

In addition to being the author of over 450 refereed articles in scientific journals, Prof Chu has co-edited several books and written popular articles for various encyclopedia and science year books.

Born in Hunan, China, to parents from Guangdong Province, Professor Chu is married with two children and speaks Cantonese and Putonghua.

The University Council is very excited about Prof Chu' s appointment. “As Hong Kong repositions itself as a knowledge-based society,” says Council Chairman Dr Vincent Lo, “HKUST, a leading research university in science and technology, has a crucial role to play. Members of the Council are confident that Professor Chu, building on the solid foundation which Professor Chia-Wei Woo has successfully laid down during the past twelve years, will provide strong leadership to HKUST as it soars to still greater heights both internationally and to meet the science and technology agenda of Hong Kong.”

Prof Chu is expected to take up his appointment on 1 July 2001. He will be visiting Hong Kong in mid December 2000.

For media enquiries only:

Loretta Pang, Director of University Development and Public Affairs
Tel: 2358-6302

Jacky Tsang
Tel: 2358-6306
email: *patsang@ust.hk*

Photos of Prof Chu and Release at http://www.ust.hk/~webopa/news/2000_News/news1120.html