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## “HeadStart@HKUST Program” Brushes Up Freshmen’s Competitiveness With Early Workplace Immersion and Career Development Guidance

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The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST)'s inaugural “[HeadStart@HKUST Program](#)” ([HeadStart](#)) aims to offer first and second year undergraduate students a “head-start” in the increasingly global and competitive society through an early workplace immersion and career development scheme.

Initiated by HKUST Council Members Catherine Leung, Prof Jack Lau and Prof May-yi Shaw, Assistant Professor of Humanities Education of the Division of Humanities, the program was launched in February. Unlike common internship programs, HeadStart consists of three components – Internship, Mentorship, and Fellowship – that are designed to provide students with a holistic workplace training and career enrichment experience.

Prof Shaw said, “The program was born out of a simple desire among the founders to offer this generation of Hong Kong youngsters a different outlook on their future. We want to build in them a new sense of hope and belief that the future lies in their own hands. With hard work and conviction, they may follow their heart and passion and still be confident that they will become instrumental leaders that build our society and the world towards a better place.”

Key activities included workshops and training on marketplace awareness interpersonal skills, events like meeting executives, company visits, executive coaching and mentoring sessions with top industry leaders, as well as networking. Student Fellows not only receive career advice early on and become more confident and competent in the workplace, they also develop new bonds among the student Fellow community and with peers from different faculties.

56 students from School of Science, School of Engineering, School of Business and Management, School Humanities and Social Science and Interdisciplinary Program Office are offered internship positions in 24 local and international corporate partners – 61% of them are local students, 10% of them are mainland students while the rest are non-local students from Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, USA and other places. Corporations that offer internships to our students range from retail, investment banking, technology, property development, media, to creative industry.

The HeadStart Fellows received either a local or an overseas internship opportunity. Jeff Hu interned at Augmedix in Silicon Valley, a company which collaborates with Google Glass to provide improved services by healthcare professionals. His immersion in the startup environment broadens his horizon and inspires his creativity. At Taiwan Public Television Station, Beatrice Chan learnt how to create a TV programme from concept to production. Rachel Wong interned with Chow Tai Fook Shenzhen Headquarters office and came to realize the bigger competition and potential with the China market. At Lee Kum Kee Family Foundation, Kevin Cao gained valuable experience through running campaigns for a good cause. Prof Shaw, who is also one of the program’s mentors, added, “There is nothing more gratifying than seeing our young student Fellows blossoming throughout the summer. They grew from being rather shy and reserved to ‘coming out of their shell’ and becoming talkative, bubbly and confident as each summer event went by. It has been a very memorable journey with them!”

“Amidst the increasingly dynamic business environment, we want to provide students with a platform to put their academic knowledge into practice, where they can learn teamwork and broaden their creative thinking and horizon in the workplace,” said Kent Wong Siu-Kee, Managing Director of Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Group Limited.

“We are glad to have received some of the brightest HKUST students at our company as summer interns participating in HeadStart. As I shared with them – Fail fast to succeed sooner and never stop innovating, I hope that they would keep that in mind to drive them to become a lifelong innovator,” said Erica Ma, Co-Founder and



(From left) Student Fellows Jeff Hu Yao-chieh and Kevin Cao Xin-Ming; Ms Erica Ma, Co-Founder and Community Advisor of CoCoon; Prof May-yi Shaw, Assistant Professor of Humanities Education of the Division of Humanities; Mr Kent Wong Siu-Kee, Managing Director of Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Group Limited; Student Fellows Beatrice Chan Nga-Lam and Rachel Wong Man-yi



Prof May-yi Shaw explains the details of inaugural HeadStart@HKUST Program



(From left) Rachel Wong Man-yi, Beatrice Chan Nga-Lam, Kevin Cao Xin-Ming and Jeff Hu Yao-chieh are four of the Student Fellows who participated in the inaugural HeadStart@HKUST Program

Community Advisor of CoCoon.

For more information of HeadStart@HKUST Program, please refer to <http://headstart.ust.hk/index.html>.

[Appendix – HeadStart@HKUST 2016 corporate partners](#)

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