

Speech by Dr. Ambrose So
College Master's Welcome Reception for Freshmen
Stanley Ho East Asia College
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Dear students, good morning and welcome to the Stanley Ho East Asia College.

What comes to your mind when you hear the name Stanley Ho? Do you think of the Casino King of Macau? That is a reasonable association, but there's much more to his life and legacy than that.

Five decades ago, Dr. Ho recognized that if Macau was to prosper, the foundations of prosperity must be strong. He worked hard to strengthen those foundations, including enhancement of the city's basic infrastructure, modes of transportation and tourist amenities. All these were guided by a vision of turning Macau into a centre of tourism for the benefit of its people. As Dr. Ho said in 1962 when he opened his first casino in Macau, "The view that our enterprise is merely one of a gambling character is a misconception. Our purpose is to bring a new prosperity to Macau and improve the welfare and living standard of its citizens."

Dr. Ho has supported many activities for the benefit of Macau's people and society. Among all, he pays special attention to education, and has been supporting the University of Macau since its opening in 1981. If you have been to the Taipa campus, you would find there a Stanley Ho Building and an STDM Auditorium.

In 2010, Dr. Ho took the lead to donate 30 million patacas to help the University build residential colleges on the Hengqin campus. He chose the East Asia College to be named after him, not only because of its special history as one of the two pilot residential colleges at the University, but also because of his deep affection for the University which has its roots since 1981, at a time when the University was called University of East Asia.

Dr. Ho has planted this conviction of "from society to society" in his enterprises. SJM is the only gaming concessionaire that has its roots in Macau. We at SJM are committed to supporting education, arts and culture, sports and other charitable activities in Macau and we encourage our employees to do the same. For University of Macau alone, we award scholarships annually to 10 outstanding students, and provide 4 scholarships to postgraduate students from the Mainland. It is indeed our pride to be able to involve in the nurturing of talents for society.

My dear students, it is not out of "luck" that you are here, at Macau's Number One university, but because of your very hard work. So I am not going to wish you luck with your studies.

Your university education will provide a fertile ground in which you can plant your dreams. And realistically, in today's global economy, one needs a college degree to compete.

Having noted the value of a university education, I wonder if you have ever heard of "the three fallacies of a university education". Let me briefly review them for you.

Half of what you are taught ... you don't learn. Half of what you are taught and learn ... you forget. And half of what you are taught, and learn, and remember ... will turn out to be wrong!

Therefore, if you did remember some basic arithmetic – Only one-eighth of what you are taught may eventually be useful to you. Of course, this fraction is not intended to be precisely correct, and certainly would be varied in different individual cases.

My young friends, I have no intention to scare you off from the university. I just want to offer you an earlier solution to this dilemma. The solution is a simple phrase, though not a simple concept. The solution is called Lifelong Learning. According to Wikipedia, Lifelong Learning is “the ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons.” Three of these words are especially important about Lifelong Learning: it is ongoing, it is voluntary, and it is self-motivated.

In Chinese, we have a similar saying from *Lun Yu* (《論語》) “居之無倦”. The phrase originally referred to the art of governing, meaning that one has to keep the affairs before the mind without weariness, and to practice them with undeviating consistency. Confucius was a great teacher, and he taught students in accordance with their own aptitudes. The same teaching can be applied to one’s educational process, not only in the pursuit of knowledge, but also in moral development, both of which are essential elements in building a harmonious society.

Before parting here, I would like to set up a challenge for you. I challenge you to be a dreamer, a doer and a lifelong learner.

Thank you all.