



2009 News

Chu family creates campus home for international students

**By Communications staff
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Western officially opened the Dr. David S. H. Chu International Student Centre October 16, a new hub at the heart of campus that will bring students together from around the world to share ideas, culture and inspiration.

Made possible by a \$2-million donation from the David S.H. Chu family of Hong Kong, the new centre opens its doors just as Western sets its sights on increasing international student enrolment under the leadership of its new president, Amit Chakma.

Chakma delivered remarks at the special event dressed in a beaded leather jacket presented to him earlier in the day during a First Nations sunrise ceremony celebrating the grand opening of Western's new Student Services Building in which the Chu International Student Centre is located.



Western President Amit Chakma

"This wonderful facility is another great example of the transformative power of philanthropy," said Chakma. "The Chu family's generosity will help Western educate global citizens and leaders for generations to come."

David Chu, and his son, Western alumnus Ken Chu (BA'96, LLD'07), are co-founders of the Hong Kong based Mission Hills Group – the world's largest golf complex. The facility features 12 championship courses, a convention and exhibition centre, hotels, a commercial complex, tennis and golf academies, and a residential community, earning it the informal title as the 'Beverley Hills of China'.

Though the Chus were unable to attend the student centre's opening, Ken shared remarks on behalf of his family that were delivered by Chakma.

"It is an honour for me and my family to establish a platform where students at Western can gather, exchange ideas, and share a common international perspective," wrote Ken. "Western gave me the skills and knowledge I needed to succeed in business globally, and with the establishment of the Chu International Centre, this is my opportunity to help make a difference for students, from around the world, at the Western campus."

The Chu family gift is also creating of a number of academic awards and a graduate public administration program in China. The new program is a non-credit enrichment experience for students at selected Chinese universities and for local government officials. The series of lectures, workshops and visits to Canada will be developed and delivered by Western professors from the Local Government Program of the Department of Political Science in Western's Faculty of Social Science.



Andrew Sancton and Chen Feng

Professor Andrew Sancton, who oversees the new program, says Chinese public administration scholars want their students to know how things are done in Canada. "We've found the Chinese have a great interest in Canadian best practices and policies, and to be able to offer this level of programming is a tremendous opportunity for international outreach and collaboration."

Chen Feng, a visiting scholar from Xiamen University who is completing her PhD in public administration at Western, was also present at the International Student Centre opening. "The Chu family are great people, great visionaries," said Feng. "They think about more than themselves, they think about the society, the country and the world."