



PHOENIX & MARTLET

EDUCATION

TWO MYSTIC BIRDS FOREVERMORE

The myths people choose for themselves reveal their souls. The phoenix and the martlet meet as LKSF enables exchange and learning between McGill and Shantou University. Look for growth in understanding in the legal, business and arts sectors between China and Canada.



Man cannot live on technology alone. If the Technion connection (see preceding article) is about the hard sciences and technology, the McGill connection is about the human element of how we structure society and interact with each other. And a large part of the human experience comes from the myths we choose to explain ourselves.

Shantou University (STU) is represented on its crest by the phoenix – the ruler of the birds, its various body parts made up of the six celestial bodies – the sky, sun, moon, wind, earth and the planets. Its majesty, nobility and endurance are the stuff of legend.

McGill is also represented by a mythical bird: the martlet. The three martlets on the crest have no feet – they are always flying like the students and graduates of the school. While a footless bird in Chinese culture suggests a person without roots, McGill is anything but rootless. With 193 years of history in Montreal, Canada, it is steeped in a tradition of excellence – a tradition shared by STU and valued by the Li Ka Shing Foundation (LKSF).

The Li Ka Shing (Canada) Foundation (LKSCF) was founded to support several major projects encouraging cultural

diversity and community involvement. It has supported a range of projects in Canadian universities, mostly in healthcare and medical research. From virology research in Edmonton to children's hospitals in Toronto, the LKSCF has been a major supporter of higher education in Canada.

Recently, LKSCF donated CAD6.635 million (USD6.35 million) to promote McGill University and STU academic exchange through the creation of three important new initiatives between the two institutions: the Li Ka Shing Initiative for Innovation in Legal Education, the Li Ka Shing Liberal Arts Exchange Initiative and the Li Ka Shing Program in International Business. These programmes will benefit 400 students of McGill University and STU in the next five years.

MC GILL - THE MARTLET FLYING HIGH FOREVER

McGill has a long tradition of preparing future leaders in Canada and even some in the Hutchison Whampoa Group. The QS World University Ranking 2012, which evaluates approximately 600 universities, placed McGill in the 18th slot, ahead of all other Canadian schools. It has been ranked No 1 in Canada by Maclean's Magazine for the past nine years. Its success has not gone unnoticed on the world stage – it attracts students from over 150 countries around the



Left: McGill's crest with the three martlets and STU's with the phoenix.

world, with more than 8,200 international students making up 21 per cent of the student body. More than 800 of these future Martlets are from China. This school is no stranger to China and the Chinese.

For McGill, China is the third largest source of international students for the University, behind only the United States and France. "China is one of McGill's most important regions on the international stage, and forging links with high-calibre Chinese institutions is one of our highest priorities," said Professor Suzanne Fortier, McGill's Principal and Vice-Chancellor, who also expressed her gratefulness about the decision. McGill has staff working full time in southern China, to recruit top students, build relationships and serve alumni.

"We are extremely grateful to the LKSCF for their vision and generosity in supporting these wonderful new exchange programmes with STU, which will create new avenues for scholarly and research collaboration between professors and students at our two institutions, expose a new generation of Chinese students to Quebec and Canadian culture and academic perspectives, and provide McGill's students and faculty members with invaluable opportunities to experience first-hand the intellectual, cultural and social milieu of modern China."

STU - RISING LIKE A PHOENIX

STU may not be as old as its new partner, but this phoenix has risen rapidly through the ranks of China's tertiary institutions. Its three founding partners, the Ministry of Education, Guangdong Province, and the LKSF have committed to the "Project 211" programme: a nationwide effort to raise research standards by establishing a network of national key universities and colleges. In 2012, STU ranked No 14 among all universities in China and No 1 in Guangdong among Chinese universities in the Nature and Science Publications Rankings. It also achieved the No 1 employment rate of graduating students among all major universities in Guangdong. Its commitment to the future is backstopped by solid support from the LKSF.

LKSF has already committed and donated more than USD760 million to the University to date. Mr Li Ka-shing's views on education shed light on the huge contribution. "Education is the cornerstone of tradition and progress, of dignity and wisdom, and is one of our key tools to reshape destiny... STU is a platform to instigate reforms in the



Above: McGill University campus grounds.

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Mr Li Ka-shing



Above: The library of Shantou University.

higher education sector in China, and we have attained many milestone achievements in the past decade," said Mr Li. "STU collaborates in a number of fields with first rate universities all around the world, including several in Canada, and it is a great pleasure for me to see this new initiative with McGill come to fruition."

2 BIRDS, 3 PROGRAMMES

Among the three exchange initiatives, the Li Ka Shing Initiative for Innovation in Legal

Education is the most extensive one. It builds upon the highly successful McGill/Shantou Summer Law Programme, which was established in 2010 through a previous gift from the LKSF; it enables McGill and STU law students to participate in intensive two-week visits to the complementary university in alternating years. The new initiative will expand upon that programme. It will also support semester abroad opportunities for McGill and STU students; faculty exchange awards in both institutions; and fellowships to allow talented graduate students and junior faculty from STU to study at McGill. Restless Martlets can fly to China for a spell; in Montreal, future Chinese jurists can experience an intellectual rebirth like the STU phoenix.

The Li Ka Shing Liberal Arts Exchange Initiative will support students from McGill and STU's respective humanities and social science programmes who wish to study abroad at the partner institute. Funding will also be available for a professor from McGill's Faculty of Arts to spend two weeks at STU each year to teach classes, conduct public lectures and meet researchers with shared scholarly interests. These professorships would rotate through disciplines, affording the opportunity to generate new creative collaborations and deepen intellectual ties across many areas of common interest to both institutions.

Last but not least, the Li Ka Shing Programme in International Business will enable students from each institution to travel abroad to take courses. Business students from STU will also be offered opportunities to take part in the acclaimed Desautels International Summer Programme, which is designed to provide undergraduate students from around the world with opportunities to gain critical North American perspectives on issues of global significance.

Numerous Chinese students go to pursue their studies at Canada's best each year. At the same time, following the growing power of China, more and more Canadians move to China to study or look for internships. The LKSCF has identified Law, the Arts, and Business as three areas where greater understanding can benefit China and Canada. These three new exchange initiatives between McGill and STU will build stronger ties between the two places, benefitting not only participating students and faculty but also enriching both countries for decades to come. Where these two birds fly, prosperity will follow. ■