和美捐300万元给新大
设立“中华经济与商业教授基金”

盛辉华报道

“有能力回报社会，让我心里感到踏实。能够捐款给新加坡管理大学设立‘和美中华经济与商业教授基金’（Hong Bee Professorship in Chinese Economy and Business），让新加坡年轻人能从学生活跃起来的中国经济状况中，体会到最大的荣幸，也是幸福。”

中华总商会会长蔡天宝（59岁）昨天在记者会上宣布，他捐出300万元给新加坡管理大学，设立这项基金。这项捐款也将扣去政府以一元对一元的拨款资助，因此这项基金的总额达到600万元。

蔡天宝在捐款仪式后接受本报访问时说：“这个捐款行动，对1967年创立、生生不息的和美集团意义重大。我为我们有能力这么做，感到非常荣幸。这是对我们集团自成立所做的最大贡献，它让我真正体会到‘施比受更为有福’的意义，能够做对社会有益的事，本身就是一种幸福。”

蔡天宝中专毕业后，协助父亲从事船上生意，没有读过大学。凭着他的知识、信心和毅力，他事业有成。去年他获得新加坡“杰出华人奖”这个在新加坡华界备受推崇的大奖。

设立基金

让年轻人了解中国

他昨天对记者说：“我和我这种只有中学程度的商人，没有离深知识，事业要成功，必须靠勤奋苦干，运气和胆识。然而在现代社会，知识很重要。‘知识就是力量’，常言这半句话。我从个人的经验来看，没有大学知识，便走很多冤枉路，这项教授基金，能让年轻人从杰出的教授那里学习，认识和了解巨变中的中国，少走冤枉路，这使我感到非常高兴。”

教授基金让新加坡管理大学设立“和美中华经济与商业教授基金”，这是和美集团力促社会的开始。今年8月，和美集团将对南洋理工大学捐款300万元，同样设立一项教授基金。

——和美集团创办人蔡天宝
Ho Bee donates $3m to SMU

“It is my pleasure to be able to give back to society. It is also an honour to be able to contribute to SMU to establish the Ho Bee Professorship in Chinese Economy and Business so that young Singaporeans can benefit from the teaching of a renowned professor and discover more about the dynamic economy of China.”

President of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mr Chua Thian Poh (59 years old) donated $3 million to SMU yesterday through his company, Ho Bee Investments Ltd. The amount will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the government, bringing the total sum to $6 million.

At an interview after the cheque presentation ceremony, he said: “This contribution means a lot to Ho Bee, a homegrown company set up in 1987. We are very honoured to be able to donate this sum of money. It allows me to appreciate the joy of giving to others. It is a pleasure to be able to help society.”

Since he finished secondary four, Mr Chua has been helping his father in the shipping business and he never went to university. Relying on his courage, confidence and perseverance, he was able to build a successful business. Last year, he was named Singapore’s 13th wealthiest businessman by Forbes magazine. He has also received the most outstanding businessman award last year, a coveted accolade within the business community here.

Professorship helps young people understand China

He told reporters: “For someone like me with only secondary school education, I lack the knowledge. Therefore, I have to rely on hard work, luck and courage. In today’s society, knowledge is very important. With that, you can do things much more easily. Without knowledge, you end up with little results with double the effort. From my experience, I have made many wasted decisions without a university education. The professorship will let young people benefit from the research of an outstanding faculty and understand a rapidly changing China.”

He recalled what Hong Kong millionaire Dr Li Ka Shing said about how the Chinese views carrying on the family name as very important. This is not restricted only to the family line but also the continuous progress of society.

Mr Chua said: “Dr Li’s words are right on point. When I donate to help society and allow people to progress, I am actually helping myself.”

He added that the donation to SMU to set up the professorship is only the start of Ho Bee’s contributions to society. This August, he will also be giving another $3 million to NTU to similarly establish another professorship. He also hopes to give to secondary schools, junior colleges, polytechnics as well as the people, cultural and arts communities.

He said: “I set no limits as to how much we can give. I will try my best.”

SMU President Professor Howard Hunter thanked Ho Bee in his speech.

He said that the professorship will give opportunities for SMU to advance research in the area of Chinese economy. It provides for a generous sum of money to invite a world renowned academic and authority in Chinese economy to come to SMU to teach and undertake research, curriculum planning, mentoring of faculty and giving of lectures.

He added: “Along with our existing professorships in law, banking and accounting, the new professorship will benefit SMU faculty, students, the business community and the general public.”

Deputy Prime Minister Mr Wong Kan Seng and Minister for Finance and Education Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam attended the event together with ten members of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry.