

**OLLSCOIL na hÉIREANN  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND**

TEXT OF THE INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS DELIVERED BY:

**PROFESSOR PATRICK MURRAY**, Dean of Medicine, University College Dublin on 19 June 2014 in the Singapore, on the occasion of the conferring of the Degree of Medicine, *honoris causa*, on **DATO LESLIE LAM**

Distinguished guests,  
colleagues and friends,

It is my great honour to be here amongst such distinguished company on this very special occasion. We have gathered to honour Dato Dr Leslie Lam - a UCD medical graduate and ambassador who has had a tremendous impact on the lives of many people in Singapore, Southeast Asia, and Ireland, and we are very pleased today for UCD to be able to recognise Dr. Lam's contributions.



L-R: NUI Chancellor Dr Maurice Manning presenting Dr Dato Leslie Lam with his honorary Degree of Medicine

Following his education in Singapore and at Blackrock College in Dublin, Dr Lam studied Medicine at UCD (as did his future wife Ivy Yap) graduating MB BChBAO in 1967. In further studies at UCD, Leslie obtained his BSc (in Pharmacology, studying with Prof. Paul Cannon) in 1969, and a Diploma in Child Health in 1975. While doing his BSc, he worked as Tutor in Clinical Pharmacology in UCD in 1968-1969, along with his Blackrock and UCD

classmate and friend Dr. Niall Keaney, who is here with us today for this occasion. Leslie did his postgraduate training in Medicine and subspecialty training in Cardiology in the Dublin hospitals, working with several mentors and lifelong colleagues, including Prof. Sean Blake at the Mater, Prof. Conor Ward in Crumlin, and Prof. Eoin O'Brien (at the Richmond hospital, now of UCD, and also here with us today, and of whom I will say more later). He duly obtained his MRCPI and completed his cardiology training in Dublin, before returning to Singapore, apparently on the wise advice of Prof. Ward.

Dr Lam has had a highly successful and varied career as a leading physician and interventional cardiologist, and he has for many years been one of the leading cardiologists in Singapore and indeed the region. Among the highlights of his career are his service for some years as personal physician to the Sultan of Brunei, as well as honorary consultant appointments from the Ministries of Health in Myanmar and in the Seychelles in recognition of the contributions that he and his team in the Mount Elizabeth Hospital Cardiac Centre have made to cardiology in the region. Dr. Lam has received numerous honours during his career, including Fellowships from the RCPI, the Academy of Medicine in Singapore, and the Society for Cardiac Angiography and Interventions of the USA. In 1984, he was admitted to the Most Honourable Order of the Kingdom of Brunei.

Of note, Dr. Lam received an Honorary Fellowship of the UCD Faculty of Medicine in 2005, when he also delivered the commencement address at the UCD SMMS Graduation Ceremony. Leslie has maintained a strong and continuous connection with UCD, and he has given generously to support a newer generation of UCD students and biomedical scientists in their studies. Leslie has demonstrated his passion for Irish heritage and education in Ireland through a number of initiatives. The Annual Dr Leslie Lam lecture at the UCD Medical Graduates Association meetings informed and delighted our alumni for a period of 5 years. Also, a number of our most gifted students have been fortunate to have been awarded competitive Leslie Lam scholarships to undertake summer research at the University of Queensland – recent students engaged in research on Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) Biomarker Discovery and on Hypoxic Ischemic Injury in the neonate, and presented their findings in the highly successful annual Summer Student Research Awards event. Leslie also

funded several Molecular Medicine Ireland postgraduate research fellowships at UCD. Finally, in December 2012 Leslie partnered with Prof. Eoin O' Brien to donate the O'Brien-Lam collection, a treasure-trove of Irish literature and heritage, to UCD. This collection includes many priceless original Beckett items, collected by Prof. O' Brien, a noted Beckett scholar. The collection also includes a broad range of historical documents, artworks, photographs, essays and correspondence relating to the history of medical education, Irish literature, Irish history and the history of art.

This last gift hints at Leslie's other, broader interests, which extend well beyond medicine and biomedical science. Among the remarks he made in his UCD SMMS honorary fellowship acceptance speech, he noted that he was fortunate to work under Prof Sean Blake at the Mater Hospital in Dublin, and that during those formative years Prof Blake persuaded him to focus on his career in cardiology, and stop spending so much time scuba diving. We're all fortunate today that he did as he was advised! I have also personally experienced another remarkable aspect of Leslie, which is his enthusiasm and expertise in the art and science of being a wine connoisseur; I'm unsure whether this derives from his early experiences as a clinical pharmacologist (if so, he has achieved more in wine science than anyone else I know in the discipline internationally), or more likely a manifestation of his more cultured, innately artistic side, but the results are readily apparent to anyone who has enjoyed the generous hospitality of the Lam's in Singapore. Finally, in addition to all of his other activities, Dr. Lam is also a strong supporter of the Irish community in Singapore, serving as a Director of the Singapore Ireland Fund.

Dr Lam has been a great friend of education in Medicine and Biomedical Sciences in UCD throughout his career, and for that we in the School of Medicine & Medical Science, the new College of Health Sciences, and the whole UCD community are eternally grateful.

Dr Lam, it is in recognition of this friendship that we are delighted to be here today, in such auspicious company, to confer upon you an Honorary Doctorate of the National University of Ireland, in recognition of your achievements in clinical cardiology in Singapore, and your friendship and support of UCD, medical education, and the arts in Ireland. We will now proceed with the conferring ceremony.....

**PRAEHONORABILIS CANCELLARIE, TOTAQUE UNIVERSITAS:**

**Praesento vobis, hunc meum filium quem scio tam moribus quam doctrina habilem et idoneum esse qui admittatur, honoris causa, ad gradum Doctoratus in Doctoratus in Medicina, idque tibi fide mea testur ac spondeo totique Academiae**