



In this issue

Message from the President	P. 2
Pilot Mentorship Program	P. 3
My Mentorship Experience	P. 3
Extracts from My Mentorship Diary	P. 4
Dateline Hong Kong	P. 5
Spring Lunch & Talk Registration	P. 6

Join us

All past QES students, whether residing in Ontario, Canada, or elsewhere, are welcome.
You can join as an Ordinary Member (no fee required) or as a Patron Member (one-time contribution of CA\$50). Details are posted on our website. Please email us, or call any of our directors or form representatives.



2013 Spring Lunch & Talk



- Date:** May 4, 2013 (Saturday)
- Location:** Star Walk Buffet Restaurant (天上人間美食)
648 Silver Star Blvd., Scarborough. (Midland & Steeles)
- Program:** 11 a.m. – 12:00 **Talk + Q&A** by Mr. Roger Kwan, CGA
Topic: Useful Financial Tips for Different Stages of Life
- 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. **Lunch**
- Cost:** \$22 per head
- Registration:** Before April 27, 2013. Please see page 6 for details.
Friends and families are welcome!!
- Inquiries:** Chan Chi-Hung (416-226-5810), Barbara Yang (647-288-8270),
Ivy Yan (416-889-4062), or email support@qesosaont.ca



Website www.qesosaont.ca
Blog www.qesosaont.ca/blog1
Email support@qesosaont.ca

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- Vice Presidents**
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James S.K. Tang (64)
- Secretary**
Chan Chi-Hung (65)
- Treasurers**
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- | | | |
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| 60,61,62 | Henry Lee | 416-622-5036 |
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| 90s | Karen Kwok | 416-846-4700 |

Message from the President

Dear Alumni and Friends, Hope that this newsletter finds you and your family healthy, joyful and full of blessings!

While we were planning the activities for the new year, a couple of things came to mind.

Reflecting on what we had done in 2012, I just want to extend, sincerely, my utmost appreciation and gratitude to all the directors serving on our board, our advisors, and our FA representatives. Without their devotion and strong team work, we just would not have been able to accomplish what we set out to do at the beginning of last year.

As I looked at the objectives of our Association, I was reminded once again that **we want to make this Association your Association**. We need your support and participation. The board of directors agrees unanimously that we particularly need 'younger' members to take a more active role in our Association. So all you young and energetic folks, please come out and support us!

Driven by this thought of appealing to our younger members, our spring event this year will feature a talk on useful financial tips for all the different stages of life. The talk will be given by our very own Roger Kwan. We encourage that you invite your families and friends, as the talk will be helpful and beneficial to them as well. For details of this event, please see the front page of this newsletter. Please do plan to attend.

We are continuing with our efforts of giving back to our communities, both in Hong Kong and here in Ontario. The pilot mentoring program with the Hong Kong OSA high school students is progressing well. You will see some of the experiences and thoughts shared by our mentors from page 3 onwards. I believe this is definitely a worthwhile program. Thanks to all the volunteer mentors - I know they have done a lot making this a success. Here in Ontario, we are planning to participate again in the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation's 'Run for the Cure'. The event will take place on October 6, and will provide very worthwhile supports for a noble cause. Please mark your calendar. Come out to walk, and sponsor your school-friends' participations.

Other events that we have planned for this year include the ever-popular Joint-School BBQ in the summer, and the AGM dinner in the fall. The Joint-School BBQ this year will be hosted by Kings College Old Boys Association (KCOBA) and will be held on Sunday, June 9, 2013. The AGM dinner will be on October 27, 2013. We will provide you with further details once the planning is underway.

I wish you all a wonderful and blessed 2013, with good health and happiness, for many years to come. Hope to see you, and your family and friends in our upcoming events.

Ivy Yan (FA71)



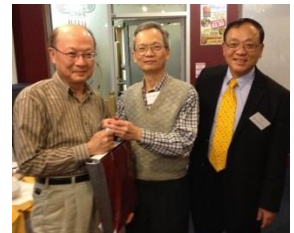
Ivy Yan presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to our guest speaker, Mr. Neville Lau



Roger Kwan stirring up the crowd



Our friend from Queen's College



The ever-popular lucky draw



COMING UP

May 4 Spring Lunch & Talk
Jun 9 Joint-School BBQ
Oct 6 'Run for the Cure' Walkathon
Oct 27 AGM Dinner

Our Association has been supporting the QESOSA's educational initiatives in Hong Kong through scholarship donations since the early 1990's. After the successful fundraising campaign in 2009, we increased our commitment for more scholarships through our Education Fund. While these scholarships serve to reward students with outstanding academic performances, one question lingers on our mind: **How can we help more students who are in need?**



On March 26, 2012, with this question in mind, former presidents Erica Kam (FA81) and Barbara Yang (FA78) visited the two QESOSA secondary schools in Tin Shui Wai, Hong Kong. They were warmly received by the principal of each school who took them for a guided tour on campus. A discussion with Mr. Chu Kuok-Wa, principal of QESOSA Tong Kwok Wah Secondary School (TKWSS), revealed that the students would benefit from mentoring by mature persons, as their parents work long hours and may not be present to offer advice when the students need it. Moreover, due to the geographical

isolation and financial constraints, the students lack exposure to the wider world. This triggered the idea of mobilizing our alumni to mentor students at a long distance, using technologies such as Skype, email and long distance call.

When this idea was shared with board directors back in Toronto, it received unanimous support. Details of a pilot mentorship program for TKWSS students were planned over emails and with Erica's help in Hong Kong. Fifteen alumni from the Ontario Chapter, including Erica, who now resides in Hong Kong, were recruited to be mentors for the pilot. From TKWSS, fifteen top S5* students were invited to join the pilot program. Each student was matched up with a mentor based on their needs and the mentors' background. The program was launched in mid-November, 2012.

A recent survey shows that about 2/3 of the students have had frequent contacts with their mentors and 1/3 of them have established a good relationship with their mentors. Three of the mentors have even met their mentees in person in Hong Kong. However, a few students have shown little response and the issue of motivation needs to be addressed.

The fifteen mentors come from FA61 to FA93, bringing to the program their unique life experience and background. Some have experience in mentoring or working with youth. Others started with a bit of worry that they might be too distant from the youth in Hong Kong. But all agree that this is a creative and worthwhile initiative, and they can learn something from it.

Please read on, for a glimpse of some of our mentors' experience.



* S5 – Secondary 5 - is the 5th Form under the new six-year secondary school system. At S6, students sit for the new Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination, which replaces the former Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) and Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE).

My Mentorship Experience

James S.K. Tang (FA64)

In the past twenty years, I have been a mentor for people with varied backgrounds. The first time was in the 1990s, when I was working in Hong Kong. I was a mentor for a few students studying at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The objective was simple: to act as an advisor (and a friend) to the students so that they could be better prepared when they joined the workforce after graduation. It was not a difficult task to accomplish as we could always meet face to face and the students were quite intelligent and motivated. I spent most of my time with them sharing my experience in career-planning strategies, job-interviewing techniques and decision-making processes. After graduation, they all landed

themselves satisfactory jobs.

My next mentorship, after my retirement and return to Canada, was with a young man in his early thirties. I basically acted as an older brother to him. We shared our experiences and established trust with one another. It was more a friendly relationship than a mentor-mentee one. The mentee subsequently migrated back to Hong Kong and landed a steady job with the Hong Kong Government.

My current participation in our Association's mentorship program is a brand new experience for me. My mentee is a 16-year-old high school student, and it is more challenging this time as we can only communicate with each other by phone and email. Nevertheless, we have established an effective and amiable relationship over a relatively short time, due primarily to my mentee's personality. Although a bit shy initially, he is in fact a friendly and jolly fellow. Communicating with him via Skype and email, I have been able to learn about his family background, his strengths and weaknesses, as well as his goals and challenges. I also begin to understand that we have different sets of priorities and values in life. If he could not meet my expectation, the reason might be that he had to deal with many other challenges, such as making money through part-time jobs, taking school examinations, or participating in various family activities. I realize that improving his English, as I suggested to him, is one activity among many that he has to make time for.



He reminds me that we are all unique individuals with different personalities and social values. I appreciate the chance to learn about him and the opportunity to help him which leads me to a saying from Confucius, the famous Chinese ancient educator: 有教無類，因人施教.

Extracts from My Mentorship Diary

Henry Lee (FA61)

Fall, 2012: Getting to know my mentee.

I had three email exchanges with my student before finally connecting with him on Skype. He is a pleasant young man and enjoys talking to me a lot. In the almost-two-hour session, I got to know most of what I want to know about him. What I might have failed to do is to get him to ask more about me, about North America, as well as the outside world. His is a family of three, him and his parents, living at walking distance to school. His parents both work hard, with long hours and six-day weeks. As a result, he has very little time with both parents together. He studies a lot, going to math tutoring right after our session. In his spare time, he plays computer games; in school he plays some individual sports. He helps out with housework, cooking dinner for his father most nights.

After the session, I came away with the feeling that, whether by choice or the lack of it, our alumni did have the right location for the schools. They are in an area where education is vital to elevate the population to better lives. The other realization is the undeniable value of this mentoring program. My mentee's comment was that he wished it had started a year earlier.

We spoke Cantonese the whole time but I said we would switch to more English from then on. I concluded that I would work with him in four focus areas:

- (1) Bettering his oral and written English.
- (2) Helping him with his project "Assistance in the Education System on the Learning Challenged". This is something that he picked for his 'S4 to S6' project, which has to be pursued almost like a university thesis. This is also the reason why he wished that the program had started earlier.

(3) Helping him with his university choices. He wishes to go to university but doesn't know what to study. As he has already dropped all three science subjects going to S4, I guided him briefly towards the arts path of economics, political science, and sociology, as well as the professions of accounting and law, where conversance with English would help.

(4) Advising him on how he may finance his studies. He feels that his family will not be able to afford him studying abroad, remarking that even local tuition fees in Hong Kong could be as high as HK\$100,000. I told him not to think it was impossible for now. Airline tickets are dirt cheap these days, as compared to the days we came here. Scholarships, bursaries, and maybe even summer jobs, could make up the difference.



Winter, 2013: Visiting him and his school.

On February 5, during our Hong Kong visit, myself, wife Connie and son Edmond went to see my mentee at his school. We were met by the school principal and vice principal, as well as the mentorship program director. My mentee also gave us a tour of his school.

Though my mentorship is progressing reasonably well, there is still room for improvement. I would like to meet his parents and have them involved somewhat, but did not manage to do so, even via Skype. They were just very busy. Like most of his classmates, my mentee's English has a fair way to go. Our emailing and conversations are not yet getting results. The encouraging part is that my mentee told me he would start taking English tutoring.

In spite of him taking a general knowledge course in school, I see a need to expose him to more knowledge of the world. I hope to be able to talk with him on a variety of things in future sessions.

Our Skype sessions are set for Saturday mornings at 10 a.m. and last over an hour each. It just means that I have to set aside all my Friday nights for preparation. Things will be easier from here on, as a good relationship and protocol has been established.

Dateline Hong Kong

Erica Kam (FA81)

It was my privilege to accompany Barbara in visiting the two QESOSA schools in Tin Shui Wai last March. In retrospect, it is amazing to see how the idea of a distance mentorship was conceived, launched and patiently cultivated to germinate. Though we are only a few small steps past the starting point, I feel that this program is already a success, largely because of the QES spirit we have been embracing and displaying all along.

I have joked with people that I am still on vacation in Hong Kong. During this stay, I see the many changes that have been taking place, and I am particularly sad and disappointed with the education system. The largest portion of the Hong Kong Government annual budget is devoted to the education sector, but despite the vast resources, it is ironic that the two major stakeholders, namely students and teachers, remain the most brutally beaten losers in the realm of education.

Unlike our good old days, it is now much tougher for students from grassroots families to move up the social ladder through education. Contrary to the examination-oriented and short-visioned tuition culture currently prevalent in Hong Kong, our mentorship program genuinely stands out with authenticity.

I was matched to a sports girl whose background brought back memories of my active school life in QES. She has diversified interests and is good at several sports. We started out with email as the single means of communication, because I wanted to help improve her written English. Despite the good intention, it did not help build our relationship. She was much too busy with her interests and training, and the frequency and length of her response were not at all encouraging.

Taking the advantage of co-locating in Hong Kong, I changed my strategy by calling her in the evenings. I am thankful that on one evening I decided to call her home number and asked also to talk to her mother. It turns out her mom is a big fan of our program. I explained my role as a mentor and her mom confided in me their family background and expectations. She could not stop thanking the school and the Ontario alumni for making this mentorship program possible, benefiting students like her daughter. What an icebreaking encounter!

However, the turning point had not come; my mentee's response and attitude did not improve to a level that I hoped to see. Then came Chinese New Year, and I took the liberty of inviting her to a meeting. This time, she asked if her mom could also join in. Well, the thought of meeting her mom who is probably younger than I is not quite pleasant! I was hesitant, yet for security reasons, there really was no ground to reject the request.

It was a causal but very meaningful meeting. It was also the first time that I saw her face to face, as we had not used Skype at all. We took turns introducing ourselves, and as we talked, I saw in her eyes the passion to excel in her favourite sport. With a broader understanding and in a deeper sense, I knew more clearly what occupied her mind and her time.



In her mom's presence, I shared with her my teenage experience. I told her my sports achievement, but I did not hide from her my regrets in not striking the right balance between studies and activities during the critical periods. While assuring her of her strengths and talents, my mentee's mom and I tried to guide her in visualizing her immediate future scenarios, based on the different choices she might make at the present time. Yes, we virtually went through a 'simulation' exercise in a casual, participative and sincere manner.

My mentee became much more active in our communication after the first meet-up. On one or two occasions, she even initiated new topics for discussion. In reflection, I think her family support was the turning point in our mentor-mentee relationship. I enjoy what I am doing and I am thankful for it.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all the people involved – in the front line, and behind the scene – for living out our belief and our dream.



Registration for Spring Lunch & Talk on May 4, 2013 (Saturday)

Please confirm your attendance no later than **April 27, 2013**, by completing and mailing in this form, together with a cheque to: QESOSA (Ontario), c/o Chi Hung Chan, 7 Simeon Court, North York, ON, M2K 2N6.

**** Please make cheque payable to QESOSA (Ontario). Thanks. ****

Name: _____ Chinese: _____ Year (F.5) _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

Number attending: ____ x \$22 Total amount remitted: \$ _____

Alternatively, you may confirm by email to support@gesosaont.ca, or by phone to any director, and then pay cash at the door. Please recognize that we organize this event with no cost margin to cover off variations in registered attendance. We would be obliged to call for full payments for no-shows or late cancellations past the deadline.