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Chinese entrepreneurs to honour Jamaican Raymond Chang

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Raymond Chang

Accepting a Lifetime Achievement Award does not signify that Ryerson University chancellor, Dr. Raymond Chang, has done everything or he's approaching the end of his distinguished career.

He made that very clear last week at a media conference to announce he's the recipient of the Association of Chinese Canadian Entrepreneurs' (ACCE) prestigious award to be presented on April 14.

A highly successful and respected entrepreneur, Chang has provided time, money and knowledge to philanthropic pursuits and he does not plan to stop

anytime soon.

"When someone is given a Lifetime Award, it tends to point to the end of something," said Chang, who is the seventh recipient of the award which was established in 2006. "I hope I have a lot more years to go and if I do, I will be here contributing."

The 2010 Outstanding Philanthropist of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (Toronto chapter), Chang has donated more than \$30 million in the last few years, including \$7 million to fund research at The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

His generosity has extended to the Caribbean in general and Jamaica in particular.

Five years ago, Chang donated close to \$750,000 to cover the first three years of a program with Ryerson that enables Caribbean nursing students to pursue higher education through distance learning. He also provided nearly J\$1.7 million in 2005 to the Jamaica Bauxite Institute to start a seeding nursery used to produce seedlings for distribution to farmers planting on reclaimed bauxite lands and he set up the Gladstone and Maisie Chang (in honour of his parents) chair in Internal Medicine and a fellowship to train Caribbean doctors at the University Health Network (UHN).

In addition, Chang has supported the Dr. Herbert Ho Ping Kong Centre for Excellence in Education and Practice of General Internal Medicine at the UHN, made numerous donations to his alma mater, St. George's College, and provided jobs for a number of immigrants, many of them Jamaicans, at CI Financial which he joined in 1984 as vice-president and chief operating officer.

Chang, who migrated to Canada in 1967 after managing a sales staff of 60 at the family-owned Consolidated Bakeries in Jamaica, graduated with degrees in Engineering and Accounting and ran a furniture store in the Jane & Finch community before joining CI. There he oversaw the company's growth from being a small money manager to Canada's second largest publicly traded fund company which now manages almost \$80 billion in assets. Two years ago, he stepped down from an active role in CI Financial where he remains a director.

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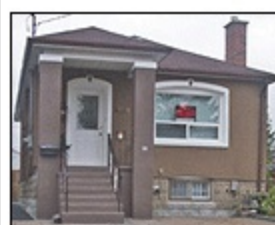
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Through his privately owned company, G. Raymond Chang Ltd., Chang is active in the development of hydrogen fuel cells, medical diagnostic devices and equipment and private wireless networks.

"Dr. Chang's outstanding track record as a business leader and philanthropist speaks for itself, and his many contributions, both to the Chinese Canadian community and the overall community, are truly deserving of this award," said ACCE president, Alan Kwong.

Royal Bank of Canada sponsors the award which recognizes individuals who have, through their lifetime, made significant contributions to the betterment of the Chinese Canadian community.

"Dr. Chang is a well respected and admired member of the Chinese Canadian community," said John Man, RBC's vice-president for Commercial Financial Services.

A 2011 Order of Jamaica recipient, Chang also holds honorary degrees from the University of the West Indies and Ryerson where he's the first Caribbean-born chancellor. His six-year tenure ends later this year.

"As chancellor, Dr. Chang takes his responsibilities very seriously," said Alan Shepherd, vice president academic. "He just does not show up on convocation day and wave the magic wand. He actually shows up over and over and over again. In the early days, he would show up in classes. He wanted to connect with our students. He's a very student-centered chancellor and because universities are primarily about students, we value his contributions enormously."

The patron of the UWI Toronto Benefit Gala, a Grace Kennedy & Company Ltd. board member and major shareholder in Walkerswood Caribbean Foods and Corpak Jamaica Ltd., Chang was chosen from an impressive list of candidates for this year's Lifetime Achievement Award.

"He exemplifies everything and more than is stated in the award criteria," said the Lifetime Achievement Award selection committee chair, Norman Morris. "Dr. Chang believes in the best of the human spirit and that we all have the ability to extend ourselves well beyond our boundaries, whatever they may be, or wherever we may be."

The press conference took place at the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education which opened in 2005.

"This award is significant for Canada, the community and Ryerson because it exemplifies the outstanding contributions of our chancellor," said the school's dean, Dr. Gervan Fearon. "It also speaks to the outstanding mosaic that we call Canada and how each of us could make a meaningful contribution to the growth of this society. Given Dr. Chang's Jamaican background, it also has significant meaning to the Jamaican and Caribbean community."

Previous ACCE Lifetime Achievement Award winners include former Governor General Adrienne Clarkson and former Alberta Lieutenant Governor Norman Kwong who in 1948 became the first Chinese-Canadian professional football player when he turned out for the Calgary Stampeders in the Canadian Football League.

By RON FANFAIR

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