

PEOPLE

Dr. Min Kao awards the inaugural Garmin Chair Professors and Scholars

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Dr. Min Kao addressing the award ceremony. Dr. Kao is a Distinguished Alumnus of NTU and a member of the U.S. National Academy of Engineering. Since founding Garmin in 1989, he has grown and expanded the company from its satellite navigation origins into a global leader in automotive, outdoor, and fitness technologies. In 2024, Garmin was ranked the second-best employer in the United States by Forbes. Dr. Kao's generosity continues to inspire the NTU community and strengthen its position as a global leader in higher education.

On November 25, 2024, National Taiwan University (NTU) hosted the “Garmin Chair Professorships and Scholar Fellowships” award ceremony. The event was graced by NTU’s distinguished alumnus and Garmin founder, Dr. Min Kao, who personally presented the awards to this year’s worthy recipients.

This year, these accolades were conferred upon three Garmin Chair Professors and five Garmin Scholars, eight recipients in total. Each awardee will receive an annual stipend of USD 30,000, with a three-year appointment eligible for one renewal.

To support NTU in attracting and retaining top talent, Dr. Kao, through the U.S.-based Kao Family Foundation, generously donated USD 20 million to establish the “Garmin Chair Professorship and Scholar Fellowship Fund” and the “Garmin Faculty Dormitory Construction and Maintenance Fund.” These initiatives are



NTU President Wen-Chang Chen (left) presenting a special contribution award to Garmin founder Dr. Min Kao (right).

aimed to bolster the recruitment and retention of exceptional faculty within the College of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) and the College of Engineering, enhancing NTU's global academic reputation. Of the donation, USD 6.25 million has been allocated to the faculty housing fund for construction, renovation, and maintenance. Currently, the housing project is over 60% complete.

NTU President Wen-Chang Chen revealed that Dr. Kao had offered to help upon learning about the university's centennial projects. He devised a comprehensive faculty retention program and funded it with an increased donation. The program not only provides competitive stipends but also offers superior housing options to attract domestic and international talent. President Chen expressed his gratitude to Dr. Kao, noting how it has also inspired other alumni to donate and boosted NTU's fundraising efforts in the United States.

An alumnus of NTU's Department of Electrical Engineering and co-founder of Garmin Ltd.—a global leader in GPS technology and smart wearables, Dr. Kao expressed his keen and continued interest in NTU's development, even 50 years after his graduation. He emphasized that exceptional faculty are the core of a competitive university. To strengthen NTU's international standing, he established both the Chair Professorship and Scholar Fellowship fund and Dormitory fund to create a complete talent recruitment package, offering competitive financial benefits and conveniently located, state-of-the-art dormitories. Dr. Kao extended his congratulations to the awardees and thanked NTU and the selection committee for their dedication and remarkable work.



Recipient list:

Garmin Chair Professors:

- Prof. Hsin-Hsi Chen of the Department of Computer Science and Information Engineering;
- Prof. Homer H. Chen of the Graduate Institute of Communication Engineering;
- Prof. Liang-Chia Chen of the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

Garmin Scholars:

- Prof. Chung-Tse Michael Wu of the Department of Electrical Engineering;
- Prof. Chun-Yi Lee of the Department of Computer Science and Information Engineering;
- Prof. Shih-Han Hung of the Department of Electrical Engineering;
- Prof. Chun-Yu Ke of the Department of Civil Engineering;
- Prof. Leigh Aldous of the Department of Chemical Engineering.