

## Recognize Outstanding Faculty

The Tam Challenge encourages philanthropic investment in Columbia's academic core in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Generous bequests from Hong Kong banker Robert Yik-Fong Tam '50BUS and his sister, Wun Tsun Tam, provide the matching funds. The Tam Challenge makes available up to \$15 million to match gifts establishing endowed professorial chairs for distinguished scholar-teachers serving in current Columbia faculty positions. Through the Tam Challenge, a wider circle of potential benefactors than ever before can consider endowing a professorship in their name or in the name of someone they wish to honor.

The Tam Challenge addresses a central priority of The Columbia Campaign for Undergraduate Education: recognizing and retaining the very best faculty in the 27 Arts and Sciences departments that offer undergraduate instruction.

### Why Endowed Professorships?

Columbia's impact—on teaching, on discovery, on meeting the challenges of the day—depends above all on the strength of our faculty. The Arts and Sciences departments at Columbia play a leading role in defining the academic disciplines in American universities, in exploring the frontiers of knowledge and interdisciplinary connection, in bringing research to bear on issues around the globe, in training graduate students as future faculty and researchers, and in refining nationally emulated models for undergraduate general education through the Core Curriculum.

To fulfill such a manifold mission, the faculty must have manifold strengths—breadth along with depth, an ability to adapt to emerging fields and a commitment to existing ones. Endowed professorships are the best single means to ensure Columbia's ability to do all of these things at once. Only endowment can provide the resources that make a strong and stable faculty possible. By increasing endowment, the University can support a faculty that is more distinguished and more comprehensive than would be possible if it were to rely on tuition dollars alone.

For students, the impact can be immediate: endowed chairs attract and retain better professors and allow the faculty to flourish. That means more undergraduate courses taught by full-time faculty, more research opportunities, and more hands-on faculty advising. A stronger faculty also promotes disciplinary diversity by stimulating both the expansion of existing programs and the creation of new ones.

The University has added approximately 50 new faculty positions in the Arts and Sciences during the period of The Columbia Campaign. By helping to create 10 chairs for existing faculty, the Tam Challenge represents a principal component of an ambitious plan to sustain this recent growth in the size and quality of our teaching faculty.

### **An Honor to Scholars and Donors**

Named professorships are the highest academic honor a university bestows on its faculty. As such, the recognition they provide is important in recruiting the best faculty to come to Columbia and in encouraging them to stay. Professors eligible to be named to chairs created under the Tam Challenge are among the leading scholars in their fields.

Columbia has a strong tradition of named chairs going back to 1830, when the College established the Jay Professorship of Greek and Latin. Many link the names of Columbia's preeminent faculty, past and present: Nobel laureate Horst Stormer is the I. I. Rabi Professor of Physics; 2006 Nobelist Edmund Phelps is the McVickar Professor of Political Economy; former assistant secretary of the treasury Richard Clarida is the C. Lowell Harriss Professor of Economics. In their day Jacques Barzun, Lionel Trilling, and Meyer Schapiro all held special professorships, and today the University has chairs named in honor of all three famed teacher-scholars.

Frequently, endowed professorships link the names of eminent faculty with the benefactors themselves, memorializing a donor's connection to Columbia and to a field of study. The 2008 Nobel laureate Martin Chalfie, for instance, is the William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Biology and George Lewis is the Edwin H. Case Professor of Music. National Medal of Science winner Gilbert Stork is the Eugene Higgins Professor of Chemistry Emeritus. In 2007, Zoe Strother was appointed as the inaugural Riggio Professor of African Art.

### **How the Challenge Works**

The Faculty of Arts and Sciences has set a \$3 million minimum for endowing a professorship during The Columbia Campaign. Under the terms of the Tam Challenge, a one-to-one match, donors can establish and name an Arts and Sciences chair with an endowment gift of \$1.5 million.

The Tam Challenge applies to chairs for existing faculty positions in departments across the Arts and Sciences—the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences. To qualify for the match, chairs must accord with University priorities as established by Nicholas Dirks, Vice President and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.