

ECOLOGICAL PARK AT LANYANG BRINGS PARADISE CLOSER TO HOME

The tree planting event held on March 10 at Lanyang Campus was open in a fanfare of Chinese music performed by the band from Jisao-hi' s San-Ming Elementary School. Several local dignitaries from I-lan attended the ceremony, such as Ms. Wu Mei-ling, who came on behalf of her husband, Lu Kuo-hwa, the Mayor of I-lan, and Mr. Lin Cheng-sheng, the Mayor of Jiao-his. Apart from the ceremony, other highlights of the day were a creativity contest on environmental issues, cheerleading performance, and of course, the actual act of tree planting.

Mr. Lin Fong-chung, the Director of the Luodong Forestry District Office, which is the co-organizer of this event, was very pleased to be able to participate in such a meaningful movement. He says that a new campus such as Lanyang is ideal for tree growing and a small scale of forestation. By doing so, people who are involved, particularly the students can learn about the importance of tree planting, forestation and green beautification. Mr. Lin explains that his office has been dedicated in promoting the concept of "Community Forest" in this region since 2003 in order to raise the awareness of local residents the crucial role trees play in nature conservation. Therefore, giving seedlings and helping Lanyang build an ecological park is an extension of this concept. His Office gave 2,000 seedlings of 15 different kinds of Taiwanese indigenous trees for this stage, and will help Lanyang maintain and manage their growth in the future.

His vision is well shared by Dr. Clement Chang, the Founder of TKU, who reiterated the vision of a natural park at the opening ceremony. Dr. Chang stressed that Lanyang is a Shangri-La of Tamkang University, where trees and flowers flourish and people and nature live harmoniously together. For such a place, he believes that it is important to retain a small student

population, ca. 2,000. In this way, Lanyang can become an ecological park that is also open to the public. Furthermore, the aim of the conference center named after him that is built with a spectacular view of Lanyang Plain, he explains, is to move some of the international conferences from Taipei and Tamsui to here so that invited international scholars could witness as well as enjoy such a splendid beauty in Taiwan.

Today' s Lanyang, according to Dr. Flora Chang, the President of TKU, is a result of a more than 10 years' careful planning—from acquisition of the land to its conservation and finally to the construction of various facilities. TKU has high hope for this campus. On one hand, the university wants the campus to carry on its three educational goals—globalization, information-oriented education, and future-oriented education; on the other hand, it has the ambition of turning Lanyang into a “garden” campus. Dr. Flora Chang has overseen, for instance, various cherry trees, whose blossoms are the University Flower, to be planted here. Ultimately, she would like Lanyang to become an “educational” ecological park providing a ground for international research by scholars and students.

Ms. Wu Mei Ling, the wife of the Mayor of I-lan County is in fact an alumna of TKU, and is proud of being one for the beauty of the campuses. She hopes that with the convenience of Hsuehshan Tunnel, more visitors will come to Lanyang Campus to appreciate its natural beauty. She also urges Drs. Flora Chang and Clement Chang to ensure top quality of facilities and teaching can be provided to students at all time. (~Ying-hsueh Hu)

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