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# 23<sup>rd</sup> Recognition Ceremony



FOR EXTERNAL AWARD WINNERS & CEDARS SERVICE AWARDEES

## A Leader of Tomorrow

### Xiang Chen's Story Faculty of Social Sciences PhD

Annually taking place in Switzerland, the St. Gallen Symposium is the world's leading initiative for intergenerational debates on business and socio-political issues. Last year, the topic of the Symposium was 'Capital for Purpose' to foster insightful discussions on the carbon market and green capital. Coinciding with the field of the doctoral research of **Xiang Chen**, the topic thus provided great motivation to her to participate in the 2019 Symposium as a HKU representative. Chen was even selected as one of the 'leaders of tomorrow' in the Symposium, let's listen to her brilliant and innovative ideas.



***“That’s how this PhD candidate defined success – bring the human being a better life.”***

Chen described the life at the University of St. Gallen as refreshing and inspiring, “This programme, for me, was just like a spring for breathing short but new life into the world, meeting global leaders, discussing fundamental issues of the international community, and establishing long-lasting friendships in a youth-led community.” In the programme, leading figures from different sectors were invited to deliver inspirational speeches to participants and modulate topical debates as panel speakers. Alongside discussions on topics such as socialism in the United States and inter-cultural communication in North Korea, Chen found the keynote speech of Professor Niall Ferguson strikingly insightful. Professor Ferguson is an international historian on economic history and the British and American imperialism. He reminded Chen “how important the fundamental definitions, theories, and causal mechanisms of some social science concepts are for us to understand the world better and more comprehensively.”

From mere participation to being selected as one of the ‘leaders of tomorrow,’ Chen used an English saying to remind herself and all of us, not to hesitate when facing challenges ahead “The early bird catches the worm. Success comes to those who prepare well and put in the effort. No project is perfect in the beginning stage. So I’d like to recommend interested fellows to prepare early.” As Chen worked tirelessly on her project throughout the Symposium, she was never hesitated to reshape previous understandings on the ever-evolving measures of carbon emission reduction. As a result, not only did she formulate a systematic methodology, her hypotheses and discussions were highly adhered to the current landscape of the carbon ecology industries, instead of merely theoretical deductions. After all, one can witness Chen’s awareness on the nature of unsatisfied needs in the great outside world. This somehow explains why she was highly acclaimed by the committee of the Symposium.

“I want to ‘utilize’ the knowledge I have learnt from public policy, politics, economics, energy and environment to reduce the suffering of disadvantaged groups, even just a bit.” That’s how this PhD candidate defined success – bring the human being a better life. But even before she arrived at this very destination, the award applauds for her toil, her intellect and her caring heart.

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