

**Remarks by Dean Nitin Nohria**  
**June 6, 2016**  
**Inauguration of Ruth Mulan Chu Chao Center**

To Dr. Chao and the members of the extended Chao family that have gathered with us today; President Faust, Governor Baker, and Senators Warren and Markey; leaders in government, business, and academia; esteemed guests and special friends of the Chaos; principals from Goody Clancy Architects and Lee Kennedy Construction; the Chao Center Executive and Facilities Committees; Provost Garber and members of the HBS and Harvard communities: welcome to the dedication of the Ruth Mulan Chu Chao Center.

"Dedication" has its roots in *dedicare*, a Latin word meaning to consecrate or to devote.

Part of what we are here to celebrate today is indeed the *consecration* of a new building. For the past 2 years, from the Dean's House next door, I've had a unique opportunity to watch the Chao Center take shape. Much as I know Jessica, Miranda, and other members of the Chao family enjoyed watching the webcam to monitor its progress, each day I, too, was able to see the foundation being dug and laid, the steel structure emerge, the shell completed, and then the interior, landscaping, and other details finalized. The Chao Center is, in every respect, a *remarkable* building: true to the design principles of the original McKim Mead and White campus design with its brick and trim and creating a beautiful terminus along Harvard Way, yet embracing the values and vision of Harvard Business School and Harvard in Allston in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with its soaring glass and steel.

I am reminded, though, of the words of banker and HBS beneficiary George F. Baker when he commented on the construction of the original campus in 1927. He noted, "...[I]t must be remembered always that the standard of excellence which must be maintained comes not simply from the outside of the buildings, but from the work and training on the inside." And *this* is what excites me, because I think the Chao Center will foster in new ways one of the elements that has defined Harvard Business School for a century: its unique residential learning experience, where what goes on inside the classroom is extended and enhanced

over coffee, in team and project work, during afternoon talks and seminars, through informal conversations, and in the times and spaces that occur when students and participants are together throughout the day and into the evening.

Already it is clear to see that the Chao Center will be more than the "bridge" between our educational programs and the members of our community. It will be a magnet: welcoming the thousands of global executive education participants who come to HBS from around the world each year as they begin their journey of educational transformation, housing classes and projects, and hosting a vibrant schedule of activities and events for the entire campus. From the Hub to the terrace, from the classrooms to the dining halls, and from the lounges to the multipurpose room, and in this wonderful new patio and outdoor quad: it will be not simply a space, but a building with a true sense of *place and purpose*.

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What we are also here to celebrate today is this second meaning of dedication, *devotion*. Because more than anything, the story of the Chao family is a story of devotion: the devotion between a husband and wife who overcame separations and great obstacles to build a new life for their daughters in America; the devotion of the parents to the value of education that could be used in service and to promote the highest ideals; the devotion of Dr. Chao and his daughters to honoring Ruth Mulan Chu Chao as a remarkable matriarch of a remarkable family; and the devotion of the Chao family to Harvard Business School and Harvard University by bestowing upon us a wonderful gift.

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The Chao Center, today and in the future, will honor these two meanings. We pledge to ensure that it lives up to the aspirations of George F. Baker as a place where the mission of Harvard Business School is brought to life, and where knowledge is gained so that it may be taken back into the world to benefit companies and communities alike. And we know, for all those who pass through the building's doors and learn about Ruth Mulan Chu Chao and

the Chao family, they will come to understand that the most simple of human virtues – that of putting others before yourself – can be an equally transformative power in making a difference in the world.

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So again, welcome. Before turning to our illustrious roster of speakers, a few words of thanks.

- Dr. Chao, Secretary Chao, May, Grace, Christine, and Angela: thank you for your incredible generosity and the faith in education, HBS, and Harvard that your gift represents.
- To Rob and Roger and the team from Goody Clancy Architects, Lee Kennedy and the team from Lee Kennedy Construction, and Reed Hilderbrand: our gratitude for designing and building such a remarkable structure and landscape.
- To Deans Jay Light and John McArthur, and to Dick Spangler, thank you for your friendship and support of the Chao family and the School.
- To the HBS teams in Executive Education, Operations, IT, KLS, and beyond: thank you for bringing the space to life with best-in-class technology, digital exhibits, new systems and processes, and more.
- Finally, with the knowledge that Harvard Business School exists as part of a great University that is part of a great city within a great state, my thanks to for creating the environment in which projects like this, and educational institutions more broadly, can flourish and thrive. We are fortunate that our neighbors have been so deeply supportive as we have enhanced our campus and, we hope, our community with this new building.

Now let me introduce our speakers: Harvard University President Drew Gilpin Faust, Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker, U.S. Senator for Massachusetts Elizabeth Warren, U.S. Senator for Massachusetts Ed Markey, and, speaking on behalf of the family, Secretary

Elaine Chao. We'll hear from each in turn, and then following their remarks we'll do the formal "ribbon cutting" to open the building.

Please join me in welcoming Harvard University President Drew Gilpin Faust.