

**2025 Global Outstanding Overseas Compatriot Alumni
【Overseas Community Service Award】**

Mr. Pang Thou Chong

From overseas student to a key advocate of education diplomacy, Pang Thou Chong is not a government official, yet he has become a pivotal figure in bridging Taiwan and Sabah through education. He has facilitated over 2,000 students from a single Malaysian state to pursue higher education in Taiwan, championed the integration of makerspaces in schools, and helped establish youth-led baking workshops. For the youth of Sabah, "studying in Taiwan" is no longer just a pathway to education - it has become a launchpad for changing their lives.

Born in December 1961 in Sabah, Malaysia, Pang nurtured a passion for journalism early in life and came to Taiwan to study in the Department of Journalism at Shih Hsin University (then a three-year college specialising in editing and reporting). He graduated in 1973. As a new-generation overseas Chinese student from Sabah, he clearly understood how education could shape one's destiny and recognized Taiwan's vital role in nurturing Chinese youth across Southeast Asia.

During his time at Shih Hsin University, Pang not only honed his professional skills but also experienced firsthand Taiwan's freedom, openness, and inclusiveness toward overseas students. He actively engaged in student organizations and built a wide network, laying the groundwork for his future endeavors in education diplomacy. Years later, he was named one of Shih Hsin University's "6th Distinguished Alumni," a recognition of his outstanding contributions to promoting Taiwan's education abroad.

After returning to Sabah, Pang Thou Chong combined his expertise in media, education, and public affairs, serving as a city councillor and holding leadership roles in various overseas Chinese and cultural organizations. His influence spans both public and private sectors, and he has successfully driven over 100 cooperation projects between Taiwan and Malaysia. Notable achievements include facilitating educational partnerships between Sabah and Taiwan, helping 9 secondary schools and 10 Taiwanese universities sign exchange agreements, leading delegations of Sabah education officials to Taiwan for further training, and assisting technical colleges in signing MOUs with six Taiwanese universities. Since 2014, he has served as Director of College Counseling, launching the “Study in Taiwan Dream Project(赴臺升學圓夢計畫)” and founding the “Taiwan Higher Education Fair(臺灣高等教育展).” Over the past decade, he has helped more than 2,000 Sabah youth study in Taiwan, with annual numbers consistently exceeding 200 - reshaping the history of Sabah students studying in Taiwan. He also successfully linked Taiwan’s Rotary Clubs with local Sabah schools, raising NT\$2 million to establish a vocational training hub, marking the only Taiwan-Malaysia cooperation project supported by a global grant.

Pang has also served as an Overseas Community Affairs Council (OCAC) promotion commissioner, overseas education sponsor, and adviser - offering both strategic policy advice and on-the-ground implementation that have significantly advanced Taiwan’s grassroots diplomacy in Sabah.

He firmly believes that the value of international educational collaboration lies not in numbers but in whether opportunities to transform lives can be sustained. Looking ahead, Pang hopes to work with alumni associations and the Sabah government to expand the “Big Hand Holding Little Hand(大手牽小手)” initiative, enabling students to begin engaging with Taiwan from

secondary school onwards. He also aims to reach non-Chinese-speaking groups such as Malays and indigenous peoples, and integrate OCAC resources with Taiwan's higher education sector to build a deeper, more accessible, and sustainable Taiwan-Malaysia education network.

Pang expresses his deep gratitude to Shih Hsin University for laying the foundation of his professional journey, and to the OCAC for its long-standing support of students, schools, and youth in Sabah. He remains firmly committed to the belief that "Education is the gentlest yet most powerful form of diplomacy," and will continue working to build more meaningful global connections for Taiwan - ensuring that more youth find hope, purpose, and a pathway to the world through studying in Taiwan.