Cogent Founder Gives $35 M to USC

By ALLEN P. ROBERTS Jr.

Ming Hsieh has donated $35 million to the University of Southern California Viterbi School of Engineering, the school said Monday.

Hsieh founded Pasadena-based Cogent Inc. after graduating from USC in 1984. The school will rename the college’s electrical engineering department after the successful entrepreneur. The gift is the largest ever to an engineering department in the country, and the largest resulting the renaming of a department at USC.

"Ming's name adds luster to a department that is already highly distinguished. He is a great Trojan who cares deeply about educating future engineers," said USC President Steven Sample, who is also an electrical engineer and a faculty member.

Cogent is a billion-dollar manufacturer of automated fingerprint and other identification systems used by governments, law enforcement agencies and corporations around the world. All 47 law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles County, for example, use one of Cogent’s systems.
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