Chinese-American makes record donation to USC

University of Southern California engineering alumnus Ming Hsieh, who was born and raised in northern China and went on to found a Southern California high-technology juggernaut, has donated 35 million U.S. dollars to the USC Viterbi School of Engineering.

In recognition of his generosity, USC will name its electrical engineering department the USC Ming Hsieh Department of Electrical Engineering, said a press release issued by the USC on Monday.

The gift is the largest ever to name an engineering department nationwide and the largest ever to name a department at USC, said the release.

"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, and we are grateful that he is investing not only in his alma mater but ultimately in this nation," said USC President Steven B. Sample, who as an electrical engineer is also a tenured faculty member in the department.

Yannis C. Yortsos, dean of the Viterbi School said: "One hundred years ago, USC offered its first engineering courses in electrical engineering. It is only fitting that Ming Hsieh, an electrical engineering alumnus, is launching the second century of USC engineering with a magnificent gift."

Hsieh received his B.S. in 1983 and his M.S. in 1984 in electrical engineering both from USC. In 1987 he founded AMAX Technology and in 1990 co-founded the South Pasadena-based Cogent Inc. He is currently president, CEO and chairman of the board of Cogent.

Cogent is a billion dollar company that supplies automated fingerprint and other identification systems to governments, law enforcement agencies and corporations around the world. All 47 law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles County, for example, use a Cogent system. Cogent's 20.7 million-share public offering was one of the most successful IPO's (initial public offering) of 2004.

Source: Xinhua