

何志立律師

Mr. Sunny Ho

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不忘初心 挑戰極限 慈善馬拉松鑄傳奇

何志立律師，從修讀化學到轉修法律，華麗轉身，卻在慈善中找到人生目標。為了幫助長者，建造一個加拿大前所未有的一站式綜合社區服務中心，積極面對挑戰，不懈努力，最終挑戰成功，實現夢想。

見到英挺的何志立律師，是在他的辦公室，一臉微笑，正如他的英文名，Sunny，充滿陽光。

何志立律師目前在列治文山市擁有自己的律師事務所，主要從事民事及房地產法律事務。一定想不到何志立大學時學的並不是法律，而是化學。

1982年何志立隨母親從香港移民到多倫多，就讀於著名的麥克馬斯特大學化學系，曾在政府的漁業及海洋部化學實驗室工作。刻板的工作限制了何志立發展的空間，幾經考慮，何志立轉身投入到充滿挑戰的房地產行業。讓他意想不到的是，彼時恰逢多倫多地產業處於低谷時期，一時間何志立找不到發展的方向，沮喪中，他選擇了回流香港。

華麗轉身 找到事業發展方向

何志立的父親在香港是位成功的會計師。父親的成功讓前路迷茫的何志立很有一種挫敗感。但是這挫敗感沒有讓何志立沉淪，卻煥發起他強烈的上進心。

回到香港的何志立繼續進入地產界打拼，每天在繁雜的法律文書堆中工作十幾個小時，這不僅讓他很快熟悉了地產界的各種業務，也漸漸對法律事務產生濃厚的興趣。何志立說，忙碌的工作並沒有讓他感到疲憊，恰恰相反，因為熱愛，讓他振奮。找到自己事業發展的方向，何志立產生回爐進修的想法。

何志立的父親雖然事業有成，但白手起家的他，對兒女的要求是勤奮與自立。父親鼓勵何志立回加拿大繼續深造，但是並沒有給予他經濟上的支持，而是把錢用在了慈善上。何志立表示，父親的良苦用心，對他影響頗深，一方面歷煉了他的生存能力，另一方面培養了他回饋社會的「慈善心」。

1996年，何志立進入新斯高薩省的Dalhousie法律學院修讀法律，這是一所法律專業在加拿大排名高的法律學院，每年只招收150名學生，專門培養加拿大法律界的精英。何志立於1999年順利畢業於該校，並在多倫多找到一份與法律相關的工作。

工作最初的兩年，何志立是很拼搏的。埋首於各種法律檔之間，很快累積了足夠的經驗，考取安省執業律師牌照，並於2001年開辦了屬於自己的律師事務所。

談起在香港回流的這段經歷，何志立不無感慨的說，這段打拼生活讓他感悟到，如果想取得成績必須付出努力，但是付出努力未必就一定取得成功。所以人生不應以追求成功為目標，但應該勤奮地走在通往成功的路上。

不忘初心 堅持回饋社區

有了自己的律師樓，何志立更加忙碌了。業務的進展，並沒讓他迷失在成功之中，相反他牢記父親的諄諄教導，只要有能力就不忘幫助別人，在助人中享受快樂。

為了更好服務社區，2001年何志立投身萬錦列治文山華商會，成為華商會的會董，這也是何志立正式進入社區服務的開始。有人問：「何律師，加入華商會是不是會給你帶來好多生意啊？」何志立誠懇地回答：「如果為的是增加客戶或者是開拓業務，那麼華商會的會董一點沒有便利之處，相反還會浪費很多時間和金錢。讓我為之付出時間和精力的動力有兩個：一個是來自父母的教誨，這個世界上無論地位高低，財產貧富，每個人都應該懷著感恩的心回饋社會，我也常常教導自己的女

兒，學習感恩，並在給予中獲得快樂，因為施比受更有福。

另外一個原因則是，作為一個新移民，經歷了很多艱辛，瞭解其中的不易，希望自己可以為華人和主流社區之間架起一座橋樑，這樣華人社區和華人才不會被遺忘，也才會在社會中發揮重要作用，為加拿大主流社區所接納。」

2006年，何志立被前列治文山員警總長邀請為座上賓，參加該市反罪案工作會議，令何志立有機會為華人發聲，詳細介紹了華商在經營生意的過程中遭遇的各種治安風險，比如打劫、偷盜等，讓警界瞭解華人商戶的需求，改善華人商戶的經營環境。會議之後，列治文山警察局對華人商場增派警力，解決了華人商戶的困擾。

除了華商會的工作，何志立曾在2009年被委任為國際扶輪社7070區副區長；還先後為獅子會、加中保險專業協會等社團做法律顧問，以專業知識為社區提供優質服務。

為慈善而跑 改變生活方式

憑著多年來為社區服務累積的經驗，何志立的目標也從為社團提供法律諮詢及援助轉向慈善組織，更直接的服務社區、服務弱勢社群。2011年9月，何志立被選為耆暉會會長。

耆暉會是成立於1976年的非牟利組織，主要為長者及殘障人士提供社區支援及安康照料服務，以確保獨居或體弱的老人享有獨立及豐富的生活。

何志立說，作為會長，我的理想是帶領耆暉會修建一個“一站式綜合社區服務中心”，為社區提供一站式醫療保健、健康護理及康復治療護理、社區支援服務和康樂服務，包括預防、醫療、短暫康復護理照顧、交通、膳食、眼睛護理、緊急護理、心理健康、家居及個人護理服務。如果這樣的服務中心落成，也將開啟加拿大社區服務中心新模式，具有里程碑的意義。

經過測算，修建一個這樣的一站式綜合社區服務中心，大

約需要1,800萬，經過何志立律師及耆暉會的多方懇談，最終獲得安省基建專案貸款1,200萬元，餘下的600萬完全需要耆暉會獨自籌資。意外的，這一項耆暉會籌款的善行，同時改變了何志立的生活方式。

最初何志立開始親力親為為這筆款項奔走，並打算嘗試參加豐業銀行一年一度湖濱馬拉松慈善長跑活動。何志立說，別說馬拉松，在那之前連跑步都沒有試過。那個時候自己身體也不是很好，膽固醇指標很高，因為工作關係，長期久坐，還有一個鼓鼓的小肚子。

朋友們聽說何志立要參加慈善長跑，紛紛勸阻，大家認為這對一個中年人來說是個不可能完成的任務。何志立當然也知道這個決定對自己是個極限挑戰，但是為了耆暉會的理想，何志立堅持一拼。

何志立開始有計劃的參加各種體能及長跑訓練，為馬拉松做準備。2011年，初試牛刀的何志立完成了有生以來的第一個半馬，20公里長跑。這不僅讓他的朋友們大跌眼鏡，也讓何志立對自己、對耆暉會充滿了信心。

2012年，何志立宣佈正式參加42公里馬拉松長跑。俗話說35公里是馬拉松的鬼門關，跑全程馬拉松跟半馬比起來，可不僅僅是體能、速度和時間的延長，更是對人意志力的考驗。何志立說，籌款600萬是挑戰極限，跑完全程馬拉松也是挑戰極限。這個為了達到目標有著堅韌毅力的男人，終於向著他的理想，排除萬難，大步前進。

那一年，何志立在親朋好友及耆暉會的感動中跑完全馬。當天何志立個人籌款2萬元，也是全多倫多籌款最高數額的前十名。謙遜的何志立並沒有把成績攬在自己的身上，而是感謝朋友的信任與相助。他說，有一個朋友為了鼓勵他便提議，只要何志立每跑一公里就捐款10元，結果何志立跑完全程，這個朋友也捐了420元。

從此，何志立不僅僅參加豐業銀行的湖濱馬拉松長跑，

也陸續加入其它慈善組織的長跑活動。在一次又一次挑戰身體極限的同時，也為耆暉會籌款。何志立說，後來參加馬拉松長跑，已經不僅僅是為耆暉會而跑，也是為自己而跑。馬拉松已經成為自己生活中的一部分。從前的膽固醇指數降到正常水準，身體狀況愈發健康，以前的小肚子不見了，取而代之的是勻稱的身材。無心插柳，因為幫助別人而幫到自己，真是個令人意想不到的收穫呢。

從2013年11月，安省基建處批准了1,200萬貸款之後的破土動工開始，到2015年整座大樓完全建成，耆暉會終於擁有了佔地7萬平方呎，四層樓面，集社區服務、家庭醫生服務、專科醫療、長者康復及康樂、幼托、青少年活動、圖書館、甚至小型手術等十數項社區服務於一體的新型社區中心。

2015年10月，耆暉會搬進新的大樓，何志立十分珍惜這座建築，推薦參評在英國倫敦舉辦的建築設計比賽，不負期待新大樓贏得了歐洲健康設計獎。作為全加第一個一站式綜合社區服務中心的參與者，何志立表示，這座建築的意義已經超越了建築本身，它象徵著加拿大在服務耆老及社區方面又向前邁出了一大步。很幸運在這個過程中，有機會讓自己參與，成為這座里程碑式的建築中的一份子。

作為移居加拿大30多年的老移民，何志立瞭解所有移民來到新的國家遭遇的困難及挫折，文化背景的不同成為移民融入主流難以逾越的鴻溝。何志立目前越來越多地參與主流社區的各項活動，希望可以讓更多主流社區看到華人積極活躍的身影，展現華人參與回饋社區的正面形象，更有效的幫助華裔社區提出需求，解決問題。何志立律師表示，自己還會繼續堅持為社區服務，希望自己可以真正成為華裔社區和主流社區間的橋樑。

何志立的善舉可以說得是為行善而行善，雖不求取歌頌也不求取報償，但兩者終將會降臨在他身上。



2011年參與湖濱馬拉松42公里長跑
First Full Marathon (42K) running
for Carefirst in 2011



2016年與太太Laura及女兒在夏威夷
With wife (Laura) and daughters (Megan and Jocelyn) in
Hawaii (March 2016)



2012年與父母親在宴會上合照
First Full Marathon (42K) running for
Carefirst in 2011



2016年與約克區警察總長La Barge及他太太
在他的退休宴會上合照
With former York Regional Police Chief Armand
La Barge and his wife Denise La Barge at his
retirement dinner (2016)



應邀在約克區警察總長退休宴會上致詞
Being invited to speak at former Chief's
retirement dinner (2016)



以約克區扶輪社會長身份捐贈\$5,000予
約克區中央醫院
As President for the Rotary Club of York donating
a cheque of \$5,000 to York Central Hospital
Foundation (now MacKenzie Health)



以耆暉會會長身份接受佛光山\$100,000捐款
As President for Carefirst Seniors & Community
Services Association receiving a \$100,000
donation from Buddha's Light International
Association of Toronto



2014年參與“冰桶”籌款
Participated in ALS Ice Bucket Challenge to raise
awareness in the community (2014)



2011年完成湖濱馬拉松長跑後與家人及支持者合照
With family and supporters from Carefirst after
completing the 1st full marathon in 2011



為長者送上聖誕大餐
Serving the seniors at Christmas party with
former president Genevieve Wong



接受約克區扶輪社捐贈的\$30,000支票
Receiving a \$30,000 donation from
Rotary Club of York



與現任約克區警察總長Eric Jolliffe 出席社區活動
With current York Regional Police Chief Eric
Jolliffe at a community event



義務主持社區講座
Giving free seminar in the community



2016年耆暉會一站式綜合社區服務中心開幕
Grand Opening Ceremony of Carefirst One-
Stop Access Multi-Services Centre in June
2016



與耆暉會籌建委員會名譽主席關衛衛及
基金會主席保延敏合照
With Stanley Kwan (Honourary Chair - Capital
Campaign) and Ian Po (Carefirst
Foundation Chair)



與現任治文山市市長巴羅在耆暉會周年籌款晚會合照
With David Barrow, Mayor of Richmond Hill at
a Carefirst Gala



2013年耆暉會新設施動土儀式 Groundbreaking
Ceremony for the Carefirst Facility (Nov 2013)



歡迎多倫多市長莊德利訪問耆暉會
Greeting Toronto Mayor John Tory at one of
the Carefirst locations

Mr. Sunny Ho

Mr. Sunny Ho, a lawyer who began his career in chemistry, found his mission in life in charitable work. In order to build an unprecedented one-stop integrated community service center for the elderly, he faced the challenges head on and made relentless efforts to raise funds, overcoming obstacles to succeed and realize his dream.

We met Mr. Sunny Ho, a handsome man, in his office. The sunny smile on his face reflects his name.

His Richmond Hill law firm deals mainly with real estate and civil law. However Sunny did not study law in university; he majored in chemistry.

In 1982, Sunny immigrated to Toronto from Hong Kong with his mother and studied at McMaster University, completing a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry. Prior to graduation, he had worked in the chemistry laboratory at the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans of Canada. The rigidity of work in chemistry felt restrictive and monotonous to Sunny, and after graduation, he threw himself into a more challenging industry: real estate. Unfortunately, his timing coincided with the slump in the Toronto real estate market. Sunny was lost as he tried to find a new direction for himself. In frustration, he decided to return to Hong Kong.

Sunny's father is a successful accountant in Hong Kong. His father's achievements compounded his frustration and sense of loss. But he did not let this frustration sink in; instead, it lit up his intense ambition.

Back in Hong Kong, Sunny continued to work hard in the real estate business, often spending over ten hours a day buried in the complex legal documents associated with real estate transactions. Not only did he become familiar quickly with different business transactions within the real estate sector, but he also acquired a strong interest in legal issues. Sunny said he did not feel tired from the hectic work. On the

contrary, he was motivated because he loved the work. The idea of going to law school was brewing on Sunny's mind as he tried to find the direction of his own career development.

Sunny's father is a self-made successful business man and expected hard work and self-reliance in his children. He encouraged Sunny to return to Canada to continue his studies, but did not give him financial support. He would rather spend his money on charity. Sunny says that his father's thoughtfulness made a deep impact on him. On the one hand it helped him become more resilient; on the other hand, it taught him the concept of 'benevolence' and that he must give back to the community.

In 1996, Sunny enrolled in Dalhousie Law School in Halifax, Nova Scotia. It was ranked as one of the top law schools in Canada with only an annual enrollment of 150 students, providing training for the elite in the Canadian legal profession. Sunny completed his studies in 1999, and started articling with a law firm in Toronto.

Upon completion of articling, Sunny received his professional designation from the Law Society of Upper Canada in Ontario, and started his own law firm in 2001.

It is not without emotion that Sunny talks about his work experience back in Hong Kong, how he came to realize that if one wants to get results, one has to work hard. However, success does not necessarily follow hard work, so the pursuit of success should not be one's only goal in life.

Sunny was busier than ever once he opened his own law practice. Even as his business prospered, he did not let success go to his head. On the contrary, he took to heart the earnest lessons he learned from his father: as long as you have the ability, don't forget to help others; relish in the joy of giving.

To better serve the community, Sunny joined the Richmond Hill and Markham Chinese Business Association in 2001, and sat on its Board of Directors. It marked the starting point of Sunny's involvement in

community work. Someone asked Sunny if he got a lot of business referrals from joining the Chinese Business Association. Sunny sincerely replied: “If the goal is to increase your clientele or expand your business, then there is no benefit in sitting on the Board of the Chinese Business Association. It will only be a waste of time, along with spending a lot of money.”

Sunny says, “There are only two things that motivate me to spend this much time and effort: the first one is the teachings of my parents: regardless of your position in the world, rich or poor, everyone should pay back to society with a thankful heart. I often teach my daughters to learn to feel gratitude, and to enjoy giving. The second reason is that as an immigrant myself, I could understand how difficult it is for new immigrants. I hope I can work between Chinese and mainstream communities to bridge the gap, so that the Chinese community and Chinese people will not be forgotten. Chinese Canadians can play an important role in society, and be accepted by mainstream.”

In 2006, Sunny was invited to join the Community Crime Prevention Council, an initiative started by former York Region Police Chief Armand Le Barge. Sunny had the opportunity to speak on behalf of the Chinese community, detailing the various security risks Chinese businesses face in the course of doing business, such as robbery and theft, so that the police could understand their needs and help improve their business environment. Following a series of meetings, additional police were provided for Chinese restaurants and shopping malls to help resolve the security concerns of Richmond Hill and Markham Chinese merchants.

In addition to his work with the Chinese Business Association, Sunny had also served as Assistant District Governor for Rotary District 7070 in 2009. Rotary International is a well-known organization with over 2 million members worldwide. Currently, Sunny is also serving as legal advisor for the Toronto Cathay Lions Club, Cast Popular Music Centre, as well as Canadian Chinese Insurance Professionals Association, utilizing his legal expertise to help the community.

With years of experience in community service, Sunny's contribution to society shifted from providing legal advice and assistance to helping charitable organizations more directly to serve the vulnerable sector. In September 2011, Sunny was elected President of Carefirst Seniors and Community Services Association.

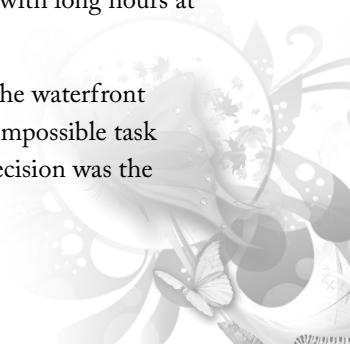
Carefirst was established in 1976 as a non-profit organization, which offers care and various services for the elderly and people with disabilities in the community, to ensure that frail and elderly seniors living alone could enjoy independent and enriched lives.

Sunny says that as President, his goal was to lead Carefirst to build a "one-stop access multi-services center" to provide health care, rehabilitation, community support and recreational services, including illness prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, nursing care, transportation, meals, eye care, emergency care, mental health, home and personal support services all under one roof. Such an integrated service center would become a new model and an important milestone for the Canadian community.

The estimated construction cost of such a one-stop integrated community service center was approximately \$18 million. After having numerous meetings with the government officials, Sunny and Carefirst were able to secure a \$12 million loan from Infrastructure Ontario, with the remaining \$6 million to be raised on their own. Unexpectedly, this fund-raising for Carefirst changed Sunny's lifestyle.

Looking for different ways to raise this money, Sunny planned to try the annual Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon. Up to then Sunny had not run before, let alone a marathon. At that time his physical condition was not very good; he had high cholesterol levels, and a bulging belly because of his sedentary lifestyle with long hours at work.

When Sunny's friends heard about his plans to run the waterfront marathon, they discouraged him, thinking it was an impossible task for a middle-aged man. Sunny certainly knew this decision was the



ultimate challenge for himself, but in order to reach his goal for Carefirst, he insisted on trying.

To prepare for the marathon, Sunny began taking various fitness and marathon training. In 2011, Sunny completed his first ever half-marathon, 21 km of long-distance running. This not only stunned his friends, but also gave Sunny confidence in himself and Carefirst.

In 2012, Sunny announced his plans to participate in the 42 km marathon. As the saying goes, the 35 km mark is where runners hit the wall in any marathon. It is not just a matter of physical fitness, improving the speed or time for the full marathon compared with the half, it is now a test of willpower. Sunny said that raising \$6 million and finishing a full marathon were challenges of the same magnitude. It was with great tenacity that he overcame all the obstacles in order to achieve his goal.

That year, Sunny's efforts to run a full marathon moved his friends and family and all of Carefirst. He received well over \$20,000 in pledges, and was recognized as one of the top individual fundraisers in the Greater Toronto Area. Sunny modestly did not take credit for the money raised, but thanked his friends for their trust and help. He said a friend tried to encourage him by proposing that he would donate \$10 for each kilometer Sunny completed, with the result that this friend donated \$420 when he finished the course.

Since then, Sunny not only participated in the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon, he has also joined other charity marathon events. While he challenges again and again the limits of his body, Carefirst raises funds at the same time. Sunny says now he does not just participate in the marathon for Carefirst, but he is also running for himself. Marathon has become a part of his life. His cholesterol has gone down to normal levels, and he is in good physical shape as a result. His pot belly is now replaced by muscle. Serendipitously, he has helped himself through helping others, a windfall unexpected.

After Infrastructure Ontario approved a \$12 million loan, Carefirst broke ground in November 2013. In 2015, the new building was fully completed, with four floors covering a total area of 70,000 square feet, providing community services, family clinic, specialist medical care, rehabilitation and recreational services along with childcare, elderly and youth programs, libraries, and even offering minor surgeries. There are more than ten services in this new community center.

Carefirst moved into the new building in October 2015. Sunny was excited when he learned that Carefirst won the European Health Design Award in London, England. As a participant in establishing the first Canadian community one-stop access multi-services center, Sunny says that the significance of the building has gone beyond the building itself. It is a symbol for a new standard in Canada's seniors and community service. Sunny is very proud to have had an opportunity to participate in this process, and become a part of this landmark building.

As an immigrant who moved to Canada more than 30 years ago, Sunny understands the difficulties and setbacks new immigrants with different cultural backgrounds encounter, and how insurmountable the divide from mainstream seems to be. He plans to get more involved in the activities of the mainstream community, hoping to present a positive image of Chinese-Canadian community through his contributions. By actively giving back to the community, he can be more effective in helping to raise the profile of the Chinese community, and help resolve its problems. Sunny says he will continue to devote himself to community service, and that he hopes to truly become a bridge between the Chinese and mainstream community.

Sunny does not expect any accolades or returns for the contributions that he has made to the community. But in the end he has earned both.

