Garry Ong, president

Great Wall Enterprises Ltd.; Phoenix International Trading; G.O. Enterprises Ltd.

Great Wall includes Travelink International and Phoenix International Trading. Travelink is a full-service travel agency specializing in escorted Asian tours with an emphasis on China.

Phoenix International Trading is a cross-cultural consulting enterprise offering business-to-business links between America and China. The company also markets American and Chinese goods in both countries.

G.O. Enterprises Ltd. operates Yum's Oriental Buffet.

What career accomplishment are you most proud of?

After working for "corporate America" for 15 years, I'm proud that I took the risk of starting my own business in 1981. It involved giving up security to become a business owner and was a big step for me.

I'm also proud to have founded the Chinese Restaurant Association of Greater Phoenix. It began in 1988 with 10 restaurants and is now about 200 restaurants strong. I particularly take pride in the organization's cultural and social contributions to the community.

Professionally speaking, where do you see yourself in 10 years?

We will continue to take advantage of the popularity of travel to China, which offers the highest growth area in the future of the travel industry. My goal for the next 10 years is to make Great Wall Enterprises the agency of choice for travel to Asia and China. I also intend to establish Phoenix International Trading as the premier Chinese-American business consulting firm.

I would also like to help establish an Asian-American community service agency to assist people with employment, their careers or in starting their own businesses.

What's the biggest obstacle you've overcome in your career?

The biggest obstacle I have faced was supporting myself in a totally unfamiliar environment. I overcame it through my faith, hard work and believing in myself.

Are minority businesses at a disadvantage?

There's a natural perception that small, minority-owned businesses may not have the ability to provide needed services -- that they may not be able to deliver on the promises and commitments they make. People often think a minority-business person can only perform in a preconceived, stereotyped business based on their cultural heritage. The minority business owner must work twice as hard to overcome those perceptions and prove their abilities. Often, they aren't given the chance to do that.

What advice would you give to other minority business owners?

I would advise others to work hard, be persistent and not be afraid to ask questions. Be a dreamer and visionary. It's also very important to set high goals for yourself.

Minorities need to open their horizons by reaching out to others and proving what they're capable of achieving. In this country, if you're self-confident, you can accomplish anything.

Mr. Garry K. Ong, of Phoenix, Arizona, is the President of G.O. Enterprises, which operates pan Asian restaurants in Phoenix and President and C.E.O. of Great Wall Enterprises, Ltd., a corporation that includes the Phoenix International Trading Company and Travelink International and Consulting Services. He was the past President of the Chinese United Association of Greater Phoenix and one of the founding members of the Chinese Restaurant Association of Arizona. Mr. Ong received his B.S. in Marketing from Arizona State University