



## Remembrance of Dr. Wei Kao (高為雄)

September 2, 1944 – November 2, 2023

By Dr. and Mrs. Chih-Ming and Shirley Ho (何志明/張翠姝)

CESASC 1988 and 2004 Presidents

為績卓著名揚航太 雄才得展惠我科工

Time flies, it will soon be over six months since Dr. Kao left us! From Chinese school to CESASC, and from acquaintance to jointly organizing technology events, the deep friendship between Wei and us has already surpassed forty years in a flash.

As a distinguished leader in the aerospace industry, Dr. Kao joined the Chinese-American Engineers and Scientists Association of Southern California (CESASC) in mid-1980s. Since then, he has devoted himself to enhancing the Association's youth programs. In order to foster the youth's interest in research and develop their abilities in independent study, Dr. Kao organized the first *Youth Engineering and Science Project Contest* for students in Grades 7-12. Under his guidance, the contest was highly acclaimed by both students and the community.

Since joining CESASC, Dr. Kao has also observed the rapid growth of aerospace and other industries in Southern California. Wei's broad vision and keen observation skills enabled him to quickly stand out in CESASC. Under his outstanding leadership, Dr. Kao chaired the *1987 Technical Conference and Industrial Exhibition*. With over 800 attendees and over 30 companies sponsoring exhibition booths, this Technical Conference held on March 21, 1987, marked a breakthrough and dramatic expansion of the scope and depth of CESASC's technical programs in many aspects. In addition to US speakers, the technical sessions featured speakers from Taiwan, China, and Hong Kong, all holding active high-ranking Science & Technology positions. In 1989, he was elected to President of CESASC In recognition of his exemplary contributions, Dr. Kao was honored with the *CESASC 1988 Service Award*.

In 2012, which was the 50th Anniversary Gala of CESASC, preparations began two years in advance. In 2009, Dr. Kao, who was serving as the Chairman of the Board at the time, provided special guidance in establishing the Honorary Advisory Committee, several ad hoc committees, and working groups. Sincere thanks to Dr. Kao's foresight, CESASC's 50th Anniversary Celebration was very well planned and further concluded in a thorough and successful manner.

After retiring, Dr. Kao moved to Temple City shortly thereafter. Apart from enjoying the pleasures of life with his grandsons, he continued to serve on the CESASC Advisory Board, drawing upon his rich knowledge for many years.

We would like to express our sincere sympathy to Marina, Brian, and their family for the loss of Wei, a role model for all of us. As a longtime CESASC leader, Dr. Kao will be remembered for his leadership, enthusiasm, and love of family, friends, and community. May his family find comfort in the cherished memories and strength in the companionship of good friends.



CESASC President 1989



Dr. Wei Kao and Dr. Chih-Ming Ho at an aviation industry conference.



Transition of the gavel between the Presidents of 2009 and 2010.



An Interview with a reporter from the World Journal.



At a Christmas meeting with CESASC board members.

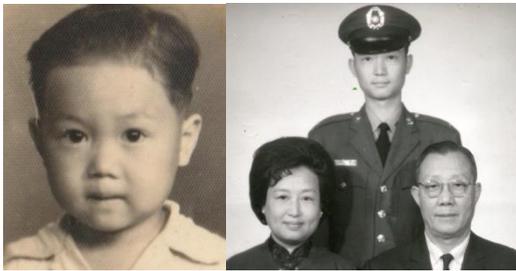


Wei with his son Brian

## In Loving Memory of Dr. Wei Hsiung Kao (高為雄)

*By Brian Y Kao, son of Wei Kao*

In remembrance of my dad Dr. Wei H. Kao, I would like to celebrate the life of my hero. My dad was a remarkable man and lived an amazing life. He strived for a life of excellence, both professionally and personally. Wei H Kao was a natural leader, with a strong moral compass and innate ability to influence. Family and friends remember him for how nurturing and caring he was, but also how he was always young at heart. CESASC was an important outlet for my dad to exhibit these qualities. He was proud to have been your leader, peer, and friend. My family and I are thankful to share this remembrance of my dad with CESASC.



Wei was born on 9/2/1944 in Sichuan, China. His father was a General for the KMT during the Communist Revolution, which resulted in them relocating to Taiwan when he was 5 years old. He attended Taiwan College and also served in the ROC Army. Growing up, Wei was nick named “smiling tiger” by family. This was due to his likeable nature, combined with his drive to achieve. Wei never forgot his roots, as he was extremely proud of

both his Chinese and Taiwanese heritage. His heritage was a big influence in his career interests throughout his career.

After graduating from Taiwan College, Wei moved to the US for graduate studies at Notre Dame and Michigan State. He would meet my mother Marina while attending Michigan State. They would marry in 1973, and together strive to build a better life in the US.



After completing his PHD at Michigan State, he worked at several companies in the mid-west, including Good Year. In 1980 they would move to San Diego, where Wei found a job at General Dynamics. This is also when his first and only son was born, Brian.

In 1981 Wei began working at the Aerospace Corporation in Los Angeles, where he would spend 25+ years. He also moved his family to Rancho Palos Verdes, where he and his family spent over 30+ years enjoying suburban life. As the Director of Material Science at the Aerospace Corporation, he led a sizable team of PHDs, Rocket Scientists, and Technicians. He has numerous patents filed and worked on numerous classified programs for the Government. He also led advanced research programs funded by State and National Agencies (Air Force Space Command,

Navy, Army, DoD and NASA to name a few). Apart from his day job, Wei also found time to be a Professor at Cal State University and President of a semi-conductor startup. In all his roles, Wei always moved up to become a leader, Manager, and/or Director. This was notable given the discrimination that he and other Chinese Engineer's faced during that time. Like many of his fellow immigrant CESASC members, I am proud that my dad made meaningful contributions to society.



My dad had a strong moral compass and sincerely enjoyed helping others. This drove his work as a crime investigation specialist designated by the National Law Enforcement Technology Center for the Department of Justice. His expertise was called upon various times to be an expert witness for high profile criminal cases. His expert testimony helped put away a prominent Intel Executive for murdering his wife. He also helped families get reparations by proving that the infamous Los Angeles Downtown Toy Factory Fire was based on negligence. He's also travelled the world giving lectures. Notably, he gave a keynote speech in Washington D.C. to thousands of FBI, Air Force, and Fireman about his work in material science. He also was the Chairman of the annual Manufacturing Problem Prevention Conference (MP3) sponsored by US Air Force Space Command for over a decade.



Retiring from Aerospace, he took on a role at the UCLA Institute of Technology Advancement in 2007. The role brought him great joy and pride during the twilight of his career. In 2012 he was a founding member of the UCLA Institute for Technology Advancement of the UCLA School of Engineering in Suzhou China. As the Deputy Director, he obtained millions in funding and conducted research. During his time at UCLA, Wei also became a grandpa for the first time in 2009.

Wei's two grandsons, Kyle and Anderson, were born in 2009 and 2011 respectively. This was perhaps his proudest moment, and what brought him the most happiness over the years. He was an amazing grandpa, spending any time he could to enrich their lives with fun, learning, and unconditional love. In 2016 he and Marina moved to Temple City, to be close to his grandsons in Arcadia. He spent his final years striving for excellence, but this time it involved being the best grandpa he could be. My kids love and miss their grandpa so much, and we are glad that we were able to spend some the precious and formidable years with him.



Thank you CESASC for being such an important part of my dad's life. It is an honor for our family to establish the **Wei Kao Scholarship Fund for future STEM students.**

## In Loving Memory of 1989 CESASC President - Dr. Wei Kao (高為雄)

September 2, 1945 – November 2, 2023

高为雄老友仙逝，非常疼惜！1987年我们南加州中华科工学会 25周年年会中请他担任全日科技研讨会，首次把两岸三地科工界精英请到洛城，盛况空前。记得在洛城威西登大酒店宴会时席开一百桌！Cathy Kuan 主持下，两岸领事及科工大员正式出场，加上华裔在美三军中将领多人，开中/美/台三地千人交流之先河，高为雄博士热心筹划，功在史册！

Shui-Lin Chao (趙瑞麟/1986 CESASC President)

Dr. Wei Kao was a visionary leader whose presence among us was a beacon of inspiration, propelling us to new heights and pushing the boundaries of innovation. He possessed a rare gift for seeing beyond the horizon and envisioning futures that others could only dare to imagine. As a mentor, guide, and unwavering source of support, he left an indelible mark on all who had the privilege of walking alongside him. His legacy will endure as we continue to push the boundaries of what is possible, striving to build a brighter future for generations to come.



Jenn-Ming Yang (1987 CESASC SF Board Member)

Dr. Wei Kao at CESASC's first Youth Project Contest (1986)

Since 1987, Dr. Wei Kao served CESASC as President, Chairman of Board, and played his outstanding leadership role in many major programs in CESASC history. Wei was one of the initiators helping CESASC launching outreaching program for Pacific Rim countries and started a first mini program for scientific and technical exchanges between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. It was turned out very successful, even with financial difficulties during world economic recession era.

Wei with 1992 Convention committee, also spared no effort to invite the George Brown, Chairman of the Defense and Weapons System Committee of the US House of Congress, to attend the CESASC Annual Convention. He also worked very hard and quietly to support many CESASC's special projects and made great contribution and consistency, in many other areas, and led the CESASC in fulfilling its historical tasks which was making CESASC highly recognized by the United States and the international community.

After Wei and I both retired, almost last two decades, we always met and chatted each other on the phone, we talked about politics, we shared the health prevention information, hanging out for enjoying good food, shared to watching Chinese classic videos and socialized in continuously to support CESASC activities together over the past decades. Wei was such a gentleman that he always with a sense of humor. He was a loving, caring and dedicated husband, father and grandfather in family. He was always understanding, generous, kind and loyal to his friends.

Wei! May You Rest in Peace. We all miss you.

Edward Liu (劉漢忠/1990 CESASC President)

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I am truly saddened to hear about Dr. Wei Kao's passing. I met Wei in the 1980's when I started my involvement in CESASC activities. Wei distinguished himself as a dedicated and capable member of CESASC. Although he was a few years younger than I, his seniority and rich experiences in CESASC activities made him one of my mentors in carrying out my duties as CESASC officers. Wei was an innovative and seasoned research leader at The Aerospace Corporation where I worked. He led a department in the Aerospace Laboratory for many years and had significant contributions in his field of expertise. I am proud of his achievements both at Aerospace and CESASC.

George Chao (趙家鈞/1992 CESASC President)

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Dr. Wei Kao's presidency at CESASC demonstrated exceptional leadership marked by visionary strategies and unwavering commitment. His influence was pivotal in establishing elevated standards for technical conferences, fostering innovation, and encouraging collaboration within the community.

Serving as a mentor and role model, Dr. Kao generously shared knowledge, guided numerous young engineers and scientists, instilling values of excellence, integrity, and perseverance in the new generation. Many CESASC members and friends have benefited from his wisdom and kindness, and his legacy will remain a lasting source of inspiration. Dr. Kao's absence will be deeply felt, but his spirit will endure in the ongoing pursuit of excellence within CESASC.

Chun-I P. Chen (陳君儀/1995 CESASC Secretary)

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悼 高为雄兄：

同岁与君成大人，君学矿冶我机电，  
共办科工研讨会，同来洛邑谋发展，  
年相等若道相似，君逝亦同我终年，  
致哀同悼兄与弟，也共天堂共世间！

John Chen (陳治宏/1996 CESASC Vice President)

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Dr. Wei Kao at 1990 CESASC  
Annual Convention

It was a shock to us to hear of Dr. Kao's unexpected passing. Suellen and I extend our deepest condolences to Marina and the family.

As I reflected upon it, Wei and I had known each other easily more than 40 years. We were colleagues at the Aerospace Corporation in Laboratory Operations, first as acquaintances and then as friends. In the earliest days there were few Chinese Americans in the corporation, and fewer in management. He was head of a department on materials for over two decades, successfully leading a large elite group of scientists with Ph.D.'s and advanced degrees. He was one of the industry's authorities in his specialty areas, and so the corporation deployed him as a leading expert and problem solver, particularly in times of crisis or engineering failure. After retirement, he continued researching at UCLA and other institutions.

Some years ago, a group of us finally convinced him to bring to CESASC his talents and vision and he stayed with us ever since, giving of his volunteer time to serve as President, then three times as Chair, continuing to help guide our organization and shape its current goals and activities. I'll miss him.

Munson and Suellen Kwok (郭民生/1998 CESASC President) and 鄭舒蘭

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We are deeply saddened to have lost a dear friend, Dr. Wei Kao.

Wei is truly passionate - 超熱心腸 and 做事義無反顧.

孔老夫子的益者三友，友直，友諒，友多聞。為雄兄兼有之。

Wei is forever in our memory.

Yu-Chong (戴聿昌/1999 CESASC Achievement Award Recipient) and Judy Tai

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Dr. Wei Kao has been a wise mentor, a caring friend, a sharp scientist and engineer, a close colleague, and most importantly, he was a true gentleman and had been a long-time faithful CESASC leader and contributor.

It is very hard to accept the fact that Dr. Wei Kao left us and CESASC friends forever. Wei had all traditional Chinese virtues and he was an almost perfect gentleman from west point of view. Wei loved his family so much and was always very proud of them. He cared for his grandkids so much that I still remember that he said that he would like to take them to China and let them learn Chinese, it was a great regret that it would not happen anymore.

Dr. Wei Kao was always very wise and worked diligently. He was my role model while I served as the President of CESASC in 2009, and Wei was the Chairman of the Board. Wei was always very caring, considerate and he was always there ready to offer help instead of taking credits. Dr. Wei has been very talented in many aspects, and had been very energetic.

Wei left us and this world too early and too rushed, but he will be deeply missed by his family, friends, colleagues, and CESASC communities and many more whom he helped and inspired.

Wensheng Zhou (周文生/2009 CESASC President) and 馮文飛

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Dr. Wei Kao was a prominent figure and one of our most esteemed members of CESASC. He is a beloved mentor and friend to myself and many within our community. His wisdom, generosity, and unwavering support enriched the lives of all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Dr. Wei Kao is one of the main pillars for CESASC organization and its development. He served as President 35 years ago in 1989, and continued his contribution since, served as Board Chairman THREE times (1991, 1999, and 2009) when CESASC needs his leadership. He exemplified the values of CESASC through his commitment to excellence and his dedication to mentorship. His legacy will be missed and remembered.

Jason Wen (溫俊山/2011 CESASC President)

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I got to know Dr. Wei Kao in my early days of involvement with CESASC, and he became my respected mentor and role model who nurtured me greatly and constantly during my presidency in 2012-2013. Dr. Kao is a true gentleman with a kind and caring heart, and was always a source of support and guidance, especially during challenging times. Our friendship transcended my tenure at CESASC, evolving into a lasting friendship that I cherished deeply. Dr. Kao's legacy as a compassionate gentleman and a visionary leader will endure. May Dr. Kao Rest In Peace, his spirit forever remembered and honored.

Yutao He (何宇滔/2012 CESASC President)

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I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Wei Kao shortly after joining CESASC in March 1987. Throughout my tenure as vice president and president of CESASC, Dr. Kao offered me invaluable advice and unwavering encouragement. His readiness to assist or support whenever needed left a lasting impression on me. His warm smile and kind demeanor were truly remarkable. Dr. Kao's dedication to serving our community remains a source of inspiration for me, and he will be dearly missed.

Liping Yan (顏利平/2013 CESASC President)

Dr. Kao was a renowned aerospace leader, and a dedicated educator. He was passionate about his work and touched the lives of many students and colleagues over the years. He was also a kind and caring person, and he will be deeply missed by all who knew him. Please accept my sincere condolences on your loss.

Dankai Liu (劉登凱/2014 CESASC President)

Dr. Wei Kao is not only an outstanding scholar and professional, but also a true gentleman. His demeanor reflects in his professional life and impacts other people around him. Dr. Kao has been very generous to me. I was fortunate enough to be invited to UCLA/Suzhou Institute for a visit under his oversight. His support to CESASC will always transmit to all of us in CESASC family. Wish Dr. Wei Kao rest in peace.

Yue Rong (容躍/2015 CESASC President)

Dr. Wei Kao was one of the role models in our CESASC community. He will be fondly remembered.

Dongmei Huang (黃冬梅/2017 CESASC President)

Dr. Wei Kao was a true gentleman, visionary leader and mentor to many of us. His legacy will continue to inspire and guide us in our personal and professional lives.

Hui Su (蘇慧/2018 CESASC President)

My deepest condolences go to Dr. Wei Kao's family. May Dr. Kao rest in peace. While we are mourning the loss of you, others are rejoicing to meet you at the gates of Heaven.

Bruce Liu (劉玉發/2021 CESASC President)

My deepest condolences go to Dr. Wei Kao's family. I had the honor to work with him when preparing for the annual convention in 2023, and it's amazing to see his grandkids, Kyle and Anderson Kao, winning the CESASC STEAM Essay Competition that year. His legacy will carry on with CESASC forever!

Chenxi Guo (郭辰曦/2022 CESASC President)



Dr. Kao at 2023 Lantern Festival CESASC Gathering



Wei's grandkids, Kyle and Anderson Kao won 2023 CESASC STEAM Essay Competition