

Obituary: Prof. Hsai-Yang Fang

Biography

Prof. Fang was born November 25 1926 in Fenghua, China. He graduated from the National Taiwan University and went to the United States in 1952. He obtained a Master's degree in Engineering at Purdue University. While at Purdue, he met Julia Sun, a graduate student at Loyola University Chicago. They married in 1960. Prof. Fang went on to complete a PhD in Civil Engineering at West Virginia University and a postdoctoral fellowship at Princeton University. In 1966, he began a long career at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania where he taught and researched for more than 40 years in fields ranging from geoenvironmental engineering to structural foundations. After retirement at Lehigh, he went on to become a Distinguished Fellow at the Global Institute for Energy and Environmental Systems at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Prof. Fang has authored over 200 papers and 11 books including the Foundation Engineering Handbook, a staple textbook for undergraduate and graduate engineering students.

Prof. Fang was a pioneer in the study of the environmental effects on foundation structures and soils, a knowledge sector which he named 'Environmental Geotechnology'. Throughout his career, Prof. Fang sponsored numerous conferences around the world to introduce the concept of Environmental Geotechnology to structural foundation designers and advance the science around how environmental factors such as earthquakes, landslides, and permafrost can greatly influence the stability of structures built into the soil. He also did original research work in various areas of physico-chemical interactions in soils and mixed original treatment with practical considerations.

Prof. Fang was widely recognized for his work in many countries and was the first geotechnical engineer to be invited by the United States Department of State to visit China following the Mao-Nixon talks in 1972. He was also invited by the Chinese Government in the 1980s to organize the First Offshore Technology Conference in Shanghai. In the late 1990s, Prof. Fang co-founded the International Society for Environmental Geotechnology (ISEG) with Prof. Hilary I. Inyang (his long-term collaborator) at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, USA. Until his death, Prof. Fang continued to serve as the Honorary Patron of ISEG, an organization that derived from a merger of a non-profit professional group that he created in 1992 with another group that was founded by Prof. H. I. Inyang in Massachusetts. ISEG as an organization has helped in advancement of geoenvironmental policies, science and technology in many parts of the world through the major contributions that were made by Prof. H-Y. Fang.



Prof. Hsai-Yang Fang 1926–2022

The death of Prof. Fang is a major loss for the community of environmental geotechnology. We will inherit Prof. Fang's legacy and continuously promote the development of environmental geotechnology!

Secretariat of International Society of Environmental Geotechnology
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