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We miss you, we are all FFF--Mourns from the Chinese orthopaedic sports medicine community

On September 24, 2021, Dr. Freddie Fu Ho-Keung, the David Silver Professor and Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine (UPMC) died at the age of 70. He was a giant in orthopaedics, a leader, a mentor, and friend forever in the Chinese-speaking sports medicine society.

Around the world, one identity unites all who knew him. That is FFF - Friends of Freddie Fu. In countless ways, thousands of orthopedic sports medicine doctors in the world received mentoring, enlightenment, support, and encouragement from Dr. Fu. FFF will mourn his sudden departure during this dark time, we will forever remember his medical achievements and we send our sincerest condolences to his family.

Dr. Freddie Fu was a passionate and energetic doctor and his creativity and empathy are unsurpassable. He went from Hong Kong to the USA to become a master in his field, fulfilled his dream, and made the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at UPMC into a world-class center for sports medicine, saving the careers of many world-renowned athletes.

Dr. Fu has been honored with countless professional awards and honors. He served as the President of International Society of Arthroscopy, Knee Surgery and Orthopaedic Sports Medicine (ISAKOS) and American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM), titled with the Distinguished Service Professor of the University of Pittsburgh, received the Kappa Delta Elizabeth Winston Lanier Award by the Kappa Delta Sorority and the Orthopaedic Research and Education Foundation (OREF) at American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), and he was inducted into the AOSSM Hall of Fame. He won respect and love of everyone with his knowledge, integrity, and perseverance. Because of him, the confidence in the Chinese has been enhanced within the international medical community.

Dr. Freddie Fu was also a dedicated medical scientist. He devoted his life to advance the diagnosis and treatment techniques of sports-related injuries; explored the knowledge in biomechanics research, basic science, and clinical studies[1, 2]. He contributed to groundbreaking work and led initiatives for the development of enhanced orthopaedic sports medicine around the world. He particularly highlighted the importance of Return to Play as a key outcome index of a successful ACL surgery [3–5]. Dr. Fu is an eternal icon and legend in the science of ACL injury and recovery[5].

Dr. Fu was an important anchor and cornerstone as a representative of the ethnic Chinese community, who made tremendous contributions to help the Chinese sports medicine community to excel globally.

He trained many fellows from China. Dr. Shiyi Chen, the current chairman of the Chinese Society of Sports Medicine was his first Chinese fellow. He trained many more leading experts, including: Dr. Patrick S.H. Yung, the professor and chairman of the Department Orthopaedics and Traumatology of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK); Dr. Hua

Feng, the late Chief of the Sports Medicine Service at Beijing Jishuitan Hospital; and Dr. Hung-maan Lee, the Counselor General of Hualien, Tzu Chi Medical Center and honorary president of the Taiwan Sports Medicine Association. He visited China very often over the past 20 years, for teaching, mentoring, and nurturing young Chinese scholars to present and perform in various international platforms and sincerely encouraged the growth and progress of young doctors.

With his great passion and enthusiasm for the orthopaedic field, he improved the academic level of Chinese sports medicine and strengthened the connections between Chinese doctors and the rest of the world. With the combined efforts from him and other local doctors, Chinese doctors have obtained many learning opportunities to excel and shine on the international academic platform and allow the world to see the Chinese talents. In addition, he introduced ISAKOS, an international society of Sports Medicine, into China and paid an extremely important role in the tremendous success of the ISAKOS Biennial Congress in Shanghai in 2017.

Dr. Freddie Fu was also a wise man of life. As we grieve, we also remember his passion for life, sports, arts, and food, his love for his wife and family, his humility, enthusiasm, compassion to his patients, and friendship toward his friends, students, and colleagues.

We are honored and pride ourselves in the identity of FFF, because Dr. Freddie Fu was and will always be our friend. He was a noble man, but affable. He set the bar high for his colleagues in academic work, but he was never rude or harsh. He always did his best to support his students. He revised the slides for the conferences with his fellows and he took the time to instruct young doctors on their research papers. Dr. Fu was also like a father taking care of the fellows from China. He treated the fellows to different Chinese restaurants in Pittsburgh, invited Chinese fellows to the Chinese New Year banquet, and picked the fellows up from the workplace during the snowy weather in cold winter. Every Chinese fellow will also remember the thrilling moment during the ACL meeting, the sweet moment when sharing the special noodle, and the exciting moment when watching football and basketball with him. Even when these Chinese fellows returned to China, his care and attention did not stop. Once, when he knew one of his fellows had received an operation for visual correction, he immediately called this fellow in between his busy operation with video chat. He spared no effort to assist fellows to return home to visit relatives during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also advised and guided the Chinese students on their research papers without reservation. What he showed us were his sincerity to work, generosity to people, and humanity to life.

Dr. Freddie Fu was a mentor, a friend, and a brother of our Chinese sports medicine world. He enlightened us with his wisdom, enthusiasm, and faith. Autumn comes gradually, and the drizzle never stops. The first

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fallen leaf in Pittsburgh fell quietly when Dr. Fu passed away suddenly. He was like a hero standing in the middle of the stage, finishing the curtain call in glory. We will miss him and his glorious demeanor.

May Dr. Freddie Fu, the international mentor, guide, and sincerest friend of Chinese orthopedic sports medicine, rest in peace. In our hearts, you will live forever.



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