



## Editorial

## Dedicated to the Late Professor Jae-Duk Lew

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Our eternal teacher and the founder of plastic surgery in Korea, it seems like our hearts are falling apart when you leave us so suddenly, even though it's a road everyone has to go someday. It seems that the ground on which we should stand on is nowhere to find.

Sir, you brought up disciples as many as stars through your great teaching, and made monumental progress in the medical field with your vast achievements. We felt strengthened and encouraged just knowing that you were with us on this land.

Sending our eternal teacher Professor Jae Duk Lew to God's side now, we write this letter coping with the emptiness in our hearts.

After graduating from Yonsei University School of Medicine in 1954, Professor Lew moved to the United States and majored in plastic surgery at Allentown Hospital, and obtained the American Board in Plastic Surgery.

Then, he returned to Korea in 1961 to introduce plastic surgery in his home country which was still like a barren land in the field, and to provide specialized surgical care to many patients. It was the beginning for Yonsei University's plastic surgery and also for the history of plastic surgery in Korea.

Even today, August 31, 1961, the day he started performing plastic surgery, is designated as the anniversary of the plastic surgery department, and academic conferences and commemorative events are held in commemoration.

After that, with undying passion, he founded the Korean Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons in 1966, and then the Journal of KSPRS.

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Prof. Jae-Duk Lew

After overcoming all the strict conditions and regulations, the “Plastic Surgery” was recognized as one of specialized medical field, and in 1974, the first Plastic Surgery Board Examination was conducted, recognizing the first 20 plastic surgeons on this land.

We are well aware that all these achievements in the early days would not had been possible without the passion of him who ran with his own hands and feet.

In 1993, the Asia-Pacific International Plastic Surgery Conference was hosted in Seoul, and it was successfully held under the direction of Professor Lew, who was the chairperson of bidding and organizing committees. Since then, numerous international plastic surgery or related academic conferences have been held in Korea. The number of board-certified plastic surgeons in Korea increased year by year and now exceeds 3,000 in number.

There are more than 300 domestic and foreign disciples he has taught directly at Yonsei University Medical Center, and if you combine the 2nd and 3rd generations of those disciples, innumerable number of disciples are working day and night for the patient care and development of plastic surgery. Again, it was an achievement that could not have been made without his passions.

He also has contributed greatly to the development of Yonsei University Medical Center by serving as the president of Severance Hospital, as well as participating in many external academic activities.

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In any treatment room, operating room, or conference room, he was strict, but always taught clearly and gave specific instructions.

When he was doing an operation, we could not take our eyes off his fingertips as we could not miss even a moment of his perfect skills, in designing, incising, and suturing without wasting a single drop of blood.

In cooperation with the Korean Red Cross, he traveled all over the country to treat patients with congenital anomalies, especially those with cleft lip and palate, and performed free surgeries for them.

In recognition of this great contribution, he received the Camellia Medal from the government, along with a commendation and a mobile operating vehicle as a supplementary prize from the president at the time.

He always lived a simple and modest life. After work, he always treated his students and junior surgeons with a warm heart. Even now, his wonderful and exotic songs, in particular "Silla's Moonlit Night" seems to be ringing in our ears.

He always taught us, "You be a very specialized doctor in one field, not a doctor who gives medicine for money, but a

doctor who is gracious to patients in any case, a doctor who loves colleagues and respects each other first, and be a doctor not lazy but only diligent. (*Ask the Elders for the Path of Korean Medicine*. History Space; 2021. p245~6, Romans 12:10~11)

He was a true prophet, pioneer, medical scientist, our eternal teacher, and father of this time. He was a great leader we all looked up to.

We feel like we've lost the warm sunlight that brightly illuminates us, feeling really empty as we let our teacher go.

However, it seems that he encourages us and tells us always to be humble, be kind to each other, and work hard with a heart of service for the patients and academic societies.

Dear Sir, we will continue to walk the path you have taught us, keeping in mind your brotherly love, love for our neighbor, your philanthropic spirit, prophetic spirit, and unquenchable passion.

Now please leave the work on this earth to us, and rest in peace under the silver wings of the Lord until the day the Lord comes again.