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Journey with Ting-Peng Liang in Pacific Asia Information Systems Field

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Introduction



Our respectful old friend **Professor Ting-Peng Liang** (in short, TP) whom we loved suddenly passed away on May 20, 2021. But we cannot forget his smile and passion, and his inerascable footprints in PACIS, PAJAIS, and AIS Community. He was the founder of PACIS, founding editor-in-chief of PAJAIS, and past president of AIS to list just a few. He was the pioneer who received the first AIS Fellow and the first LEO Award from Asia Pacific. That is why the leaders of the information systems field organized the first ever special tribute session in PACIS 2021 in memory of TP (<https://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis2021/253/>).

TP was also a man of compassion who always loved and helped the next generation of young scholars. That is why the PACIS Executive Committee and AIS Council established a new award of **Ting-Peng Liang PACIS Young Scholar Award** after his name. Remembering his life is in some sense reviewing the history of the Information Systems field, particularly for Pacific Asia region.

Seventeen coauthors have offered their heartfelt contributions to this article because each of them can recall different aspects of TP's life and contributions. To organize their statements in a single thread avoiding overlaps, Jae Kyu Lee (as "I") narrates the stories and statements given by coauthors. The common words were "We love you. We respect you. And we miss you and cannot forget your smile."

TP's Birth and Family

To begin, we start with TP's birth and youth recalled by his family. TP's second son David Liang wrote the draft.

TP was born on March 23rd, 1952. He was the eldest of three with a younger brother and sister. His father was a military man and his mother was a housewife. While he grew up, his family struggled financially, as did most of his generation. He could not afford to buy books for extracurricular readings, thus he sometimes read the outdated newspapers found on the street side again and again.

After TP graduated from elementary school, he entered into National Feng-Shan Junior High School and then later, Kaohsiung Senior High School. Besides gaining knowledge and wisdom from school work, he also developed his hobbies of playing Go and table tennis, both of which he carried for the rest of his life. Upon graduating from high school, he studied Chemical Engineering at the National Cheng Kung University. Afterward he served in the military as a platoon leader for two years.

TP's first job was at a chemical company. He worked there for three years in research and development. During this time, he leveraged his chemical engineering expertise to start a family-operated chemical factory mainly producing and selling dish detergent products. The experience in this venture fueled his interest to study business administration. Although this side hustle proved quite successful, he sold the business to focus on his master's study in business administration.

TP got married with Jenny Wang at age of 27. His first son, Nigel, was born in 1982 who works now as software engineer in Kirkland, Washington. The second son (David) born in 1987 now works as IT product manager in Irvine, California. They inherited the IT culture from TP.

David Liang made a video of his father's moving story, and posted it at <https://www.forevermissed.com/tpliang/about>. He also organized pictures of TP' at <https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=1GEadn3CXIOq1qneYVFum3MajLKMIC5Nm>.

Ph.D. Study in the Information Systems Field

When TP was studying for his MBA degree at the National Sun Yat-sen University in 1980, his professors and peers encouraged him to pursue Ph.D. study. He was admitted to the prestigious Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, U.S.A. His lifelong journey in Information Systems field started there.

I saw the smile of TP for the first time at the campus of the Wharton School in 1982. He joined the Ph.D. cohort at the Department of Decision Sciences (which was renamed as Operations and Information Management) one year after me. He was the first Chinese doctoral candidate. At that time, personal computers emerged, and Steve Jobs made the Apple Mac, and Bill Gates had started his Microsoft MS-DOS business. We became classmates while struggling and laughing together for the study and research of IT-empowered better decision making. We were excited about developing Decision Support Systems using mathematical models and Artificial Intelligence for efficient business operations.

TP as Professor in Taiwan

After his graduation, TP served as professor for Purdue University and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Although he was very successful in his career in the U.S.A., he determined to join the National Sun Yat-sen University (NSYSU) in Kaohsiung, Taiwan because he loved his hometown and Asia. At that time, the research activities of Information Systems were mainly centered in the U.S.A. and Europe, while it was just emerging in Asia. In the meantime, I joined the professor position at Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), and we met again as colleagues in Asia. TP's professorial life in Taiwan was described by Chih-Ping Wei (Professor of National Taiwan University who chaired PACIS 2010) as TP's former colleague at NSYSU.

Professorship at National Sun Yat-sen University

After TP received his Ph.D. from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in 1986, TP joined the University of Illinois as an assistant professor (1986-1990) and then Purdue University (1990-1993) as an associate professor. In 1991-1992, TP took leave from Purdue University and returned to his alma mater, NSYSU, as a visiting professor at Department of Information Management. TP officially joined NSYSU in 1993 and served for around 30 years until he retired in January 2021. He supervised many doctoral students including the first one, Professor Shin-Yuan Hung who is now the provost of National Chung Cheng University and served as Chair of PACIS 2016.

During his professorship at NSYSU, TP extended his research network, explored novel research areas, and sought for potential research collaborators. TP also held visiting appointments at various universities, including Chinese University of Hong Kong (2002-2006) and City University of Hong Kong (2009-2011). In 2012, National Chengchi University (NCCU) established a neuroscience imaging center, sponsored by National Science Council (NSC), now called Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), Taiwan. To explore neuro-IS research, TP held a joint appointment position at NCCU as a chair professor between 2012-2015. Through this endeavor, TP was a pioneer in neuro-IS research area, delivering several keynote speeches in reputable international conferences/workshops and guest-editing a

special issue in a leading IS journal such as *Journal of Management Information Systems* in 2014. Patrick Chau recalled:

“After reading the call for papers, I contacted TP and asked his expectations on the level and quality of the ‘neuro’ part of the IS study as while I was interested in this new field, but I knew little about neuroscience. He replied to me that we should try our best and a focus on neuroscience could be used in IS studies rather than the technical details and requirements of the neuroscience part. He emphasized to me that NeuroIS was something very new to our discipline. We should be inclusive and accept non-critical methodological deficiencies of NeuroIS studies at this stage. Otherwise, there’s no way for this field (i.e., NeuroIS) to grow and to learn from other disciplines (he meant neuroscience). I admired his vision.”

Academic Awards

Owing to his outstanding academic performance and strong academic reputation and leadership, TP received many awards from his university, Taiwan government, and AIS. For instance, TP had been appointed a chair professor of NSYSU since 2001. He also received the Outstanding Research Awards three times from NSC, Taiwan in 1994, 1996, and 1998, respectively. Following these three awards, TP was appointed as a research fellow by NSC during 2000-2006 and received the Distinguished Research Fellow Award from NSC in 2006. In addition, TP also received the Academic Award in 2006 and National Chair Professorship twice (in 2003 and 2008, respectively) from the Ministry of Education, Taiwan. Since 2008, TP held the Life-time National Chair Professorship by the Ministry of Education.

In terms of international recognitions TP was named an AIS Fellow in 2003. In 2014, he was honored with the AIS LEO Award for lifetime achievement in the IS discipline. TP was the first scholar from the Pacific Asia to receive these two recognitions from AIS.

Service Contributions to NSYSU

When TP was a visiting professor at NSYSU in 1991, he also served as the director of Graduate Institute of Information Management at NSYSU, aiming to link the graduate program of the Institute to the international IS community. Subsequently, TP assumed many administrative roles at NSYSU such as the Dean of College of Management twice for (1994-1997) and (2006-2009). He was the founding Director of Graduate Institute of Communications Management during 1997-1999 and the first director of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Incubation Center (1997-1999).

During 1999-2002, TP served as the Provost of NSYSU. In 1999, TP established the Electronic Commerce Research Center (ECRC) at NSYSU and served as the director thereafter. Since 2005, under the auspices of “Aim for Top University Program” and “Higher Education Sprout Project” of the Ministry of Education, Taiwan, ECRC has become a premier research center on EC research in Taiwan and has also served as an influential hub connecting the IS community in Taiwan and international IS scholars. TP and I coauthored the best-selling book with Efraim Turban on “Electronic Commerce: A Managerial Perspective (Elsevier; Now the 9th Edition in 2018 by Springer),” which was updated bi-annually.

Taiwan Workshop on Information Management

In 2013, TP initiated the *Taiwan Summer Workshop on Information Management* (TSWIM) to cultivate junior faculty and doctoral students in Taiwan. Each year, TSWIM invited several renowned international IS researchers, many of whom were editors-in-chief or senior editors of top-tier IS journals. They delivered keynote/invited speeches or advised students’ paper

presentations. Now, TSWIM has become a major platform for Taiwanese scholars and doctoral students to broaden their research vision and research networks.

Special Tribute of NSYSU in Memory of TP

The College of Management at NSYSU shared the same enthusiasm that TP had in promoting the neuroscience research in the management and information systems fields and established the “Dr. Ting-Peng Liang Memorial Laboratory for Neuroscience Decision and Management” in September 28, 2021, in memory of TP. Moreover, the College organized a memorial service on October 16, 2021 and also published a memorial book, which collected more than 100 memorial articles and hundreds of photos, contributed by TP’s family, local and international colleagues, students, and industrial friends. In the memorial service, the president of NSYSU, Dr. Cheng, gave the Distinguished Alumni Award to TP to recognize his extraordinary research achievement and his outstanding contributions to the university and the local and international IS communities.

To commemorate TP’s contribution to the department, Department of Information Management at NSYSU recently established “Dr. Ting-Peng Liang Memorial Award” to facilitate the recruitment of promising junior faculty or established tenured faculty. In addition, the Department of Information Management also established “Dr. Ting-Peng Liang Memorial Doctoral Scholarship” to attract quality students to join the doctoral program and encourage doctoral students to pursue for high-quality research. The funding for the memorial award and memorial doctoral scholarship comes from TP’s family, Department of Information Management, and donations from TP’s colleagues, international IS scholars, and Ph.D. graduates.

TP and Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems

TP was a founder and nurturing brother of PACIS. These stories are described by many colleagues who worked together with TP. Among them, Michael Myers (Past AIS President, Conference Chair of PACIS 2007, 2021, 2018 and ICIS 2014 at Auckland, New Zealand), Kwok Kee Wei (Past AIS President, Conference Chair of PACIS 2008, 2014, 2019), Choon Ling Sia (Assistant Vice President of PACIS Executive Committee, Program Chair, PACIS 2017), and Chih-Ping Wei (Program Chair of PACIS 2010). I have summarized their writings avoiding overlaps.

TP as Founder of PACIS

TP made enormous contributions to the IS discipline, bringing the mainstream IS research into Taiwan and the Pacific Asia region. A primary contribution in this regard is that he founded the *Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems* (PACIS) by hosting the inaugural meeting at Kaohsiung, Taiwan in 1993. The venue was the beautiful ocean-front campus of NSYSU, and the meeting was very successful owing to TP’s dedicated effort. Kwok Kee Wei, Patrick Chau and Jae Kyu Lee joined this meeting together without knowing what will be the future of PACIS. Since there were not many researchers and publications in the Pacific Asia region at that time, the conference was held every other year until 2000.

TP as Nurturing Brother of PACIS

Endless effort of nurturing the annual PACIS conferences was necessary to share the necessary experiences with new conference chairs who might not have sufficient experience of organizing international conferences. So TP, along with other pioneer leaders, would continually devote his time and energy to make PACIS more impactful and sustainable. For example, TP served as co-chair in several subsequent meetings to help the hosting chairs

including PACIS 2004 (Shanghai, China), PACIS 2010 (Taipei, Taiwan), and PACIS 2016 (Chiayi, Taiwan). He served, but he never sought to own PACIS nor was he self-aggrandizing at meetings. That was the spirit of founding members: help and cultivate new leaders, but do not dominate them.

The foresight of TP to establish a platform to enable cooperation and collaboration, and elevate the mutual understanding and goodwill both within, and outside the region was realized through PACIS. PACIS has played a critical role in fostering international collaboration of IS scholars not only in the Pacific Asia region, but also globally.

PACIS as AIS Region 3 Conference.

As PACIS became well established, PACIS and the Association for Information Systems (AIS) agreed to make PACIS a full-fledged AIS Region 3 Conference in 2015 after a long review and many discussions. At that time, AIS had only ICIS and AMCIS as its own conferences. TP and several pioneering leaders were instrumental in deepening this relationship. Since then, the PACIS Executive Committee is also named as the AIS Region 3 Board. Afterwards, the European Conference on Information Systems (ECIS) also joined AIS as a Region 2 Conference of AIS, and AIS came to have three regional conferences along with International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS) as its premier global conference.

Since TP chaired the ICIS 2011 meeting in Shanghai, held for the first time in Asia, the role of Region 3 escalated. Since then, ICIS came to be held in Region 3 every three years, and the AIS president also became elected from Region 3 every three years.

Due to Covid-19, PACIS has just had its second virtual conference of PACIS 2021 organized by the team from Dubai. Kathy Ning Shen (Conference Chair of PACIS 2020 and PACIS 2021) recalled that “TP was the key person to bring PACIS to the Middle East and expanded the impact of the conference and AIS to this region. We really appreciate his contribution.”

Going forward, the 26th PACIS in 2022 will again be fully virtual led by Ming-Hui Huang from Taipei with the original team mainly based in Sydney, followed by Nanchang in China (2023), Saigon in Vietnam (2024), and then Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia as the 29th PACIS (2025).

Tribute Session at PACIS 2021

The conference chairs of PACIS 2021, Doug Vogel and Kathy Ning Shen, generously arranged a remarkable tribute session in memory of TP Liang on July 14, 2021. The speakers commemorated TP and expressed their sorrow at TP's loss, but also with the delight that TP had Lived With Us. The contributed speakers who shared their heart were:

Jae Kyu Lee, Xi'an Jiaotong University and KAIST
 Doug Vogel, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin, China
 David Liang, Son of TP Liang
 Chih-Ping Wei, National Taiwan University
 Shin-Yuan Hung, National Chung Cheng University
 Brian Fitzgerald, University of Limerick
 Matthew Nelson, Illinois State University
 Choon Ling Sia, City University of Hong Kong and National Taiwan University
 Kwok-Kee Wei, Singapore Institute of Management
 Michael D. Myers, University of Auckland
 Keng Leng Siau, City University of Hong Kong
 Kathy Ning Shen, United Arab Emirates University
 James Jiang, National Taiwan University
 Guy G. Gable, Queensland University of Technology

The video recording of the session is posted permanently at AIS eLibrary (<https://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis2021/253/>).

TP and AIS

In addition to his endless services for PACIS, TP has contributed to the global community of AIS by serving as President of AIS. He also founded the Pacific Asia Journal of AIS, and nurtured the Chinese Chapters of AIS.

TP as AIS President

TP was elected as AIS President and served for the term July 2018 - June 2019. His actual service started as President-Elect and continued until the role of Immediate Past President ended. His service as a member of AIS Executive Committee and AIS Council member continued for three years. The AIS Executive Committee that is composed of President, Immediate Past President, and President-Elect, and Executive Director, meet every week handling all strategic matters that is necessary to make AIS move smoothly. The AIS council meets four times a year to make official decisions and holds meetings at ICIS and regional conference venues for two full days each. TP likewise served at these meetings.



Upon the loss of TP, AIS has announced “Sorrow of TP’s Demise” in the front web page of AIS for a long time, organized the Tribute Session at PACIS 2021, and approved the establishment of *TP Liang PACIS Young Scholar Award* after his name. I have never seen AIS shows such a respect to a particular person. This is the evidence of TP’s dedication to AIS and the high esteem with which he is regarded by the leaders of AIS and the IS community.

The current President of AIS Patrick Chau, Immediate Past President Brian Fitzgerald, and Associate Executive Director Matthew Nelson expressed their special thanks TP for all his services.

Patrick Chau recalled the moment he ran for AIS president as “TP was the one who first talked to me about why I should consider running for the role of the President of AIS. I vividly remembered that he said, ‘Patrick, you are already an established scholar in the field, and I am sure you have benefited a lot from AIS and the network built by and around AIS. It’s time for you to consider how to give back to the Association and the IS community.’ He was no doubt my role model.”



Brian Fitzgerald said, “TP paid all his effort to make AIS run. TP was a deep source of wisdom at our various meetings in dealing with the difficult and complex issues that arose. In addition to his massive contribution to Region 3, he contributed enormously to the AIS field globally. The fruits of his contribution will continue to emerge in years to come. A saying in Irish comes to mind: *Ní bheidh a leithéid arís ann* (We will not see his like again) which is apt in the case of TP.”

Matthew Nelson comprehensively recalled, “My fondest memories of TP will be his friendly smile, his leadership skills and his countless contributions to our community. Every area across the Association was improved with TP’s presence, leadership and efforts. He launched new journals, he created new conferences, he started new chapters, he added new member services and he built new global bridges based on intellectual pursuits and research streams. During his tenure as AIS President, successful conferences took place in Portsmouth, Yokohama, New Orleans and San Francisco. Membership levels in the Association grew to new high levels and he oversaw one of largest transformations in the AIS eLibrary’s functionality and services, including the addition of the journal *MISQE* into the eLibrary. I encourage everyone to read TP’s ‘Best Wishes for 2019 from AIS’ that he personally wrote at the start of 2019. It can be found here (<https://aisnet.org/news/news.asp?id=432570>). Thank you, TP for your dedication and contributions to our community.”

Doug Vogel (Past President of AIS and PACIS Conference Chair of 2020 and 2021) recalled long memory of TP with his smile.

“My first interactions with TP go back over 20 years. I fondly remember him for his ever-present smile and positive outlook that pervaded his time at the City University of Hong Kong. In seminars, the hallway and personal interactions, TP was always supportive. I especially remember our lunches where, at a table of 10, TP would engage in far ranging discussions with insight and contributions that impressed everyone present. He was also a master at table tennis which would occasionally follow the lunches where he demonstrated an athletic skill that few knew but many will remember. Having both been AIS past-presidents, our interactions continued until his untimely death. He continued to serve the global community in a dedicated and conscientious fashion and, still, with that ever-present smile. We will miss him dearly.”



Atreyi Kankanhalli (AIS Vice President of Region 3) recalls her work with TP in the AIS Council and PACIS Executive Committee.

“TP Liang was an inspiring member of the AIS Council when I joined the Council in July 2019. Although I had met him many times at PACIS and ICIS conferences, I got to know him more closely when I worked with him in the Council. At that time, he had just finished his term as AIS President. But as Immediate Past President, he was very active in the Council. He attended every Council meeting and offered great suggestions on all on-going initiatives. He has always been a wise and thoughtful leader – offering great suggestions on all matters of discussion. He will be sorely missed!”

TP as Founding Editor-in-Chief of PAJAIS

While TP was in Hong Kong with his visiting appointment at Chinese University of Hong Kong, he contacted Patrick Chau and Kar Yan Tam (currently Dean of the HKUST Business School) and discussed the possibility of establishing an IS journal in Asia and for Asia. It sowed the seeds of the birth of the journal, *Pacific Asia Journal of the Association for Information Systems (PAJAIS)*.

The PAJAIS was initiated in 2008 and TP served as the founding Editor-in-Chief. The PAJAIS is the only AIS-affiliated IS journal in the Asia Pacific Region. TP in his EIC editorial comment in 2008 stated that the mission of PAJAIS is to be a regional flagship IS journal for publishing the impactful and timely research on the Asia Pacific Region.

James Jiang (the current Editor-in-Chief of PAJAIS) could not recollect TP's efforts without weeping and tears.

"TP invited me as a Visiting Chair Professor at the National Sun Yat-sen University during my sabbatical period from 2007 to 2008. I had in-depth interaction with TP to learn that he was eager to establish a journal for Asia Pacific IS scholars to distribute their research findings.

When I succeeded the EIC role in 2018, in order to achieve this mission that I have inherited from TP, I have worked hard with the managing editor (Dr. Jacob Tsai) to smooth the peer-review process and transferred the legacy system to ScholarOne in 2019 to ensure timely publication. Owing to the assistance of TP, we published a series of editorials that set out the essential requirements in PAJAIS to help authors enhance the quality of submissions. With everyone's effort, PAJAIS has been indexed by important databases (AIS e-Library, EBSCO, ProQuest and DBLP) in 2020 and included in the reputable journal list (ABDC, CABS and ESCI). TP was happy to see this progress.

TP was very supportive to bridge the collaboration between PAJAIS and AIS conferences, especially PACIS. We continued this effort and collaborated with scholars on special issues focusing on the timely Asia Pacific issues. The diverse coverage of publication is an outcome of TP's endeavor to establish a platform that Asia Pacific IS scholars can distribute their works. PAJAIS is respectful of TP's legacy to IS scholars in the Asia Pacific region."

TP in AIS China Chapter and AIS Chinese Scholars Chapter

Very few of us know that AIS has both a China Chapter and Chinese Scholars Chapter.

TP was the founding President of the AIS Chinese Speaking Chapter (which is now called AIS Chinese Scholars Chapter).

Wayne Huang who served the President of AIS China Chapter said:

"More than 15 years ago, AIS council decided to increase awareness and membership in Asia Pacific, including in mainland China. Starting from 2007, I accompanied the Past-president of AIS, Professor Richard Watson, who visited China numerous times for the establishment of AIS China Chapter. Professor G. Davis' also visited Xi'an and Shanghai in 2007 also helped with setting up AIS China Chapter. One of the important and sensitive issues was the proper working connection and relationship between AIS China Chapter and AIS Chinese Speaking Chapter. TP was involved heavily to resolve this issue.

I have communicated with TP person-to-person a few times. I have been impressed by his open mind, a broad perspective of AIS as a whole, as well as the wisdom and experience of dealing with a tough and sensitive issue. With his leadership and support, the issue was resolved with a solution being accepted by the two parties involved. Eventually, AIS China Chapter was set up successfully, maintaining healthy and friendly working relationship with AIS Chinese Scholars Chapter."

The second President of AIS Chinese Scholars Chapter, Patrick Chau who is the current President of AIS recalled:

“After TP served as the founding President of the chapter for a couple of years, one day, he contacted me and asked me if I would be interested in being his successor. I told him that my Mandarin Chinese was poor and I was not qualified to be the President of this Chinese Speaking Chapter (as most Chinese IS scholars spoke Mandarin/Putonghua rather the Cantonese that Hong Kong people speak). He then said, ‘as long as you have a heart to serve the community, it doesn’t matter if you speak Chinese or English!’ I became the second President of the Chapter and held my Chapter meetings in English (☺☺☺)!”

Keng Leng Siau who is the current AIS Chinese Scholars Chapter also said:

“TP and I interacted more frequently over the past few years because of the AIS Chinese Scholars Chapter. He was one of the persons that twisted my arm to serve as the President of the AIS Chinese Scholars Chapter. When I finally agreed to serve in that role, I requested that he should participate actively in the chapter’s activities. And he did! In the most recent meeting held in December 17, 2020, TP shared his experience and insights on IS research and the publication process. We had about 90-100 people that participated in the session. TP was his usual cheerful self with lots of smiles and laughter throughout the session. His passing came as a huge shock to many of us. TP will be deeply missed. On behalf of the members of the AIS Chinese Scholars Chapter, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to TP and our deepest condolences to TP’s family. Rest in peace TP!”

TP has also established the *Workshop on e-Business (WeB)* in 2002, which later became a pre-ICIS workshop, focusing on e-commerce and e-business.

TP in IS Research

TP’s contribution to IS Research was kindly reviewed by Guy G. Gable (Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Strategic Information Systems) who has been a leading member of PACIS Executive Committee from the beginning. He served as Program Chair of PACIS 1997, Conference Chair of PACIS 2011, and will serve as advisor of forthcoming PACIS 2022. He characterized TP’s research as ‘starting from desired industry impact, back to necessary research design’ as below.

“I came to know TP at the second PACIS held in Singapore in 1995 and came to know him further when I hosted the 3rd PACIS under TP’s guidance at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia in 1997. I met with TP most years in conjunction with PACIS and ICIS, and on my several stays in Hong Kong back in the 2000’s when he was spending much time at City University of Hong Kong, and I was teaching 1 month each year at The University of Hong Kong.

I was asked to comment at the tribute session for TP on 14 July 2021, on ‘TP as an Information Systems (IS) Researcher’, which I was much honored to do. That said, I admitted then I wasn’t close to TP’s research, and unfortunately didn’t have the pleasure of co-authoring with him. I did though then, and do now, comment broadly on his base of work, and relate my impressions of TP as a researcher.

My impression from first meeting TP was that he was a serious researcher, who ‘did not suffer fools gladly’. As I reflected prior to the tribute, I realised I did in fact work with TP on one initiative which further reinforced my initial view of him as a researcher. In around

2006, TP championed a case study of “The Information Systems Academic Discipline in Taiwan” (Lee & Liang, 2007¹) which he and Ching-Chang Lee contributed to a study of IS in Pacific Asia region which I was leading at the time. Their case study distinguished Taiwan (from other Pacific Asia States in the study – e.g., Australia, Singapore, New Zealand, Hong Kong ...) at that time, as having a relatively greater emphasis on the technical and practical side of IS, and on the importance of research contribution to practice. My sense was that this was the grounding TP had in IS, and it permeated his every research effort.

My sense too was that TP worked backwards from desired industry impact to necessary research design; that he wasn't driven by method or metrics or kudos. Thus, his all-the-more impressive h-index of 56 (amongst the top IS researchers globally) has bolstered my faith in our discipline, and its ability to recognise and reward strong, impactful contribution. This is what TP sought and achieved with his research - strong impactful contribution. His base of work is a credit to the discipline.”

TP for Young Scholars

Colleagues and former students unanimously thank TP for his care for the next generation of scholars and remember his trademark smiles. Michael Myers particularly said,

“TP never lost an opportunity to contribute to Ph.D. students in Taiwan. Whenever PACIS was held there, he realized that many senior international scholars would be there. Therefore, he took the initiative to invite these scholars, not just to attend PACIS, but to contribute to some kind of additional workshop for the students. These were often one day workshops before or after PACIS. As these workshops sometimes included an overnight stay somewhere, it gave the students time to interact and socialize with the international scholars. These events thus helped many of these students, not only to receive feedback on their work, but also to future research collaborations in some cases. This was sometimes a tremendous help to their research and to their future careers.

TP could also be very entertaining sometimes. He could be lots of fun. For example, at one of the events I just mentioned, he organised a karaoke night for the visiting international scholars. I distinctly remember that TP was one of the best singers on the night, or at least one of best at keeping in sync. We will all miss TP's big smile and his contributions to the IS community in the Asia Pacific region.”

Wayne Huang stated,

“I worked with TP in PACIS EC at PACIS 2016 in Taiwan for which I served for Doctoral Consortium. TP is a very friendly and easy-to-talk person, with a sense of humour. When I asked those who met and/or worked with him even for a short while in the past, including my PhD students or young faculty of our school, they all recalled that TP is a polite, honourable, direct, smiling, and respectful scholar and gentleman.”

¹ Lee, Ching-Chang and Liang, Ting-Peng (2007) "The Information Systems Academic Discipline in Taiwan: A Focus on Top-Tier Universities," *Communications of the Association for Information Systems*: Vol. 21 , Article 7. (DOI: 10.17705/1CAIS.02107; Available at: <https://aisel.aisnet.org/cais/vol21/iss1/7>)

Keng Leng Siau also said,

“I have known TP for more than 20 years. The one thing I remember most about TP is his cheerful and friendly smile. He was always approachable and welcoming. As a senior scholar and an established IS researcher, he was surprisingly generous with his time.”

TP Liang PACIS Young Scholar Award

All TP's colleagues and the leaders of PACIS and AIS had the same sentiment that we need to build a monument to commemorate his contribution to PACIS and his spirit of caring for young scholars. Therefore, a task force to establish a TP Award was organized with advisors who served as AIS Presidents and PACIS Chairs. The Editor-in-Chief of PAJAIS and a former colleague and student were also invited to this task force.

TP Award Task Force

The TP Award Task Force was formed by the relevant leadership as follows.

- AIS President elected from R3 (Patrick Chau)
- AIS R3 Vice President (Atreyi Kankanhalli)
- PACIS Executive Committee Chairs (Wayne Huang, Kwok Kee Wei, Jae Kyu Lee)
- PACIS Executive Committee Assistant VP (Choon Ling Sia)

Advisors to the Task Force was formed to hear their opinions.

- Doug Vogel (PAICS 2020 and 2021 Chair and Past AIS President)
- Michael Myers (PACIS 2007, 2012, 2018 Chair and Past AIS President)
- Guy Gable (PACIS 2011, 2022 Chair)
- James Jiang (PAJAIS Editor-in-Chief)
- Kathy Ning Shen (PACIS 2020 and 2021 Chair)
- Chih-Ping Wei (PACIS 2010 Chair, Former colleague of TP at NSYSU)
- Shin -Yuan Hung (PACIS 2016 Chair; TP's first Ph.D. student)

There were sincere discussions about the title, the definition of young scholars and the selection process. After much discussion, there was voting to make a decision.

Approval of PACIS Executive Committee

The following proposal was submitted to PACIS EC. The proposal was carefully reviewed and approved on July 8, 2021.

1) Purpose

To establish an AIS Award in recognition of TP Liang's contribution for the establishment of PACIS and PAJAIS. This award will encourage young scholars to contribute to PACIS with high recognition.

2) Award Title: TP Liang PACIS Young Scholar Award

3) Definition of Young Scholar: It was described as 'Younger than 40' in the proposal, but during the review of AIS Council, it was revised to 'Early Stage of Career' to make it more flexible.

4) Selection Process: Young author(s)' Best Paper(s) at PACIS each year will be selected; The Award Selection Committee will select the awardee(s) in cooperation with the PACIS Program Committee of the year. The selected awardee(s) will be announced at PACIS, but the formal AIS Award will be delivered at ICIS Plenary Session.

5) Nomination Process: PACIS program committee nominates their awardee(s) through the AIS Award Nomination web page and the Award Selection Committee selects the Awardee(s) according to the AIS Award Nomination process.

Approval of AIS Council

Atreyi Kankanhalli, in her capacity as AIS Vice President of R3, submitted an Agenda Point for the review of AIS Council in September 24, 2021. Matthew Nelson (Associate Executive Director) revised the draft to make it more formal, and Patrick Chau chaired the council as AIS President, and Jae Kyu Lee was invited to explain the background of the TP Award. All council members were positive about making the award in memory of TP Liang. However, there was discussion about the definition of young scholar. After discussion, the council agreed to revise the definition to 'Early Stage of Career' to make it more flexible. The proposal was unanimously approved.

It is expected that this award will help to recognize the long-term impact and incredible contributions of TP Liang to AIS and the entire IS Community. It will also help to showcase and recognize the critically important research work in Region 3 and PACIS each year.

Lessons from TP's Life

TP has left us physically, but he still lives with us in our memory. We would like to thank him for his gifts given to us and the Information Systems community throughout his life. We miss him as a lovable and respectful friend, but he also left us a milestone to think what we should do and should not do while we are still alive. He reminds me of the words, "In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the law and prophets." He guided us in a mission to fulfill. We pray for his eternal peace in heaven.

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