

In cherished remembrance of Dr. Sun Lee

In 1960s, Dr. Sun Lee who had developed small animal organ transplant models through maximizing the world-first superb microsurgical technique passed away aged 95 on October 4, 2015. The monumental achievements he has elaborately made without rest are incomparable; establishing foundation of organ transplant as an ultimate treatment for terminal stage of organ failure and expanding globally state-of-the-art experimental microsurgical technique.

The International Society for Experimental Microsurgery (ISEM) organized for the purpose of expanding surgical science and education on microsurgery for his followers has acted as if it were his family. It was first time for me to have met Prof. Sun Lee in 1994 at the 2nd ISEM Congress in Kanazawa, Japan. I remember as if it were yesterday when he said to me with a smile “Kobayashi-san, you’ve been studying very hard, haven’t you?” At that time, I was back to Jichi Medical University as an assistant surgeon from overseas study in Australia. The world-famous Prof. Sun Lee had been paying attention to the research done by a Japanese surgeon nobody knew at that time directly struck my heart, which led me to continue further my research thanks to his encouragement. In 1998 at the 4th ISEM Congress held in London, Ontario State, Canada, he suddenly came to me “I’ll recommend Kobayashi-san to be a Councilor for ISEM for the next election”. The presentation I made at the Congress had been based on the outcomes generated from a small lab at Jichi Medical University while I was a clinician and took care of young doctors. Despite the tiny and immature research results, I came to have a belief “Someone in the world for sure watch our endeavors”. Based on the research results, I was assigned to the professor at Jichi Medical University in the year 2000. At the following ISEM Congresses in 2002 (San Diego, US) and in 2004 (Debrecen, Hungary) I met Prof. Lee together with my graduate school students.



(2004 ISEM Congress in Debrecen, Hungary)

Each time I met him, I also had an honor to meet his wife, which resulted in extending our mutual friendship so-called “Lee Family”.



(2007 Executive Committee Meetings in Savignone-Genoa, Italy)

Prof. Lee, as a founder of ISEM had been always acting as a central and important position at ISEM activities. In 2008, the ISEM Congress took place in Shanghai, China where he grabbed hands of 9th President, Prof. Corradino Campisi and 10th President, myself and declared in front of the audience “We are the family”.



(2008 ISEM 19th Congress in Shanghai, China)

The 10th ISEM Anniversary (Commemorative 20-year history) Congress was held in Sao Paulo, Brazil.



(2010 ISEM 10th Anniversary Congress 【20-year history】 in Sao Paulo, Brazil)

Prof. Lee not only passionately attended the Congress ceremony, but also listened to and made comments on the presentations by young researchers. I, myself felt that we had successfully taken over 20-year old ISEM activities to the next generation. In parallel with the congress, I was honored Silver Plate as “Sun Lee Award” with Prof. Lee’s letter.

SAN DIEGO MICROSURGICAL INSTITUTE
& TRAINING CENTER
At Scripps Mercy Hospital

Director: Sun Lee, M.D.

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Dear Professor Kobayashi:

I have received your letter after the congress and I am glad that all went well as we planned.

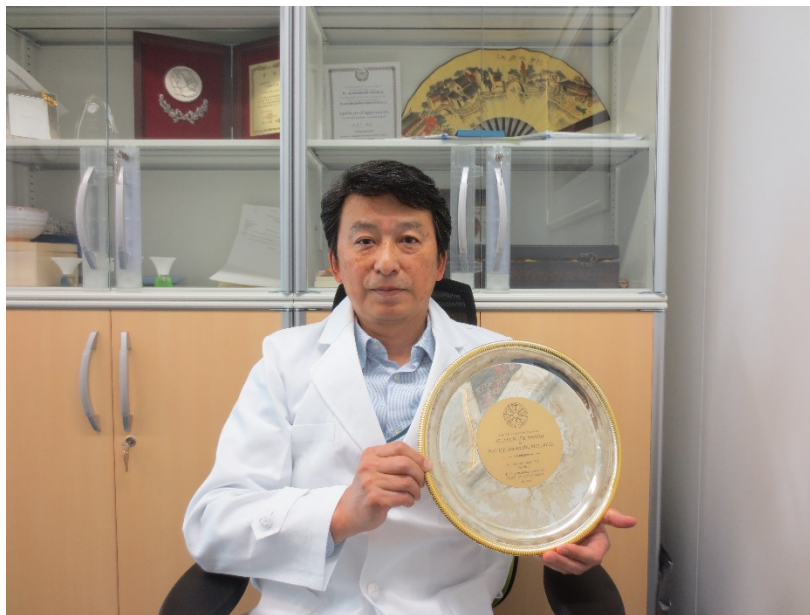
If my health allowed by 2014, I shall try to attend the Kyoto congress.

I am sending the Silver plate as I promised. Keep up with good work.

Sincerely,


Sun Lee, M.D.

Currently I am recalling what Prof. Lee had been telling us by organizing a series of pictures taken with him. The great father of microsurgery, Dr. Sun Lee who established experimental microsurgery as a medical science and took merciful care of his followers in the world as borderless family members.



(2015 Silver Plate by Dr. Sun Lee at my lab in Keio University School of Medicine)