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In Celebration

Professor Sung Tack Ro on his 65th birthday



Sung Tack Ro was born in Seoul, Korea, on April 16, 1943. He entered elementary school just before the beginning of the Korean War in 1950 when his father was the principal of an elementary school. Since then, his life has always been associated with various educational institutions. Professor Ro received his first degree in mechanical engineering from Seoul National University in 1966 and then served as an instructor in an army ordnance school. While there, he taught automobile maintenance and principles for two years. Having finished his military service, he moved to the United States for graduate study. Professor Ro obtained his Master degree from the Rose Polytechnic Institute (now Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology) in Terre Haute, Indiana, in 1969, and then moved to Brown University in Providence, R.I., for his Ph.D. He received his doctorate degree in 1972 under the guidance of the late Professor J. Kestin.

Subsequently, after spending one year as a Research Associate, Professor Ro returned to the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Seoul National University in September, 1973, as an Assistant Professor. This year, he retires from the same department after an illustrious 35-year-long career.

Professor Ro has often mentioned that he was fortunate to have had the chance to attend Rose Polytechnic where he was able to begin his graduate study with financial support, and to have met Professor Kestin from whom he learned not only about thermal science but also about life, especially that of an academic.

His research covers diverse fields though they all share the common bond of applying thermodynamic principles to optimize the use of energy. Professor Ro produced seminal fundamental studies on measurement of the viscosity and thermal conductivity of multi-component gas mixtures at high temperatures, including the work done at Brown with Professor Kestin and Professor W. Wakeham (currently the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Southampton, U.K.). The thermal conductivity measurements were extended to cover new refrigerants and their mixtures. He also devoted much effort to investigating transient heat transfer of phase-change of melting and solidification with volume changes in two phases; frost formation; and natural convection around a thin coated wire.

Professor Ro has also carried out more application-oriented research and has analyzed the performance of various power and refrigeration systems using gas/steam turbines and, more recently, fuel cells.

In all, Professor Ro has authored over 200 archival journal papers in addition to many conference papers in the areas of thermodynamics, heat transfer, and energy systems. Also, he has authored a book on thermodynamics. Using his unique talent to relate his research to his teaching, his lectures have been popular among students for decades and have been recognized through teaching awards.

In addition to his distinguished research and teaching career, Professor Ro has held many administrative positions as well. For

nine years, he has directed the Turbo and Power Machinery Research Center which was supported by Korean government and industries. He also served as the Director of the Institute of Advanced Machinery and Design at Seoul National University for four years.

Professor Ro has also volunteered generously to various academic societies. He was the organizer/chair of numerous conferences, including the 11th International Heat Transfer Conference (1998), the 5th Asian Thermophysical Properties Conference (1998), and the 6th International Symposium on Transport Phenomena (ISTP-6) in Thermal Engineering (1993). He served as the President of the Assembly for the International Heat Transfer Conferences (1998–2002). He was also the President of the Korean Society of Mechanical Engineers and the Society of Air-Conditioning and Refrigerating Engineers of Korea.

He has also been a member of the advisory/editorial boards or an editor of the International Journal of Heat and Mass Transfer, International Communications in Heat and Mass Transfer, the International Journal of Transport Phenomena, the International Journal of Refrigeration, and the International Journal of Rotating Machinery.

Professor Ro was a Visiting Professor at Brown University and Tokyo Institute of Technology. He is a member of the Korean Acad-

emy of Science and Technology and the National Academy of Engineering of Korea. He is also a Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

On the occasion of his retirement from Seoul National University, we would like to recognize his professional achievements and wish him continued good health and happiness.

Joon Sik Lee

*School of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering,
Seoul National University,
Seoul 151-742, Republic of Korea
Tel.: +82 2 880 7117; fax: +82 2 883 0179
E-mail address: jslee123@snu.ac.kr*

W.J. Minkowycz

*Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering (M/C 251),
The University of Illinois at Chicago,
842 West Taylor Street, Room 2049 ERF,
Chicago, IL 60607-7022, USA*

Hideo Yoshida

*Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics,
Kyoto University, Kyoto 606-8501, Japan*