



Teh Fu Yen, Astani Department Professor, 1927-2010

"A highly creative geochemistry researcher who specialized in developing innovative green technologies"

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An environmental chemist who was a member of the faculty at the University of Southern California for more than 40 years passed away peacefully January 12 in a local hospital.



Teh-Fu "Dave" Yen: "A highly creative geochemistry researcher who specialized in developing innovative green technologies"

Teh Fu "Dave" Yen was a professor in the Environmental Engineering Program in the Sonny Astani Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and had served on the USC faculty for more than 40 years.

"Dave Yen was a highly creative geochemistry researcher who specialized in developing innovative green technologies," said Dean Yannis C. Yortsos. "He was beloved by his students and deeply respected by faculty colleagues. We will all miss him greatly."

A few days before he died, Yen's students visited him at the hospital to celebrate his 83rd birthday. "He was really happy, smiled a lot, talked to each one of the students who went to his surprise birthday party," said Chia-Yu "Iris" Yang, a post doctoral research associate and one of Yen's former doctoral students in environmental engineering.

Raised in Kunming the capital of Yunnan Province in China, he received his B.S. in chemistry from Huachung (Central China) University, an M.S. in chemistry and chemical engineering, from West Virginia University and his Ph.D. in organic chemistry and biochemistry from Virginia Polytechnic Institute. After a brief period on the faculty at California State University in Los Angeles, Yen

joined the USC faculty in 1969 as an associate professor of biochemistry, and of chemical and environmental engineering.

He was well known for his research on the science and technology of alternative processes to achieve the environmentally benign use of fossil fuels. He pioneered an innovative process using bacteria, fungi and other methods to clean up dangerous toxic waste and developed an inter-metallic filter to remove sulfur from low-grade oil.

Yen produced more than 500 papers and was the author, co-author, editor or co-editor of 26 books. He was a founder of the Geochemistry Division of the American Chemical Society and an editor, founding editor or editorial board member of numerous technical journals.

"He was working on a book even in the hospital," said Jean-Pierre Bardet, professor and chair of the Astani Department. "He was a gentleman and a scholar, much loved by his students, well known in several areas of engineering and chemistry."

A fellow of the American Institute of Chemists and the Institute of Petroleum, he received the Distinguished Faculty Member Award from the USC Alumni Association in 1975, among many other honors.

A memorial service will be held at the Sky Rose Chapel of Rose Hills Memorial Park & Mortuary on Saturday, Jan. 23, at 1 pm. Visitation is scheduled on the night before (Friday, Jan. 22), from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

He lived in Altadena and is survived by his wife Shiao-Ping.