

Professor Christodoulos A. Floudas – Memorial (October 9th, 2016)

Professor Christodoulos Floudas left us for a Final Trip on that sunny afternoon of August 14th – Yes, most of us, we are still waiting ... For his car to arrive, for a phone call, for him to appear from the corner ... With his big smile, his elegant walk, his spontaneous & intelligent sense of humour and small-talk....

Chris was born in Ioannina, in the north-west mountainous part of Greece called Epirus; He moved to the city of Thessaloniki, the capital of Greek Macedonia, where he earned his first degree in 1982 in chemical engineering from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

One thing that not many people know is that - at his early years, he was also a very talented footballer, I mean soccer player – but eventually chose what I would call a more ‘scientific path’. What would have been the equivalent of ‘global optimization’ in the world of soccer?

During his undergraduate years in Thessaloniki he met his ‘future’ wife Fotini. Interesting to note here that Fotini - after she met Chris – she decided to study chemistry. Part of the old story & debate between chemists and chemical engineers, I guess.

In the summer of 1981, he came here to the US – he completed his PhD in 1985 at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and in early 1986 [I remember it was a very cold and snowy January day] he joined Princeton University as a young assistant professor, promoted to Associate Professor in 1991 and to Professor in 1994 – where he became the Stephen C. Macaleer (class of) ’63 Professor in Engineering and Applied Science and Professor of Chemical Engineering. At Princeton, he was also in the

faculty in the Center for Quantitative Biology at the Lewis-Sigler Institute, and Associated Faculty in the Program of Computational and in Applied Mathematics, and in the Department of Operations Research and Financial Engineering. In 2015, he came to Texas A&M University to become the director of the Energy Institute and the Erle Nye '59 Chair Professor for Engineering Excellence in the Artie McFerrin Department of Chemical Engineering.

In the summer of 1986, it was August 16th I remember, Chris and Fotini got married at Ioannina [they would have celebrated their 30 years anniversary the very same date] – with Fotini moving to Princeton in early fall of that year. In early February of 1989 their beautiful daughter Ismini was born. Time passed fast – happy times are always like this. It was the summer of 2015 that we all celebrated in great style the engagement of Ismini to Stefanos – it was definitely one of his happiest days of his life. And I know how much he was looking forward to Ismini's wedding

Chris was one of the very best minds of his generation – the finest Ambassador of the 'systems thinking' philosophy, vision and practise. With his extraordinary talent and enthusiasm, and his endless number of seminal and unique contributions, he substantially influenced and greatly shaped the field of process systems engineering and the research minds of the younger generations around the world. It is a testimony to the strength and intensity of his exquisite intellectual capability and leadership skills, that he played key pivotal role in successfully embedding the multi-scale systems engineering thinking into a host of domains and areas – the Energy Institute that he lead here at Texas A&M is an example par excellence of this.

Professor Floudas' research record, seminal contributions and achievements are equally extraordinary and really second to none. The author of two graduate textbooks,

Nonlinear Mixed-Integer Optimization (Oxford University Press, 1995), and *Deterministic Global Optimization* (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000), he co-edited ten monographs/books, over 330 refereed publications, delivered over 330 invited lectures, seminars, and named lectureships. He was the recipient of numerous awards and honors for teaching and research that include the NSF Presidential Young Investigator Award, 1988; the Engineering Council Teaching Award, Princeton University, 1995; the Bodossaki Foundation Award in Applied Sciences, 1997; the 2001 AIChE Professional Progress Award for Outstanding Progress in Chemical Engineering; the 2006 AIChE Computing in Chemical Engineering Award; the 2007 Graduate Mentoring Award, Princeton University; Member of National Academy of Engineering, 2011; One thousand Global Experts, China 2012-2015; SIAM Fellow, 2013; TIAS Fellow and Eminent Scholar, 2013-14; AIChE Fellow, 2013; National Award and HELORS Gold Medal, 2013; Honorary Doctorate, Abo Akademi University, Finland, 2014; Thompson Reuters Highly Cited Researcher, 2014 (for 2002-2012, 11 years; and then again in 2015); Member of TAMEST (The Academy of Medicine, Engineering, and Sciences of Texas), 2015; Corresponding Member of the Academy of Athens, 2015; Member of the US National Academy of Inventors in 2015.

His academic tree is equally most impressive! Spanning over four generations with 43 PhD students of his own and a total number of 186 - over 20 of which became professors themselves

As a closest friend, a closest colleague & collaborator, a 'brother' – it has truly been a blessing, a privilege and a great honour to be closely associated with such a great man, a great mind, a great scientist, a truly inspirational person – a visionary and a leader who radiated optimism and determination around him, resonating excellence -

impacting on the lives of so many people, both intellectually and as a role model. His unparalleled legacy will stay on and will be guiding us as we move along and ahead to fully accomplish all the things that He paved the way – to deliver the vision and the mission – with the pride, the enthusiasm, the passion, the intensity and the charisma that made it the ‘Floudas’ way.

For his Final Trip - we say Goodbye and we pray. He will be immensely missed.

ENP, Sunday 9 October 2016