

**FRED FENG HSIAO (SHAW)**  
1919 – 2010

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## BEGINNINGS

**Fred Feng Hsiao (Shaw)** was born in Xian, China, on May 19, 1919, into a highly respected family. His father was the mayor of the city and was a visionary businessman dealing in cotton, grains, and finance. Fred's nickname was "Chang-Chang" meaning "open heart." He was the fourth of 11 children and enjoyed playing soccer after working in his family's fields. His father taught him to be disciplined, to study hard, to work hard and to be kind and generous to others. He became a Christian at an early age. Proving himself to be an exceptional student, he attended National Wuhan University in Hubei Province and in 1944 graduated at the top of his class. By coincidence, the testing center for the Chinese National Examinations was in the same city, and Fred's father advised him to sit for the exam. He did well and was given the opportunity to attend the university of his choice in the United States.

## COMING TO AMERICA

With the support of his father, Fred began his journey to America in the winter of 1944. Because the Japanese occupied the China coast, he was forced to take a flight over the Himalayan Mountains to India. There he boarded a US Navy transport that brought him to the west coast of the United States. He then took a train cross-country to Boston, Massachusetts. Fred finally arrived at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (M.I.T.) in January of 1945 to pursue his Master's Degree. When not studying, he could be found swimming in the indoor pool and enjoying apple pie at the school cafeteria. He graduated from M.I.T. with a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering in 1946.

## MINNESOTA

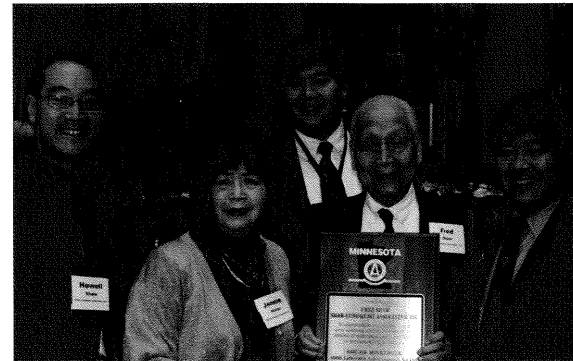
With the intention of solving the torrential Yellow River flooding in his homeland, and on the advice of his father to stay in America during the Communist revolution, Fred decided to pursue his Ph.D. in Hydraulic Engineering. In 1947, he came to Minneapolis to work under Dr. Strub, the world-famous professor of hydraulics, whose lab was based at the University of Minnesota. His deep love affair with sports began while a student at the "U," and he cheered on his beloved Gophers, Twins, Vikings and Timberwolves for the rest of his life. Because he greatly valued serving others, he was elected the president of the Chinese Students Association. Fred was also one of the founders of the Chinese Christian Fellowship in the Twin Cities.

He met Orville Madsen while attending Hope Baptist Church, and in 1949, Orville offered him a position at his construction company as a part-time estimator working out of Orville's basement. Fred proved himself to be very good at his trade, and in 1951, became a full-time employee. During this time, Orville suggested that Fred adopt "Fred Shaw" as his alias for business since "Feng Hsiao" was too difficult for Americans to pronounce. Fred was soon promoted to Vice President and Chief Estimator, and in 1954, became a member of the Board of Directors. He was responsible for growing Orville E. Madsen & Sons from a home-based business to one of the most respected contractors in the metropolitan area.

In 1957, Fred was a founding Elder of the Twin Cities Chinese Christian Church. Encouraged by Dr. & Mrs. C.Y. Wang, one of his former classmates, he began corresponding with Jennie (Chi-Ni) Ho, an attractive undergrad at National Taiwan University (NTU) in 1956. A romance blossomed, and Jennie graduated from NTU and passed her exams to study abroad. In April 1958, Fred drove to San Francisco to bring Jennie back to Minneapolis so she could pursue a Master's Degree in English literature. Instead, she obtained her "MRS" degree as they married two months later on June 7. They moved into a small two-bedroom house in Richfield. Two years later, Jennie was expecting and Fred bought a three-bedroom house in a new development in Fridley. They moved in the winter of 1960.

In May 1961, they welcomed their first child into the world and named him Howell. In February 1965, they celebrated their second son and named him Hoyt. Fred's family also lived through the terrifying tornado of 1965 that completely leveled their home. In 1970, they moved to a new house in West Bloomington, and in February 1976, they brought their third son, Holden, home. In 1988, Fred moved his family to Edina to take advantage of the highly ranked public school system. Then after all his children had grown up, he and Jennie downsized to a comfortable condo back in Richfield, near where they began.

All his sons have married: Howell to Nina in 1997, Holden to Yu Wen in 2007, and Hoyt to Zhen Zhen in 2009. He was the proud grandfather of three grandchildren: Julian, Isabel, and David. Fred truly loved Minnesota, his adopted home. He always took the opportunity to express his appreciation for the climate that kept him healthy and the people that accepted and embraced him even as an outsider. He felt that he was always treated equitably and with respect.



## SHAW-LUNDQUIST

When Orville E. Madsen and Sons moved to Wisconsin in 1973, Fred and his good friend and Chief Superintendent Lyle Lundquist decided to stay in Minneapolis. Together they found Shaw-Lundquist Associates, Inc. So when Orville E. Madsen's office in the Sexton Building downtown Minneapolis closed its doors on June 30, 1974, Shaw-Lundquist opened its doors the next day in the same office with the same receptionist. Because Fred's reputation for integrity and honesty preceded him, he received contractor's bonding immediately and hit the ground running. With Fred in the office and Lyle in the field, the company successfully completed project after project, and Shaw-Lundquist quickly earned the respect of the local construction industry.

In 1984, Lyle retired and Fred took sole control of the company. In the same year, the company moved its base of operations to a leased space in Eagan and celebrated their award as the Minority Supplier of the Year from the Minnesota Minority Purchasing Council. In 1987, Hoyt joined Shaw-Lundquist and began modernizing operations. Ten years later, Shaw-Lundquist built and occupied its own facility on West Service Road. Holden joined the company in 1999. And finally, Howell, his eldest son, joined the company in 2005. Under Fred's leadership, the company grew to annual revenues of over \$80,000,000 and was recognized as the largest certified minority contractor in the Midwest and the largest certified Asian-owned contractor in the nation. Fred was inducted into the National Association of Minority Contractor's Hall of Fame in 2004; he was the inaugural inductee into the Metropolitan Economic Development Association's Entrepreneurial Hall of Fame in 2005. The Associated General Contractors of Minnesota also honored him with their prestigious 2005 Lifetime Achievement Award. In October 2009 at age 90, Fred was promoted to Chairman of the Board and his son, Hoyt, took over the reigns as President. Fred's construction legacy includes such well-known projects as the Minneapolis Convention Center, the Brookdale Regional Center and Library, the Como Park Visitor and Education Center, the University of Minnesota Ridder Ice Hockey Arena and Baseline Tennis Center, the Minneapolis Saint Paul International Airport A & C Concourse, and the Minnesota Department of Health/Agriculture Laboratory.

## COMMUNITY

One of the most important lessons Fred learned from his father was to be generous and give back to his community – and give back he did. In the Chinese Community, Fred and Jennie devoted much of their time and financial resources to the Chinese American Association of Minnesota (CAAM) and other non-profit organizations. CAAM was invited to participate in the Minneapolis Aquatennial's 1970 Summer Festival, which featured the theme, "Sailing the Seven Seas." Serving as CAAM's Vice President, Fred oversaw the construction of an impressive Chinese Arch, which was erected over the intersection of 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Nicollet Avenue. The CAAM arch was later moved to the State Fairgrounds. He was a founding member of the Chinese American Business Association of Minnesota and served as President. In 2008, Fred was given the Contribution to Chinese Community Award by the Chinese Heritage Foundation. In that same year, Fred and Jennie were major contributors to the Confucius Institute at the University of Minnesota to support the instruction of the Chinese language in elementary to high schools across the state. For the minority construction community, Fred was a founding member of the National Association of Minority Contractors – Upper Midwest Chapter and served as Vice President and Treasurer. He was widely known for his availability to minority contractors for business advice and encouragement.



## LEAVING A LEGACY

Fred highly valued education and wished to help others in their pursuit of knowledge. To that end, he and Jennie established the Jennie and Fred Hsiao Scholarship Fund through the University of Minnesota Foundation at the China Center in 2001. The scholarship is awarded to U of M students traveling to China for their studies. Over 40 students have benefited from this scholarship to date. In 2006, Fred and Jennie established the Jennie and Fred Hsiao Fellowship Fund through the University of Minnesota Foundation at the China Center to support Chinese nationals studying Civil Engineering, Environmental Engineering, or Architecture to attend the U of M.