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## Tributes to Freddie Fu pour in from all corners

Tuesday, October 5, 2021

There's not much we can add to the outpouring of tributes to Freddie Fu — orthopaedic surgeon, professor and chair of Pitt's Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and head team physician for the Pitt Athletic Department — who died Sept. 24 at the age of 70.

Pitt football coach Pat Narduzzi might have said it best: "When people talk about Pitt legends, Dr. Freddie Fu should absolutely be included in that discussion. He was the best in the world at what he did. So many of Pitt's greatest athletes were blessed to have been treated and cared for by Dr. Fu. Not only was he a gifted doctor, but also someone who was personally invested in every person and patient he worked with. On behalf of our entire football program, I want to extend my deepest sympathies to his family and many loved ones."

Pitt held a moment of silence in honor of Fu before the Panthers football game against the University of New Hampshire on Sept. 25 at Heinz Field. Players for all of Pitt's athletic teams wore patches with "FF" on them in the week following his death.

On Oct. 1, a standing-room-only crowd at Heinz Chapel gathered for a memorial service for Fu, while another 100 or so watched the service via livestream in Alumni Hall across Fifth Avenue. Some celebrants traveled from Europe and Asia to attend the 70-minute service and to pose afterward for a team photograph of Fu pupils.

Fu founded Western Pennsylvania's first sports medicine program in 1986 in a small suite near Pitt's main campus. In 2000, after outgrowing a second, bigger location, the UPMC Center for Sports Medicine moved into a newly built 37,000-square-foot building on Pittsburgh's South Side, within the 60 acres now known as the UPMC Rooney Sports Complex.

In 2015, Fu guided a partnership between UPMC and the National Hockey League's Pittsburgh Penguins to build a sports medicine and training facility in Cranberry Township — the UPMC Lemieux Sports.

As an internationally renowned orthopaedic scientist and surgeon, Fu helped revolutionize anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) reconstruction and is extolled specifically for his relentless scientific research and clinical expertise in treating ACL injuries, common in athletes of all ages and skill levels.

For 32 years, Fu was the head team physician for Pitt's Athletic Department and for 37 years, he was company physician for the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre.

Fu is survived by his wife of 47 years, Hilda Pang Fu; his daughter, Joyce Lok-See Fu (and husband, Chad Martin); son, Gordon Ka-Hong Fu (and wife, Ding Li); five grandchildren: Ludivine Ling-Yun Fu Martin, Alexander Zee-Yun Fu Martin, Axel Wei-Yun Fu Martin, Kendrick Kai Cheng Fu and Kasen Kai Sheng Fu; his mother, Mabel Foo; sisters Susan Lam and Jeanette Maeba; and brothers Frank Fu and Nigel Fu.

In lieu of flowers or gifts, the Fu family kindly asks memorial contributions to be made to the Fu Family Legacy Fund in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh, P.O. Box 640093, Pittsburgh, PA, 15264-0093, or at <http://pae.pitt.edu/RememberFu>.

Read more about Fu's career in a memorial story by UPMC.

## Remembering Dr. Fu

Athletes, colleagues, students and more have voiced their respect for Fu in news articles and on social media. Here's just some of the tributes:

"Freddie was known worldwide as a brilliant orthopaedic surgeon and a leader in the field of sports medicine. He was also a committed teacher and mentor, and he leaves behind a global community of former students, residents and colleagues who continue to heal and reshape medicine. I am so grateful that he chose to build his life and legacy in Pittsburgh and — like so many others — I am proud to have called him a friend and colleague." — **Pitt Chancellor Patrick Gallagher** in Pittwire

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"Dr. Freddie Fu was a mentor, a leader and above all a good man. He was one of our biggest supporters and loved our sport. He touched so many lives, including ours, and his legacy will live on." — **Dan Fisher**, Pitt volleyball coach

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"Dr. Freddie Fu, thank you for what you did for my knee and my career. My heart hurts knowing your life was cut short due to Cancer. Literally talked to you less than a month ago. May your legacy live on! I'm going to miss those random pics of Nature you would send me daily. RIP." — **Andrew McCutchen**, former Pirates outfielder who now plays for the Phillies. He also told the Post-Gazette: "When you think of all these major orthopaedic surgeons in the world, Freddie Fu's name is right there. But you would have never known that because he treated everyone with respect and gave everyone the time."

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"Freddie Fu gave me a second chance in my career. I'm still on top just because of him. I owe him everything. Thank you Freddie Fu. Rest in peace." — **Zlatan Ibrahimović**, Swedish soccer player for AC Milan, on Instagram

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"Our @ussoccer deepest condolences and thoughts our with @UPMCSportsMed and family on the passing of Dr Freddie Fu. The game of soccer, its athletes and our sports medicine family have forever been blessed and fortunate from his wisdom kindness and human spirit." — **George Chiampas**, chief medical officer for U.S. Soccer

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"What a wonderful man. Dr Fu was always so kind and humble. What a inspiration, ambassador and pioneer. God rest his soul." — **Larry Fitzgerald**, former wide receiver for Pitt and the Arizona Cardinals, on Twitter

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"Because of Dr. Fu, my career was saved. I had an injury at that point in 1986 that people in my position, with what I had to do physically, didn't always recover enough to continue on with their career." — **Joe Briggs**, former dancer with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

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"Freddie Fu proved that you didn't have to be a professional athlete to make a massive impact on the sports world. He was one of the premier orthopedic surgeons in the world, based right here in Pittsburgh, and so many of our local teams and athletes at all levels benefitted from his skill and expertise. He leaves a legacy in Pittsburgh sports that will never be forgotten." — **David Morehouse**, Penguins' president and chief executive," in the Post-Gazette

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"You made me from a student to a resident to a surgeon to a professor. I am forever grateful to you Hilda and the Fu family. Your leadership, strength, generosity, and courage inspires us. To us you said thank you thank you thank you. But it is us that thank you." — **Volker Musahl**, Pitt professor of orthopaedic surgery, medical director at the UPMC Rooney Sports Medicine Complex and co-head physician of the Pitt football team, on Twitter

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"UPMC Sports Medicine is forever indebted to Freddie Fu, MD, creator of UPMC's world-renowned sports medicine program. Our fearless leader, our brilliant mentor, our kindest friend – thank you, Dr. Fu." — **UPMC Sports Medicine** on Twitter

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"The world lost an absolute icon today, I will forever be grateful for Dr. Fu, he made me a better athletic trainer, person and photographer. Prayers and love to all who know him." — **Kate McCartney**, Pitt volleyball trainer on Twitter

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“The ISAKOS Family mourns the loss of orthopaedic pioneer and ISAKOS Past President, Freddie Fu, MD USA. His vibrant spirit has touched us all and forever changed the field of orthopaedics. A legend gone too soon — let us honor Dr. Fu, his work, and his life” — **ISAKOS**, The International Society of Arthroscopy, Knee Surgery & Orthopaedic Sports Medicine

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“Thank you Dr. Fu for all that you have done for the World of Sports Medicine and thank you for mentoring me through the years.” — **Rick Burkholder**, vice president of sports medicine and performance for the Kansas City Chiefs, on Twitter

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“You don’t always get to find a true mentor in this life. I was fortunate to find someone who believed in me and celebrated with me every step of the way. Dr. Fu will be truly missed by every soul he touched. I can only hope to continue his legacy.” — **Megan Wolf**, assistant professor, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Wake Forest University School of Medicine

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“I was 6 when Dr Fu really began to take off at PITT. Born w/ Osteogenesis Imperfecta I’ve had dozens of ortho surgeries, especially early on in life. Every time I ran into him he always made sure to remind me there wasn’t anything I couldn’t do. We lost a great one.” — **Sara Simpson**, on Twitter

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“There are so many people in our neighborhoods that can go about their daily lives without pain because of the incredible work of Dr. Fu. Much respect and RIP.” — **Patrick Schulte**, prosecutor at Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General and Pitt grad, on Twitter

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