

Community Builder

Philanthropist, trustee emeritus
Gerald Tsai, Jr., dies at 79

GERALD TSAI, JR., a trustee emeritus and a devoted BU alumnus whose philanthropic support significantly reshaped the Charles River Campus, died on July 9, at age 79. Tsai (CAS'49, GRS'49, HON.'03) donated more than \$7 million to Boston University for campus improvements, including the Tsai Performance Center and the Tsai Fitness Center in the Fitness and Recreation Center.

He earned bachelor's and master's degrees in economics at Boston University and was renowned internationally as a groundbreaking financier. He began building investment funds for Fidelity while still in his twenties, but even as he led major multinational corporations, he remained committed to BU and the University's efforts to improve the campus and build community.

"Jerry was an icon in the investment community and one of Boston University's most loyal and active alumni," says BU President Robert A. Brown. "He understood the role of the University in the creation of a student's professional and personal life and was a generous supporter of initiatives to enhance their educational experiences. I will personally miss him."

A native of Shanghai, China, Tsai attended St. John's Middle School and St. John's University there and came to the United States in 1947. After a semester at Wesleyan University, he transferred to BU, where he attended the former College of Liberal Arts when the school was on Boylston Street in Copley Square. He said that when CLA (later renamed the College of Arts and Sciences) moved to its current home on Commonwealth Avenue in 1947, he and his classmates were very excited because they felt they had a real college campus.

Tsai began his investment career in 1951 as a security analyst at Bache & Company. A year later, he joined Boston's Fidelity Management and Research Company, Inc., ultimately ascending to executive vice president. He subsequently held executive positions in several of the nation's most important financial institutions and eventually became the founder and chair of his own management and consulting firm, Tsai Management,



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FRED SWAY

Inc., and a philanthropic organization, the Gerald Tsai Foundation.

Tsai's first major gift to BU enabled the creation of the Tsai Performance Center in 1989; at the time, his pledge of \$5.5 million was the largest individual gift from a single donor in BU's history. The center, a renovation of the former Hayden Hall, was intended to provide a performance space for BU's resident artists.

When another pressing need arose more than a decade later — an up-to-date fitness and athletic facility where students could gather — Tsai gave \$2 million for the Tsai Fitness Center, an 18,000-square-foot weight training and cardiovascular conditioning area. When it opened in 2005, Tsai said he was inspired by the project's enormous potential to provide a sense of community for students. The Fitness and Recreation Center serves approximately 5,000 members each day.

An Associate Founder of BU, Tsai was a member of the University's Board of Trustees from 1967 to 1977 and from 1988 to 2002 and served as an honorary member of the board until his death.

JESSICA ULLIAN



IRENA VODENSKA-CHITKUSHEV

GOOD-WILL VISIT Lou Chitkushev (left), a Metropolitan College associate professor and chair of the computer science department, traveled to Skopje, Macedonia, last June to meet Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski. The two discussed ways to bring MET graduate programs in information technology to Macedonia

and bring more Macedonian students to BU. Chitkushev presented Gruevski with the book *The Other Balkan Wars*, published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "This book provides a unique insight into the causes and consequences of the Balkan wars of 1912-1913, which have shaped the modern

history of Macedonia and the entire region," Chitkushev says. "Moreover, this book was prohibited in Macedonia for more than eighty years and was just recently translated." Chitkushev also visited Korea and Japan, where he delivered presentations to BU alumni on the security challenges of globalization.