

ISDE Presidential Biography: Kenneth Wang, Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, Mayo Clinic Rochester, Minnesota, USA

Kenneth Wang was born in Tapei, Taiwan, in 1955. He studied medicine at the School of Medicine of the Mayo Clinic and specialized in gastroenterology and hepatology. He is currently a Professor of medicine at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science.

It is truly an honor to be given the opportunity to write this presidential biography for Kenneth Wang. Before elaborating on the benefits of his presidency for the ISDE and the work he has performed as a Chief Editor of *Diseases of the Esophagus*, I first would like to introduce him as a person and mention a few of his many major achievements.

Kenneth Wang, known as Dr. Wang by many patients, students, fellows and collaborators, but probably even better known as simply 'Ken' by his great inner circle, is the most integer, omniscient and charismatic person that I know. A person with whom one can discuss and debate no matter which topic or problem because of his broad knowledge and wide interest in personal, scientific, clinical and societal matters. As a patient doctor, Kenneth Wang is known as highly passionate, dedicated and professional.

One of Kenneth Wang's major talents is his mentoring skills. As one of his many mentees, I would like to acknowledge this special gift. As one of his past postdoctoral fellows, I was highly privileged to have 'Dr. Wang' as my mentor. His advice has always been leading in the many important choices that I had to make during my career. His mentoring talent has been widely recognized and resulted in a long list of students and fellows who were under his guidance. It is not surprising that his mentoring skills have been awarded by the mentorship award of the Mayo Clinic in 2014.

Kenneth Wang is more widely recognized for his achievements on Barrett's esophagus and early esophageal cancers. He is one of the pioneers on photodynamic therapies, endoscopic mucosal resections, imaging and several ablative therapies for Barrett's esophagus. Next to patient studies, Kenneth Wang has been dedicated to fundamental and translational research and, as a principal investigator, has been leading these studies in his laboratory. His research has been supported by many grants, including several NIH/R01 grants, several industrial partnerships



and patients' legacies. He has been very active on several review and nomination panels, for instance for the National Cancer Institute, and he actively participated in numerous study groups such as the Early Detection Research Network, the BetrNet consortium, InterSPOR and more recently in TCGA. Kenneth Wang has been awarded numerous times for his work. His latest and most prestigious award was the Crystal Award, which he received in 2019. This Schindler Award from the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy is the highest award for outstanding contributions to the field of gastrointestinal endoscopy.

Given his abilities and interests, his natural talent in leadership and his character, it is not at all surprising that Kenneth Wang has been actively serving in an overwhelming number of governing boards. He frequently participated as an active member and several times served in terms of presidencies. His Taiwanese background and fluency in Eastern languages allowed him to interact and join several Eastern gastroenterological societies within China and Japan. From 2013 to 2016, he was a guest professor of the Institute of Digestive Diseases at the Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology of the Chinese General Hospital and Chinese Medical School in Beijing in the Republic of China, and in

2019, he was appointed as a fellow of the Japanese Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Society. Indeed, Kenneth Wang has been actively serving for many years on several national and international governing boards, including the American College of Gastroenterology, the American Gastroenterological Association, the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy, the Chinese Society of Gastroenterology, the International Photodynamic Association and the International Society for Diseases of the Esophagus. He was the President of the American Society for Gastrointestinal Endoscopy from 2013 to 2014 and the International Society of Diseases of the Esophagus from 2014 to 2016.

Before Kenneth Wang was elected as the President of the ISDE, he served as the Medical Chief Editor of Diseases of the Esophagus together with Claude Deschamps. Their major accomplishments for the journal were to double the impact factor reaching a full figure. This was achieved for instance by securing high impact reviews on several esophageal disorders. During this period, the journal also greatly reduced the reviewing and return time of the submitted articles and attracted submission of papers from several leading groups.

Kenneth Wang's connection and interest with East Asian countries such as the People's Republic of China and Japan facilitated him to convince the Chinese Society of Diseases of the Esophagus to join ISDE. This has been an outstanding benefit and resulted in an increased number of Chinese memberships for both societies. During his presidency, also a large surgical database was created for esophagectomies for monitoring complications and outcomes. This database has been accepted by many US thoracic surgery departments and is currently being used to obtain reliable data on patient outcomes. Importantly, Kenneth Wang increased diversity by encouraging female memberships and by nominating female members in the board of directors.

Despite all his achievements, Kenneth Wang has always remained a most generous, kind and modest man with a great sense of humor, always in a good mood and a 'savoir vivre' through his appreciation of all the little good things in life. We are truly proud and privileged to have had Kenneth Wang as a president and to have him as friend of the ISDE.

Sheila K. Krishnadath