

## Armando T. Chiong, Sr., MD (1930 - 2018) A Tribute from a Mentee to a Mentor

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Dr. Armando T. Chiong, Sr. was fondly called Arman by his contemporaries. A mild-mannered man, he could be interpreted as a very docile and complacent individual--but for those who truly knew him, this was far from the truth. He may have been a very accommodating person, willing to listen and extend help to anybody, but he was never complacent. Too caring may be a better term to describe him. I still can vividly remember the controversy regarding the six students. Though his term as chair of the department was already over, he stood his ground and supported the stand of the faculty in general but more specifically, he was even willing to resign from the college if any faculty member of the department was removed from the

roster because of their stand. Such was the fortitude of the man, that he was even willing to risk not only his security of tenure but whatever retirement benefits may also have accrued to him.

Another incident that I can recall was his stand to protect the chairman's prerogative regarding admission to the residency program. He decided to uphold and give premium to academic performance irrespective of the gender of the applicant. Where before females were only given at most two slots, he decided that as chair he had the final say on admission matters and gave another slot to an applicant with a better academic grade who incidentally was female. Thus was abolished the quota system for females and academic performance upheld.

He was also a man with a mission. He preferred approaching matters in a very organized manner. He required all services/sections to formulate and submit a research agenda for the section with the intention of having a guided/directed research effort/activity by the department. Thus, was born the research handbook of the department. This transpired when his daughter Charlotte was chief resident of the department. However, implementation and pursuit of the objective has been spotty and sporadic except for a few services.

A good family man, it can be said that he was until now the only one who could claim that two of his children became faculty members



of our department. A third child is presently connected with another department of UPCM. It may be recalled that the early and untimely demise of another child so devastated him. That is the hallmark of his being a good family man.

He was never a flamboyant person. You could always expect him to attend departmental activities in his usual attire of colored pants, never denims, topped by his trademark long-sleeved polo shirt without a necktie. This getup was his invariable uniform. He never liked to rock the boat except to drive home certain principles or rules that must stand the test of time. Whenever such things did occur was when you could see him at his decisive best.

He was also a very approachable person. A research-oriented person, when requested by some residents for advice on certain research matters, he would gladly listen to their query and try to help resolve any quandary that may arise from the query. You could be sure that the next time he was in the department, he would be bringing pertinent articles and researches that could assist the resident. And chances were, included in the reprints were articles he had performed on the topic/subject when he was still with the University of Virginia under Prof. Fitz-Hugh, the same institution where Dr. Victor S. Ejercito (the younger) had his training. Such was indicative of the high regard that university had for him that a simple letter of recommendation from him was enough to guarantee admission. How many of us can make the same claim? But he never mentioned or boasted about this matter. I hope we too can make possible to younger residents such easy acceptance and availability of further training abroad.

This in a nutshell was Dr. Armando Chiong, Sr. -- a quiet man who rarely spoke unless called for, organized and with a mission, a researcher, a father but most of all, a mentor worthy of emulation who always stood by the principles he believed in. Sir, goodbye and may your ideals be better appreciated and practiced by your successors.