

October 21, 2015

Jin Chen, 22

~ 1/3/1987 – 1/26/2009~

Microsoft Headquarters in Bellevue, Washington

By: Shan Chen / Joshua Isaac

His Smile Unforgettable

January 26, 2009, Jin Chen lost his life accidentally, while at work, from the 28th floor of the Lincoln Square Microsoft office complex in Bellevue of Seattle, Washington, at the age of 22.

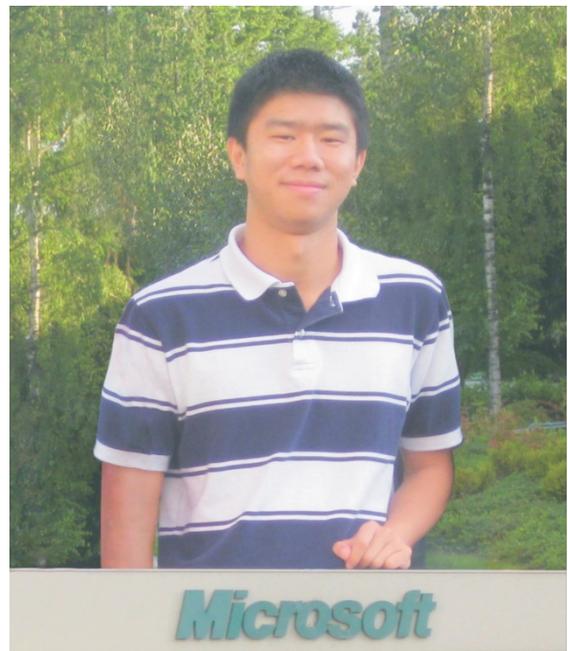
The death was immediately declared a “suicide” by the company, local police and the media to the public while the parents were shown and told it was an accident while working at work place, when they ran from another state for the tragedy. No OSHA investigation.

April 28, 2010, Jin Chen’s name was called at the Washington state Worker Memorial Ceremony.

Jin’s colleague Joshua Isaac wrote about him on 04-16-2009 on Microsoft Internal Publication “Inside Track”:

Jin Chen’s Smile Was Unforgettable :

Despite his 22 years of age, Jin Chen transcended time to deeply affect those who knew him and make his years on earth meaningful. He warmed the hearts of those who knew him.



“To judge a person that you know is not just how long this person is living, but really the impact this person had to produce such special greatness,” wrote a contributor to Jin Chen’s online memorial book.

In many of the more than 100 tributes people from all over the world wrote, this comment highlights a theme repeated over and over. Despite his 22 years of age, Chen transcended time to deeply affect those who knew him and make his years on earth meaningful.

“A moment in time can be a lifetime. A whisper in a cold day—it’s a universe on its own. A glimpse of a single day can last an eternity,” wrote Jesus Barrera Ramos, senior program manager for Microsoft Office. “It’s with these realizations that I see that the little moments we talked, laughed, or worked together were enough to give me memories of you for a lifetime.”

Jin was born in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China, on January 3, 1987. His family immigrated to the Detroit area in 1996. Chen quickly learned English and went on to exceptional academic and athletic success. He attended Riverview High School in Riverview, Michigan, where he was captain of the soccer, track, and swim teams. He graduated as class valedictorian in 2004 and was named by the Detroit Free Press as one of Michigan’s top 10 high school scholar athletes for 2004.

While attending the University of Michigan and studying computer engineering, Jin excelled at a 2007 summer internship at Microsoft. Following graduation, he joined Microsoft in August of 2008 as a program manager in the Office Global Experience Platform (GXP) team. He quickly became a highly valued, indispensable member of his team until his death on Jan 26, 2009.

“Happy, smart, fun, truthful, honest, caring, team player...these are some of the adjectives that come to my mind when I remember Jin,” said Javier Larrinaga, principal group manager for Office and Jin’s manager. “From the moment he came to Microsoft, I saw in Jin an extraordinary human being and a very promising program manager.”

Jin was described as having a great instinct to transform customer requirements into solutions. As part of the Office GXP team, he worked to determine where internationalization defects are introduced by developers. “Jin’s ability to work across organizations and focus on the right priorities resulted in a noticeable quality and refinement increase of the product,” added Larrinaga. “In fact, the next release of

Microsoft Office is already benefiting from Jin's great work."



Jin was a nationally ranked and internationally recognized competitor in the Asian game of Go. Online accounts spoke of Jin as an extremely popular and generous teacher of the game. "Just before the holidays, [Jin] convinced me that I needed to learn how to play Go," wrote Kate Kelly, program manager for Office. "I'll miss having [Jin] as a teammate and officemate, and I'll always remember the good times

from the last six months."

(Jin represented US at 2007 World students Go Competition in Tokyo, Japan)

Another theme resonating in the online memorial is that Jin's smile will not be forgotten. "I did not get the pleasure to work on a project with Jin, but I do recall every time I saw him...he always had the biggest smile, and he was so genuinely friendly," wrote Sandy Rivas, SDET for Office. "He just made you feel good and brightened up your day. And everyone who encountered Jin, whether working closely with him or just passing him in the hall, he warmed our hearts with his genuine smile, and he made a difference to each of us."