

In Memory of Professor Akira Nakajima *(1923 - 2017)*



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Professor Akira Nakajima, a great international leader of ophthalmology, who was also instrumental in the growth and development of the Asia-Pacific Academy of Ophthalmology (APAO).

From 1972 to 1976, Prof. Nakajima was the President of APAO. Subsequently, he was our longest-serving Secretary-General from 1976 to 1990. He received the José Rizal Medal in 1987 for his outstanding contributions to the development of clinical ophthalmology and great achievements in the prevention of blindness in the Asia-Pacific region.

The APAO Nakajima Award was established in 2005 in Prof. Nakajima's honor, and presented at the APAO Congress to young distinguished ophthalmologists from the Asia-Pacific region for their outstanding accomplishments in international ophthalmology.

Prof. Nakajima was a Professor at Juntendo University in Tokyo from 1961, where he was also Director of the Research Institute of Ophthalmology of Juntendo University. His vast clinical expertise and contributions were in the areas of cornea and external eye diseases, ocular genetics, and refraction, while his research interests also included molecular biological, immunological, and electrophysiological studies on chorioretinal degeneration, vitreous diseases, uveitis, and glaucoma. Throughout the decades, he has made unparalleled contributions to ophthalmic teaching and training, clinical and laboratory research, and clinical ophthalmic practice, in Japan, in the Asia-Pacific region, and well beyond.

In 1980s, Prof. Nakajima was the Director of the World Health Organization Collaborating Center for the Prevention of Blindness in Tokyo, and founded the World Health Organization Pacific West Region Corporation Center for Blindness Control. He joined the Board of Trustees of the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) in 1982, later serving as ICO President from 1990 to 1998. He was awarded the very prestigious ICO Gonin Medal in 1986. Prof. Nakajima was also President of the Academia Ophthalmologica Internationalis (AOI) from 1988 to 1990.

Professor Akira Nakajima passed away peacefully at the age of 93.