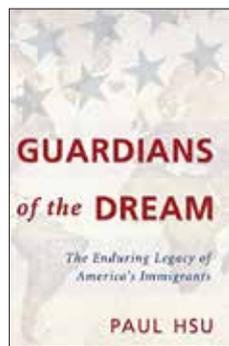


By Amanda Gold

Supporting the Dream



He arrived in the US with \$500 to his name.

A few years ago Paul S. Hsu decided to give back to Florida's Eglin Chapter by creating a \$5,000 scholarship to honor his wife, Maggie.

In 2016 he established a second \$5,000 scholarship in the name of his friend, retired Air Force Gen. William L. Kirk, the former commander of US Air Forces in Europe and founder of the chapter's education foundation.

Each year, a high school student is awarded one of these scholarships. It's how Hsu's American dream lives on.

JUST ONE STEP

In 1976, at the age of 24, engineer Hsu left his native Taiwan with only \$500. He had decided to immigrate to the US because he believed that in this country, anything was possible.

In his 2014 book, *Guardians of the Dream: The Enduring Legacy of America's Immigrants*, Hsu writes of the experience: "We didn't think our struggle was unfair because my wife and I knew that it was only one step along the road."

Within eight years, he founded an avionics and battlefield electronics company, with DOD as its primary customer.

Hsu went on to start three more companies in the fields of electronic component

research services and data management; electronic medical device manufacturing; and aerospace and technology.

In 2007, President George W. Bush appointed Hsu as the associate administrator of the Small Business Administration's Office of Government Contracting and Business Development. President Barack Obama later appointed him to the Commerce Department's National Advisory Council on Minority Business Enterprises. Today, Hsu holds a senior fellow position at the Harvard University Asia Center.

TEAMS FOR STEM

Along with the Eglin Chapter scholarships, Hsu has always sought opportunities to contribute at the national and community level and recently turned his attention to improving high school students' performance in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

He has guided development of a program called TEAMS (Teaching Excellence Awards in Math and Science) to recognize STEM teachers from three public high schools in north Okaloosa County. Hsu focused on them because he anticipates a future high-tech expansion for the area, and he believes teachers prepare students for success in fields of growing demand.



Paul Hsu, here with his Schnoodle Lai-Fu—"Prosperity" in Chinese—supports STEM education through the Eglin Chapter.

A panel of community members selects two teachers each year, through a rigorous application process. The top two TEAMS winners receive \$5,000 each. Four other teachers each receive \$500 merit prizes.

IMMIGRANT NATION

Hsu says that America, at its heart, has always been an immigrant nation—and he knows this firsthand.

"It took some time," he wrote in his book, "but we succeeded. We had a belief that America had great opportunities, and that if we made sacrifices and stayed motivated, we wouldn't be held back because of class, race, or because we weren't born here. That is a unique aspect of America's character." ✪

Amanda Gold is the Eglin Chapter's VP for communications.