2025–2026 AAEOY Awards Ceremony Held in Silicon Valley
Intel CEO Lip-Bu Tan Receives Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award; 17 Asian American Engineering and Technology Leaders Honored



SILICON VALLEY TIMES — The 2025–2026 Asian American Engineer of the Year (AAEOY) Award and Conference was held on September 19, 2026, at the Santa Clara Convention Center in California. Engineers, technology leaders, executives, scholars and guests from across the United States gathered in Silicon Valley to celebrate this year's AAEOY honorees. The conference was organized by the San Francisco Bay Area chapter of the Chinese Institute of Engineers–USA (CIE-USA), CIE/USA-SF. Since its founding in 2002, AAEOY has recognized Asian American professionals for outstanding achievements in engineering, technological innovation, business leadership and public service. Silicon Valley Times conducted on-site filming and interviews. For more, see this special report.

— Silicon Valley Times Special Report Team



Dr. Tony Liu, Chair of the 2025–2026 AAEOY Executive Committee, opened the conference with welcoming remarks. He said the program focused on technological innovation and empowering future generations. Alongside recognizing outstanding engineers and technology professionals, its AI forums, national AIGC video challenge and youth programs advanced innovation, industry exchange and the development of future talent. He congratulated the awardees and thanked sponsors, partners and volunteers for their support.



Raymond Y. Chen, Chair of the CIE-USA and AAEOY National Council, then addressed the audience. Reflecting on AAEOY's development since 2002, he said the program has long celebrated the contributions of Asian American engineers

and technology professionals to innovation, entrepreneurship and society, while promoting STEM education, professional development and leadership.



The conference also received congratulatory messages from public officials and the engineering education community. U.S. Representatives Judy Chu and Ro Khanna and California State Treasurer Fiona Ma sent letters congratulating AAEOY and this year's honorees and recognizing the program's work in advancing STEM, celebrating Asian American engineers and encouraging the next generation. DiscoverE, an organization promoting engineering education, also sent congratulations.

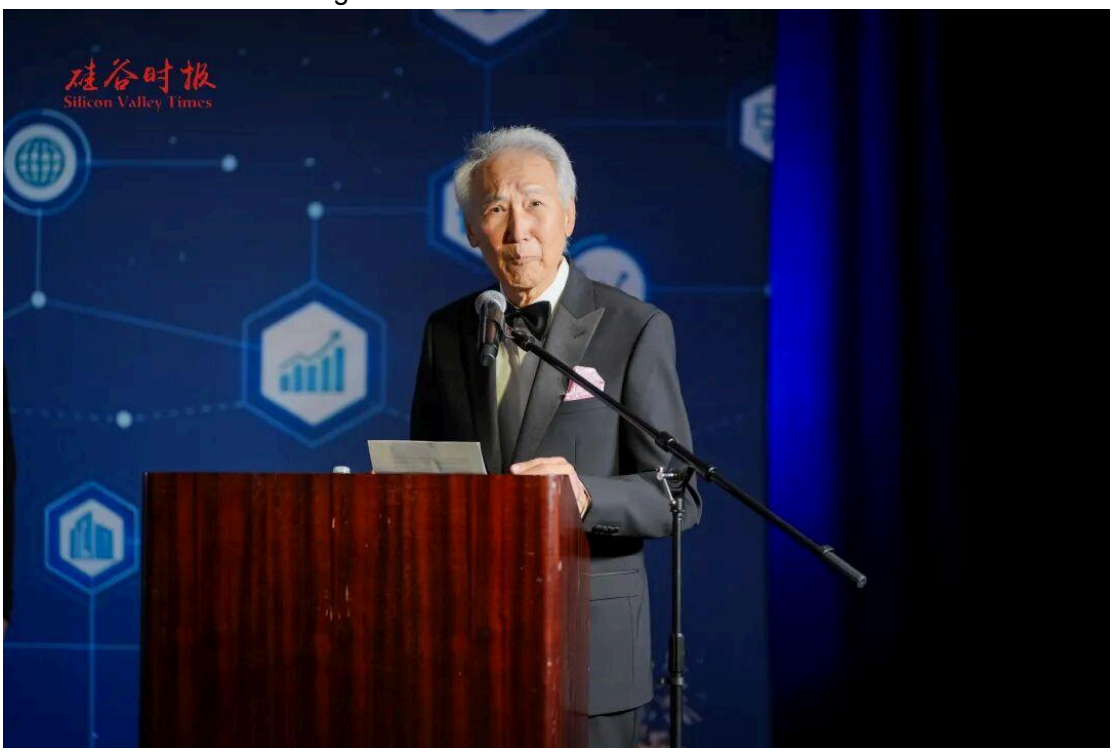


The evening's black-tie awards ceremony was a centerpiece of the conference. Seventeen Asian American engineering professionals from fields including

semiconductors, artificial intelligence, energy, life sciences, aerospace, data storage and advanced engineering received AAEOY awards and honors.

Intel CEO Lip-Bu Tan Receives Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award

Among the evening's highlights, Lip-Bu Tan, Chief Executive Officer of Intel Corporation, received the AAEOY Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award.



At the ceremony, Dr. Chenming Hu, Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley, and former Chief Technology Officer of TSMC, took the stage to introduce Tan. He recounted Tan's decades of work across technology investing, electronic design automation and the semiconductor industry, along with his leadership and sustained support for technological innovation. Tan then accepted the award and delivered his remarks.



Tan is an influential leader in the global semiconductor and technology industries. He serves as Intel's CEO and a member of its board of directors. From 2009 to 2021, he was CEO of Cadence Design Systems, where he subsequently served as Executive Chairman. He is also the founder of Walden International and has spent decades working in semiconductors and technology, with extensive experience in business leadership, investment and innovation.



From technology investment to electronic design automation and the global semiconductor industry, Tan's career has spanned several phases of technological development. His Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award was a focal point of the evening.

Arun Majumdar Receives Distinguished Leadership in Science and Technology Award

Another major AAEOY honor, the Distinguished Leadership in Science and Technology Award, went to Dr. Arun Majumdar, Inaugural Dean of the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability.



At the ceremony, Dr. K. R. Sridhar, founder, Chairman and CEO of Bloom Energy, took the stage to introduce Dr. Majumdar. He reflected on Majumdar's longstanding work in energy, climate, innovation and education, and on a career extending from research and public service to founding and leading the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability.





Dr. Majumdar has long worked at the intersection of energy, climate and technological innovation. He was the inaugural director of the U.S. Department of Energy's Advanced Research Projects Agency–Energy (ARPA-E). He is now the Inaugural Dean of the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability and the Jay Precourt Provostial Chair Professor. The award recognizes a career spanning research, education and public service.

Dr. Majumdar was also a featured speaker at the conference. That afternoon, he delivered a keynote titled "Education in the Age of AI: Preparing Minds for an Intelligent Future," examining how rapid advances in artificial intelligence are changing higher education and the preparation of future talent.

Fifteen Engineering and Technology Professionals Receive Three Annual Awards

In addition to the two distinguished honors, the ceremony presented the Executive of the Year Award, Engineer of the Year Award and Most Promising Engineer of the Year Award to professionals across technology and engineering fields.



The eight Executive of the Year Award recipients were Dr. Xiaodong Che, Chief Technology Officer and Senior Vice President, Western Digital; Dr. Indradeep Ghosh, Chief Executive Officer, Fujitsu Research of America; Dr. Sam Heidari, Chief Executive Officer, Lumotive; Dr. Jungwon Lee, Corporate Executive Vice President, Samsung Electronics; Dr. Stacey Ma, Executive Vice President of Pharmaceutical Development and Manufacturing, Gilead Sciences; Dr. Liu Ren, Senior Vice President and Fellow of AI, Bosch Research; Dr. Sokwoo Rhee, Corporate Executive Vice President for Innovation, LG Electronics, and Head of LG NOVA; and Brandon Wang, Vice President, Synopsys.



The Engineer of the Year Award went to three engineering and technology professionals: Dr. John Hu, Senior Director, Advanced Technology Group, NVIDIA; Dr. Ganping Ju, Chief Technologist, Seagate Technology; and Vivian Ye, Principal Member of Technical Staff, AT&T.



The Most Promising Engineer of the Year Award went to Dr. Sakun Duwal, Manager, R&D Science and Engineering, Sandia National Laboratories; Max Fang, Director of Architecture, Ambarella; Johnny Ho, Co-founder and Chief Strategy Officer, Perplexity AI; and Hung Le Nguyen, Airplane Safety Engineering Manager, The Boeing Company.



In the closing session, Dr. Zee Zhai, Co-Chair of the 2025–2026 AAEOY Executive Committee and President of CIE/USA-SF, delivered concluding remarks. He thanked the awardees, speakers, sponsors, partners and volunteers, and expressed his hope that AAEOY would continue to connect the engineering and technology community, inspire young people to pursue innovation and support the next generation of engineers.



During the banquet, the AAEOY official seal was formally transferred to the next AAEOY host, the New York Chapter in New York City, marking the continuation of the AAEOY tradition.



The 2025–2026 AAEOY awards ceremony and banquet concluded that evening. Through its celebration of engineering achievement, discussion of innovation and education in the AI era, and exchanges across generations, the conference connected today's technology community with the engineers of tomorrow.

Two Parallel Tracks Explore AI Innovation and the Next Generation of Engineers

Before the evening ceremony, two parallel afternoon tracks explored AI-driven industry innovation and the education and development of future engineering talent. They added professional presentations and discussions to the conference program.

Track 1: The AI-Native Future and Industry Innovation



Track 1, “Engineering the AI-Native Future: How AI Is Transforming Technology, Business, and Innovation,” examined how artificial intelligence is reshaping competition, product development, software engineering and entrepreneurship. Jeremiah Owyang, General Partner at Blitzscaling Ventures, delivered a keynote titled “The AI-Native Era: How Organizations Will Compete, Build, and Scale,” discussing how companies can rethink competition, organizational capabilities and growth in the AI-native era.



Bernard Harguindeguy, founder of Executive Venture Fund, then joined a featured fireside chat titled “Every Company Is Becoming an AI Company whether It Knows it or Not.” From a business and investment perspective, he discussed AI’s impact on business

models, operations and innovation, as well as opportunities arising from corporate transformation.



Leo Tchourakov, Principal Engineer at Factory AI, gave a technical presentation titled "Beyond Coding Agents: Inside the Self-Improving Software Factory." Focusing on the use of AI in software development, he explored how AI may progress from a coding assistant toward more autonomous systems capable of continuous improvement.



The Startup Leaders Panel Discussion, "Reimagining Innovation: Entrepreneurship Powered by AI," examined AI's role in changing entrepreneurial and innovation models. Xiaoran Wang, CEO and Co-Founder of AGIGA AI, and Tom Pritsky, CEO of Captify,

shared perspectives on startups, product innovation and business development in the AI era.

Track 2: Education and the Next Generation of Engineers in the AI Era

Track 2, “The Engineering Lifecycle: Empowering the Next Generation in the AI Era,” focused on educational innovation, young talent, the development of engineers and career paths for emerging technology professionals.



Track 2 began with an awards presentation for the AAEOY National AI-Generated Content Video Challenge. Under the theme “Engineering Changes the World,” the challenge encouraged participants to use AI-powered storytelling to show how engineering innovation transforms lives. Winning entries were screened and recognized at the event.



Dr. Arun Majumdar, Inaugural Dean of the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability, then delivered “Education in the Age of AI: Preparing Minds for an Intelligent Future,” discussing higher education, talent development and preparation for an intelligent future amid rapid advances in AI.



Johnny Ho, Co-founder and Chief Strategy Officer of Perplexity AI, followed with a keynote titled “Orchestrating Entrepreneurship in AI.” Drawing on the rapidly evolving AI industry, he discussed entrepreneurship, innovation opportunities and how founders can respond to new technologies. Ho is a former CIE/USA-SF high school scholarship recipient who returned to the conference as the co-founder of an AI company. His journey from scholarship recipient to AAEOY honoree and keynote speaker reflected Track 2’s theme of empowering the next generation.



“The Rising Stars” panel brought former CIE/USA-SF high school scholarship recipients back to the conference to discuss their education, careers and growth in technology. Shawn Flynn, Managing Director of Silicon Valley Highpoint Capital, moderated the conversation with six former recipients: Helen Chang, Krystal Lan, Ray Lin, Bonnie Liu, Annie Liu and Joleen Pan.

The 2026 CIE/USA-SF High School Scholarship Award Presentation followed, hosted by Estella Pok. The scholarships recognized and supported high school students with strong academic and STEM achievements, encouraging them to explore engineering and technology and build foundations for future study and careers.

More Than Two Decades of Celebrating Engineering and Technology Talent

Founded in 2002, AAEOY is a flagship CIE-USA program hosted in rotation by its regional chapters. CIE-USA was founded in New York in 1917 and has seven regional chapters across the United States, including chapters in New York and Dallas. Its programs promote STEM outreach, professional development, leadership and recognition of Asian American engineering and technology professionals.



From the recognition of 17 annual honorees to discussions of AI, industry innovation and the development of future talent, this year’s AAEOY continued its tradition of connecting the technology industry, engineering professionals and young people. It also highlighted the varied contributions of Asian American engineers and technology professionals to U.S. technology, industry and academia.



Silicon Valley Times: Exclusive Interviews



Lip-Bu Tan
Chief Executive Officer, Intel Corporation
2025–2026 AAEOY Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award

Artificial intelligence is driving rapid growth in the semiconductor industry. I am very grateful to AAEOY for this recognition. It is an excellent organization with a great mission: recognizing engineers who have made contributions to engineering and technology.
I believe this is not only an encouragement to me, but also recognition of the other award recipients and their achievements. I hope everyone will continue to make breakthroughs in innovation and advance the industry to meet its growing needs. AAEOY is an excellent platform that both encourages engineers and provides opportunities for collaboration and exchange. We need many engineers across all industries. In semiconductors alone, only about 3% of engineers currently enter this field, which is far from enough. Over the next three years, the semiconductor industry is expected to need approximately 150,000 engineers to fill relevant positions. That is why I believe AAEOY is such a valuable platform for nurturing and encouraging more young engineers to enter this industry.



Dr. Arun Majumdar

Inaugural Dean, Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability

2025–2026 AAEOY Distinguished Leadership in Science and Technology Award

Sustainability will become increasingly important. As everyone knows, the development of artificial intelligence is already being constrained by electricity supply. I do not think anyone wants rapid advances in AI to come at an enormous environmental cost.
Receiving this award is a tremendous honor. I am proud to be an Asian American and deeply honored by this recognition. Looking back at past recipients, I feel especially privileged. My Ph.D. adviser, Professor Chang-Lin Tien, received this honor at the inaugural AAEOY awards in 2002. To now receive the same honor alongside such distinguished figures as my doctoral adviser Professor Tien and my mentor Professor Steven Chu is profoundly meaningful to me. I believe we are celebrating not only the contributions of Asian Americans to engineering and technology, but also their contributions to American society as a whole. These achievements deserve to be celebrated and remembered. More importantly, recognizing them helps the next generation feel a sense of belonging and build confidence, so that young people believe they, too, can achieve such things. I think that is extremely important. I sincerely wish AAEOY even greater success in the future. This is a very meaningful endeavor, and I hope you will keep it going.



Raymond Y. Chen
Chinese Institute of Engineers–USA (CIE-USA)
and Asian American Engineer of the Year (AAEOY)
National Council Chair

For many years, AAEOY has been one of CIE-USA's signature flagship programs. This year, we transformed the conference's operating model, focusing on ways to engage more companies and communities in nominating and recognizing engineering and technology professionals who have made outstanding contributions. Encouragingly, this new model has produced positive results, and we have gained the support of many new companies. Looking ahead to 2027, the next AAEOY conference will be held in New York City, and we have already begun preparations with the New York team. I believe AAEOY will continue to play an important role in advancing the engineering and technology community and ensuring that more outstanding professionals receive the recognition they deserve.



Dr. Tony Liu

Chair, 2025–2026 AAEOY Executive Committee

This year, we placed special emphasis on education and nurturing the next generation. The conference featured an alumni homecoming event, inviting former CIE high school scholarship recipients to return and share their authentic, firsthand experiences with the audience. We hope their stories will inspire the next generation of young people. These accomplished alumni can serve as important role models for younger students.



Joint Interview with Two Vice Presidents of the New York Chapter

Vice Presidents, CIE-USA Greater New York Chapter

Dr. Sabrina Hsueh & Dr. Grace Lin

We also place great importance on building connections across generations, bringing young people together with experienced engineers and emerging startup communities. This offers an excellent opportunity to foster mutual understanding across generations, bridge the generational gap, and explore how to attract more young people into the engineering and technology community. New York is now home to the second-largest startup ecosystem in the United States. We hope to strengthen intergenerational connections further and explore how to bring more engineers, entrepreneurs, and young professionals together in the new era of artificial intelligence.

We very much look forward to holding next year's AAEOY conference in Manhattan, New York City, to celebrate the outstanding achievements of Asian American engineers. At the same time, I believe the event has another very important purpose. By recognizing these distinguished honorees, we can set an example for the younger generation.

VIP Reception Draws Distinguished Guests






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More Highlights from the Event


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Executive Networking
Connecting C-Suite leaders, venture capitalists, and policymakers to foster leadership development and capital access.
Knowledge Exchange
Highlighting keynotes and technical symposia in AI, quantum computing, clean energy, and biotech.
45