

In Memory of Dr. Tsuneji Nagai – Message from Shinji Yamashita

October 4, 2025

It is with deep humility and gratitude that I stand before you today at this memorial gathering. I have been entrusted with the great honor of offering a few words in your memory, and I must admit I am quite nervous about what to say. But with heartfelt appreciation and respect, I would like to share a few thoughts.

The year 1985, when you founded the The Academy of Pharmaceutical Science and Technology, Japan (APSTJ), was also the year I began my career as a research assistant at Setsunan University. I was just starting out, and you were a towering figure—someone I could hardly imagine ever speaking with personally. The idea that I would one day have the privilege of knowing you closely was beyond my dreams.

Through the Society's activities, and later through my own time at the University of Michigan's College of Pharmacy—where you had also studied—I came to know your warmth and generosity. As this photo shows, you always welcomed me with kindness. I am truly grateful.

During my time as Vice President and later President of the Society, I often visited your home under the pretext of seeking advice on academic matters. In truth, the highlight of those visits was enjoying the fine sake and wine you so graciously shared. Among them, the wine you purchased annually from the Pasteur Institute—what you fondly called “Game”—was especially memorable. Professors Imai, Ozeki, and Kusuhara and I would often join you, and before we knew it, several bottles would be gone. I must apologize for that. I'm sure we caused your wife, Kiyoko sama, some trouble as well, but you never seemed to mind, and we kept coming back. Those evenings were truly joyful and irreplaceable for me.

On July 7, 2016, we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Nagai Foundation Tokyo for

International Exchange in Pharmaceutical Sciences with a symposium and reception held right here at the Imperial Hotel. I had the honor of serving as the organizing chair. As this photo shows, many guests from Japan and abroad attended, and I was reminded once again of how deeply respected and beloved you were around the world.

The symposium's title, which I chose in consultation with Professor Sugiyama and others, was "Link to the Past and Bridge to the Future." For me and many pharmaceutical scientists in Japan, the Society is not only a place to present research—it is a vital community where we meet colleagues and form lasting bonds. Through your founding of the Society, as well as the Cyclodextrin Symposium and the Federation of Asian Pharmaceutical Sciences, you gave future generations a place to belong and connect. You truly built a bridge to the future of pharmaceutical science in Japan and across Asia.

Today, under Professor Kusuhara's leadership, APSTJ continues to thrive, with more than 1,000 researchers attending the annual meeting. I participate every year, and it brings me great joy to see the next generation—and the one after—actively contributing and growing.

Dr. Nagai, the bridge you built to the future is being faithfully carried forward. Please rest assured. I, too, have grown older, and I do not know how much longer I will be able to witness its progress. But when the time comes, I promise I will visit you and share all that has happened. And when I do, I look forward to enjoying another glass of wine with you and talking about everything once more.

Dr. Nagai, thank you for everything. You have truly earned your rest. May you find peace.

With deepest respect,

Shinji Yamashita