



Michael Yee Lun Leung

April 30, 1979 - July 22, 2024

Michael Yee Lun Leung, 45, passed away unexpectedly of natural causes on July 22, 2024, while traveling in Rome, Italy.

Always wearing a huge smile and known for being an airplane/airline enthusiast, he is survived by his parents Ken and Stella Leung and sister Celia Leung of Hong Kong. Having lived in Chicago for the last 23 years, he also developed a local "chosen" family of best friends Mark Adamski and Aaron Goldberg.

His warm soul, thoughtfulness, and unwavering desire to always want to help others allowed him to form many genuine friendships with many people, who undoubtedly are all missing his signature charm and charisma right now. Everybody loved Michael; it was impossible not to.

Born in Hong Kong on April 30, 1979, Michael graduated from LaSalle College, that was notably under the now-closed Kai Tak Airport landing path, which ignited his interest in aviation. From there, he attended Tufts University in Boston where he majored in Economics. Law school brought Michael to Chicago, but it didn't take long for him to recognize his passion was in aviation, so he made a wise decision to pivot and pursue a career with United Airlines.

And that decision paid off. Michael worked for United for over 20 years, his only employer ever, in a variety of management roles. He obsessed over making the experience of travel on United a more seamless and enjoyable one, and transformed numerous colleagues into meaningful, lifelong friendships. He defined what it meant to be "United Family," and earned the respect of hundreds of colleagues across the globe.

Closely related to his aviation enthusiasm, Michael loved to travel, and he often chose destinations based on being able to fly new aircraft types and the available food scene; he LOVED to try all foods and flavors. Photography came naturally to Michael, and he enjoyed sharing the illustrative visuals of his travels with everyone. During the summers in Chicago, he spent time boating on Lake Michigan, which offered him unobstructed views of aircraft approaching Chicago's O'Hare Airport.

Perhaps one fact about Michael not many know is that he was in Phuket, Thailand during the 2004 tsunami. Putting his expert-level weather knowledge to life-saving use, he was able to get himself and several cousins into a boat and out to sea while the waves crashed. As his family was leaving Phuket, he called his United Airlines colleagues to start a fundraiser to help local residents recover from the extreme devastation.

Michael gave lots of love to this world, much more than most, but unfortunately left us way too soon.

A mentor by nature and a staunch believer in the greater good and paying things forward, in lieu of flowers or gifts, we are confident Michael would be overjoyed to see donations being made to help young, under-represented aspiring aviators complete flight school and pursue their passion of the skies. Some great options are Avion Institute: <https://avioninstitute.org/> , NGPA: <https://www.ngpa.org/>, PAPA: <https://www.asianpilots.org/donate> and Tuskegee

Next: <https://www.tuskegeenext.org/>.

Finally, his favorite lyrics in one of his most favorite songs “If the World Just Danced” by Diana Ross (MOTi Remix):

Don't look back, don't take a second glance
While life is busy making other plans
Jump off the edge and find out where you land
Go take the lead and teach the world to dance
So much better if the world just danced.

Love you always, Michael.

Arrangements by Inclusive Funeral Care, 773-370-2959 or www.InclusiveFuneralCare.com.