Boeing St. Louis Engineer Wins Asian American Corporate Achievement Award

Dianne Chong, a Boeing engineer who manages three engineering departments and oversees a staff of 200 while devoting much of her free time to work in the St. Louis community, will receive a 2002 National Asian American Corporate Achievement Award on Friday, Oct. 18.

The award, which honors Asian Pacific American corporate employees for outstanding contributions to their companies and their communities, will be presented in Hollywood, Fla., by the Organization of Chinese Americans and its Business Advisory Council. Chong and 11 other recipients, including Gary Toyama, a Boeing executive in Seal Beach, Calif., will be honored. Toyama is the deputy to the vice president/general manager of operations for Boeing Integrated Defense Systems.

Chong provides the leadership and manages the resources for the three engineering departments at Boeing Integrated Defense Systems, headquartered in St. Louis. "I'm very honored to receive this award," Chong said. "And I'm honored to be representing a company like Boeing, which has provided me many opportunities throughout my career."

An engineer at Boeing St. Louis and its predecessor, McDonnell Douglas, since 1986, Chong has held a variety of key positions within the company, including as a team leader within the Boeing Phantom Works advanced research and development unit and a team leader in the company's production aircraft programs.

Chong's technical acumen is just a part of her Boeing portfolio. A mentor to other minorities within the company, she performs outreach on behalf of Boeing through programs such as the INROADS minority student intern program and Women of Tomorrow, a program that helps young women from inner city St. Louis high schools. She is the company's technical focal to Tennessee State University and is the St. Louis liaison to the University of Illinois and St. Louis University Parks College of Engineering and Aviation.

Chong is equally active in the St. Louis community. She is a member of the board of directors of the St. Louis chapter of the American Red Cross, serves on the steering committee for a St. Louis YWCA program that honors women leaders and holds workshops for young women on the exciting challenges associated with math and science careers.

Born in Waukegan, Ill., in 1949, Chong lists her parents as two of the people who have had the greatest impact on her career. "My father encouraged us to achieve as much as we could through education," she says. "He also spent much time promoting a sense of community with the four other Chinese families in the town where I grew up." Of her mother, who was widowed at age 35, yet raised five small children, completed her GED and went on to gain a liberal arts degree from a local community college, Chong says: "From her I learned the values of helping others, perseverance and vision."

Chong has won numerous awards during her career, including a Technology All Star award presented last month at the National Women of Color in Technology Awards Conference in Atlanta. She was honored for her achievements and leadership of minority women in the fields of mathematics, science, technology, and engineering.

Chong holds a doctorate in metallurgy from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a master's of business administration from Washington University in St. Louis. She and her husband have one son and live in the St. Louis area.

The Organization of Chinese Americans, Inc. is a national civil rights advocacy and education organization dedicated to advancing the social, political and economic well-being of Americans of Chinese and Asian/Pacific Islander descent.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $23 billion business. It provides systems solutions to its global military, government and commercial customers. It is a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; the world's largest military aircraft manufacturer; the world's largest satellite manufacturer and a leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in launch services.

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