

# In Memoriam



Mitsuo Saito

The Hot Chips community, and more generally the computer and semiconductor communities, have lost an important contributor and a great person.

Mitsuo Saito was a member of the Hot Chips Program Committee for many years, and was a major figure at Toshiba.

Mitsuo Saito was Chief Fellow, Toshiba Corp. He was retiring at the end of March, but he collapsed during his farewell party on March 19. He was taken to local hospital and died the next morning, on March 20. He was 62 years old.

He received B.S. and M.S. in Electronics Engineering from the University of Tokyo in 1972 and 1974 respectively. From 1984 to 1985, he was a visiting researcher at the MIT Media Lab.

He joined Toshiba in 1974, and worked on the development of many processors and computer systems. He was the General Manager, System LSI Research and Development Center, from 1997 to 2000, and had been Chief Fellow, Semiconductor Company, since 2001.

Saito started his career in Toshiba with work on Japanese language processing, including a Japanese word processor. He then worked on various processor R&D projects, such as an AI processor and a 3D graphics processor. He led joint development projects of both MIPS and Sparc processors with MIPS and Sun. He also worked on on multiprocessor server computer development as well as a portable device, which was a very early version of a "tablet".

Saito-san worked on the processor development project for the Playstation 2 with Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. (SCEI) in 1995; the processor chip became known as the "Emotion Engine". The Playstation 2 was released in 2000. In 2000 he became the Toshiba project leader for the next generation processor (known as the "Cell Broadband Engine") for the Playstation 3 with SCEI and IBM. The Playstation 3 was released in 2006. Without his

involvement and leadership, these state-of-the-art processors would not have seen the light of day.

Since 2006, Saito had been engaged in the development of a Cell derivative processor, the "SpursEngine", the image recognition LSI "Visconti" series, and many other SoCs. He had also been devoting himself to mentoring young engineers.

He was decorated with the Medal with a Blue Ribbon (Ranju Hoshō) in 2011 for his achievement in the development of real-time 3D graphics processor.

Saito-san served on the Hot Chips program committee in 1997, 1999-2001, and 2004-2013. He was an important contributor to Hot Chips because of his knowledge and connections in the (Japanese) industry, including his ability to solicit good presentations, his good understanding of products and computer architecture, his cooperative personality and his good command of English.

Those of us who have known and worked with Saito-san miss him greatly, as a technical star, a good person and a great friend.

Yoshio Masubuchi

Alan Jay Smith