

Celebrating the Life of Prof. Giovanni Solari



It is with great sadness and grief that I share the news of our very dear friend Giovanni Solari's passing away this evening in Genoa. He was bravely fighting an adverse medical condition for several months with its ups and downs but eventually succumbed to its power. He was surrounded by his family in his last moments.

Giovanni was a consummate researcher, who dug deep into pressing issues of modeling wind loads on structures through his insightful analysis. His leadership as the first president of the International Association for Wind Engineering (IAWE) was phenomenal as he carefully through consensus building established the bylaws and then also helped to launch the Davenport Medal to recognize the contributions of Alan Davenport. He was proud of the medal being instituted by IAWE and had offered the medal as memorabilia to Alan in Cairns, Australia.

Giovanni was a giant in the field, a towering figure and his accomplishments were recognized by many organizations like ASCE and IAWE as he received the Jack E Cermak Medal, Robert H Scanlan Medal and Alan G Davenport Medal. He was instrumental in assisting me in the reformulation of the Gust Effect Factor in a closed-form in ASCE 7 when we moved to a 3-sec gust as the reference wind speed.

Besides a suite of papers that had impacted the field, he authored a book on Wind Engineering from a historical perspective. He spoke at an Italian Ted Talk where he promoted the field of wind engineering with passion and particularly the thunderstorm winds.

On a personal note, I first met him at the International Conference on Wind Engineering at Colorado State University several decades back and from that day we have been friends. He was an honest, committed, driven, unassuming scholar and a real gentleman. Many years back he organized one of the best conferences I have attended. It was an early Italian Wind Engineering Conference in Genoa with high-level technical contents and superb Italian food. More recently he was very committed to the success of THUNDERR, a European Union Research Center he directed, which has produced some of the most cutting edge research in the field and has matriculated a very talented cadre of students from the newly installed Ph.D. program at the University of Genoa in Wind Engineering.

As we celebrate the life this modern-day giant in the wind engineering field, I think we can all benefit from the example he has set with his love, enthusiasm and dedication to research, education and personal decency to carry on his legacy.

Respectfully Submitted

Ahsan Kareem

President IAWE

November 19, 2020