LOCAL GRAD GOES HIGH TECH... and brings it back home

By Peter Drury

David Wong at his office, Courtesy Photo.

David and Trina Wong, 35, is president, Chief Technology Officer (CTO), and co-founder of People Power Company, a maker of high-tech products that help solve ancient problems -- such as caring for elders and keeping them, and their caregivers, connected to family and the community. 

Dave is a graduate of Miami High School, class of 2000. Lauded as a top-tier engineer, visionary technologist, and compassionate entrepreneur, David credits his success to, in part, the ample free time he enjoyed as child.

"One of the things that helped me succeed was having time to focus on things that mattered to me," David says. "It just happened to be stuff that helped my professional growth."

Transformed by his love of computers, Dave learned his first programming language at age 10. When he joined his best friend, the most widely read professional programming language of the era, he named the $500 by leaving computers around town. Then, he and his friend Jeremy Fergusson built a website to demonstrate the knowledge they had acquired.

"I was always into computers," says David, from his home in Coconut Creek, Florida. "I sort of was a five year old after school on learning new things and building new things."

In high school, he volunteered for the Miami School District, providing technical support to the networked IT teams. Danny Yang, Public Relations Director at CTO, was the Computer Applications teacher at the time. The switching for ways to keep (and keep) Jeremy, for ahead of the class, engaged. "You have those things we could do and we cannot explain," Danny says, and "you want to challenge them."


Co-founders Lisa Wong and David Wong, 3 years ago, started the company in their garage. The company has since evolved from a $500 investment into a high technology company. (From Photo)

From Dream to Reality

"I knew there was this place called Silicon Valley and all these startups were happening there." David says of his childhood. "It was my dream to go there." In 2015, David woke up to that dream. Living in a room behind a garage in Palo Alto California, he had an idea. "David had this really wild idea to turn an old smartphone into a free surveillance camera," notes Genna.

They began talking to investors that day. They developed the app, named it Presence, and created a new model for old cell phones - helping families

in his kitchen and then refused to push the button, not wanting to be a burden to his family.

The Presence program is an innovative way to set up. David's grandmother, who lives in Glencoe, uses the app on a security system. She says Genna's mother's best heuristics twice the past. According to their research partners at the University of California, Berkeley, anxiety and depression are two of the biggest problems in the field of senior care, both for the elderly and their caregivers.

"While falls are a big deal in senior care, isolation and depression are the bigger problems to solve," David says. "We have to go beyond the sleepy objects and find ways to connect people in new ways."

From Intern to Co-founder

"I haven't met too many people as talented as David," says Wang, founder of six tech start-ups, former CEO of Dropbox and current CEO of People Power. "He's definitely one of a kind."

At Dropbox, David was one of a large team of people responsible for updating software inside the box, a best-selling cell phone at the time. The software was written in C, the language he had learned in middle school.

"He was just so untrained and so fast and so smart to get along with, and he is such a talented baseball player," says Genna. "We got to be great friends."

In 2017, Dropbox sold to Hewlett Packard Enterprise for over $2 billion to work for Bionics Research in Tokyo, where he developed expertise in robot, low-power sensing, wireless sensor networks.

David and Genny Wang reconnected in 2020. Inspired by her data's concerns about the planet, Genna wanted to start a clean tech company and use wireless sensors to reduce energy in the home and reduce carbon pollution. David tapped the list of all our players he wanted to bring back together.

"Not only is he a very accomplished programmer, he has a range of abilities that span across the board and his technical skills and hard work all the way up to closing deals and artificial intelligence," explains Genna, "I never met anyone with so many skills."

Genna and David became co-founders of People Power in 2020. Today, the company has 30 employees around the United States, Canada, India, and China.

"It's not every day that you meet someone who has your skills," David remarks. "Let alone start a company with them."

Wang made a conscious choice to move from Japan back to leadership in "People Power Company. Continued on page 7.

The Presence Family app is capable of running on a tablet into an electronic frame that frames an as "an Instagram for elders." David also came up with an architecture that supports a product called the Social Connector R101, which will remind one person every day to call the elder family member or share a picture or video with them.

In the February release, called Care 3, the app will offer caregivers support groups. It goes beyond simply linking elders and caregivers to experts in the field and others dealing with similar challenges.

"What are you going to do with this?" David says. "I'm here to help bring the future to life."