Family Statement on Passing of Angela Chao

New York, NY – February 12, 2024 – Dr. James S. C. Chao released the following statement on the passing of his daughter, Angela Chao:

“It is with a heavy heart and deep sadness that I announce the passing of my beloved youngest daughter, Angela Chao. Angela is a brilliant woman, a charismatic and visionary leader and much-loved by all her sisters, our entire family and friends. From an early age, she displayed a delightful precociousness and fierce intellectual curiosity that endeared her to everyone and helped her excel at everything she did. As a daughter, sister, mother, aunt, wife and friend, she was unfailingly filial, thoughtful, kind and devoted. These qualities were complemented by a spirited personality, exceptional intelligence, compassion for all and a wonderful sense of humor. She kept us laughing and smiling. She believed deeply that the true treasures in life are family, friends and helping others. Losing her at such a young age is something we never even imagined, and our entire family is devastated with grief.

Angela is unique in that she was academically gifted, hard-working, and possessed strong core values during her entire life. She expressed an interest in the shipping industry at an early age and was a wonderful and inquisitive companion accompanying me to the office on “Take Your Daughter to Work” days. We were so proud that she graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in economics from Harvard College in just three years. While attending Harvard Business School, she used her enthusiasm and knowledge of shipping to write a ground-breaking case study on “Ocean Carriers” that to this day is part of the required curriculum for first year HBS students. She always believed in helping others and became a beloved member of the Harvard community, serving on the HBS Board of Dean’s Advisors and establishing the Ruth Mulan Chu Chao and James Si-Cheng Chao Family Fellowship at Harvard College. As a trail blazer for women in the executive suite, she inspired others to pursue their dreams. She also loved music and tried the French horn as her instrument when young, insisting on carrying it herself to every lesson. These early experiences created a lifelong, passionate commitment to the fine arts. She put her advocacy into action by serving on the Chairman’s Council of the Metropolitan Museum of the Arts, and as an Advisory Board Member of the Metropolitan Opera. In addition, she generously supported many health and community philanthropies, including serving as a member of the International Advisory Board of the Hospital for Special Surgery. We are especially gratified by Angela’s devoted service to the Asian-American community. Although born in America, she never forgot her roots and throughout her life helped build bridges of understanding between East and West. Among other special honors, she served as Honorary Chair of the Chiao-Tung University Alumni Association in America, Co-Chair of the Advisory Council of the Asian American Foundation, and a member of the Young Leaders Forum of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations.
Angela’s name in Chinese sounds like the characters for peace and prosperity. She certainly gave more than her share of both to this world. Her absence leaves a void not only in our hearts, but in the Asian-American community.

Although we are heartbroken, my family and I have the deep conviction- nurtured by our Christian faith- that we will see Angela again, along with her mother and my beloved wife, Ruth Mulan Chu Chao, and our daughter and her sister Jeanette. They are forever in our hearts and our minds.”

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