

# Dr. Harold Wong – A Personal History



I have devoted 50+ years to studying the world of money. I earned my Ph.D. in Economics (UC Berkeley) in 1974 and passed the national CPA exam in November 1979. Unlike most Ph.D.'s who remain their whole career solely as university professors, I wanted to make my mark in the real world.

In addition to my academic career, I started 11 businesses: income tax planning; single-family rental homes; commercial buildings; almond farms; California celebrity hotel; public speaking; TV/radio appearances; Caterpillar heavy equipment leasing; computer peripherals leasing; mortgage loan broker; and retirement income planning.



In 2015 and 2016, I purchased part of a creative Arizona commercial and residential real estate investment firm. The holdings include 7 hotels, 3 apartment buildings, mini-storage facilities, office buildings, and a major mixed-use real estate development north of Denver, CO. In 2020, the company was named to the prestigious Inc. 5000 list (5,000 Fastest Growing Private Companies in America) for the 7<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. In 2016, I became part-owner of a revolutionary solar reefer company in Mesa, Arizona.

*Photo: The Solar Reefer and Trailer display, at the 2019 International Food Distributors Trade Show, in Orlando Florida.*

**FREE FINANCIAL COLUMN**

**THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC**  
Contributing Columnist

**The most popular money column in Gannett's AZ Republic**

**Over 1 Million Have Heard Dr. Wong Through 400 TV/Radio Appearances**

For eight years, I wrote the exclusive column on money in the community section of the Arizona Republic, the largest daily newspaper in the state of Arizona. My research was then distributed to the 2,100 newspapers across America that are members of the National Newspaper Association.

Through 400 TV/radio show appearances, over one million people have heard my message. My first media appearance was in February of 1980. During a two-hour interview I had on KCBS, the CBS radio station in San Francisco, my appearance set a record for listener response by generating over 3,000 phone calls and letters. During the early 1980s, my message set an all-time response record on over 50 TV and radio stations from San Francisco to Los Angeles.



According to The National Speakers Association, (NSA), I am only one of nine speakers world-wide who is a current and active member for at least 40 years. I was the top-rated speaker in three NSA Showcase events that I entered.

I have educated thousands of attorneys, CPAs, financial professionals, and realtors over the last 40 years. My monthly column “Asset Protection” appeared in a legal publication distributed to 7,000 Arizona attorneys. My CD on “Advanced IRA Strategies” was distributed to over 1,000 CPA’s. More than 100,000 realtors and real estate investors have attended my seminars.

In my sports career I have excelled at brutal Japanese Shotokan Karate and Korean Tae Kwon Do. I have had every one of my fingers and toes broken and these were considered minor injuries. One of my favorite photos shows me touring Asia in 1985 with part of the U.S. Olympic Tae Kwon Do team. We drummed up interest for the 1988 Olympics, hosted by Seoul, South Korea. This was the first time that Tae Kwon Do became an Olympic sport.



### **1985 U.S. Olympic Tae Kwon Do Team**

Goodwill Tour at World TKD HQ - Seoul, Korea • Harold Wong - Front Row, Far Left

Kim Royce was my star student. He started training with me at age 15. He won the silver medal, heavy weight class, at the World Tae Kwon Do Championships.



**1985 Harold Wong in China, Training Kim Royce**  
Who Won Silver Medal Tae Kwon Do Heavyweight World Championships



**1999 Arizona Tennis Association Team Doubles Champions**  
(One of a record 7 straight ATA Team Championships won by Dr. Wong's team)

My competitive tennis career began at age 37 and I have played for teams that won 3<sup>rd</sup> place twice (1996 and 2002) and twice with top 10 finishes (1994 and 2000) at the United States Tennis Association National Amateur Team Championships. A separate tennis team that I started, coached, and played for won a record seven straight Arizona Tennis Association Team Doubles Championships.



**1994 U.S. Tennis Association National Team Amateur Championships**  
Tucson, Arizona • Harold Wong - Front Row, Far Left



**2000 U.S. Tennis Association National Team Championships**  
Tucson, Arizona • Harold Wong - Front Row, Second from Left

In 1997, I competed in the Club Med World Amateur Tennis Tournament in Mexico and won Gold Medal Mixed Doubles, America Zone (N. and S. America)



Gold Medal Mixed Doubles, American Zone Champions,  
1997 Club Med World Amateur Tennis Tournament in Mexico

## How it All Began

For decades, the Chinese suffered under the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which prohibited all immigration of Chinese laborers and Chinese women. According to Wikipedia, it was the first, and remains the only law to prevent all members of a specific ethnic or national group from immigrating to the United States.

This Exclusion Act was repealed by the Magnuson Act on December 17, 1943, which allowed only 105 Chinese to legally enter each year. My Dad won the last national scholarship competition in China before the Communists took over the entire country. He was stationed at the U. of Iowa (Iowa City) where he earned his Ph.D. in chemical engineering and my mom got her master's degree in biochemistry.



Harold Wong, age 13, shoveling in corn field,  
back of house - 1963, Bradley, Illinois

We lived in the rural outskirts of Joliet, Illinois (and later, the outskirts of Kankakee, Illinois) because no one would rent to us in town. America had fought the Japanese in World War 2 and had fought the North Koreans and Chinese Communists in the Korean War and developed a hatred of Asians. We were lucky to have indoor plumbing in an old house. Nearly all the neighbors had outhouses; a water pump in the front yard; and a water pump in the kitchen.

I went to the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana and graduated in June 1971 with a BA in Economics, Magna Cum Laude,

and Phi Beta Kappa. I was designated a Woodrow Wilson Fellow, ranked one of the top 1,000 to graduate from the United States or Canada.

I started graduate school in September 1971 at UC Berkeley and earned my Ph.D. in Economics in 1974. I was the youngest in memory to receive a Ph.D. and passed all exams eight months after arriving. My dissertation was funded by a US Department of Labor Grant, and I was assigned my office at a research institute off campus from the moment I arrived.

## **I love what I do**

My family escaped communist China and came to America, which truly is the land of opportunity. The political and economic freedom and upward mobility is rare in the world. I'm grateful for the opportunity to rise from the only Asian in the

Laborer's Union in central Illinois to the success I've achieved in at many areas of life: academics, sports, business, publishing, real estate, and solar reefer technology.

The house we lived in could have been purchased for \$12,000, but that was way too expensive for my parents. Instead, for years we rented it for \$100 a month. I never dreamed that in my future I would be owning hotels, apartment buildings and many other types of real estate.

My mission is to give back to America by helping hard-working families reach a happy and prosperous retirement, where they can live their bucket list dreams! It would be my honor and privilege to help educate and coach you on all the financial issues that concern you. Everything is possible in America, if you work hard and smart; and have an expert coach or mentor!

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[www.drharoldwong.com](http://www.drharoldwong.com) – for my 7-page White Paper on Huge Tax Savings

[www.solarbusinessinvestments.com](http://www.solarbusinessinvestments.com) - for more on Solar Tax Saving Strategies

Testimonials:

*...I particularly appreciate the straight talk, no nonsense approach you took in your presentation...Your guidance on investing in this market reassured me that though many challenges may exist, there are still opportunities to be successful....I will definitely recommend your seminar to other investors and realtors...*

**Richard H. Jones, CPA, Estate Capital Funding**

*Your Talk on Secret Tax Strategies was one of the most interesting topics covered and we received great feedback from all who attended...*

**Zach Fuller, Caliber Companies**

*Your in-depth knowledge of the material was quite evident and you informed us of the facts (IRS rules), regardless of how attendees were trying to bend the rules to fit their needs/wants. You have given me a marketing edge over my competitors which I'm sure will open new doors for me.*

**Mark Morelock, Associate Broker, West USA Realty**