



Phillip M. Wasylean II

October 31, 1941 - February 3, 2020

Hampton - Phillip M. Wasylean II, 78, of Hampton, New Hampshire and San Juan, Puerto Rico, died on Monday, February 3, 2020 at Portsmouth Hospital in Portsmouth, New Hampshire after a long and valiant battle with cancer.

Phil was born on October 31, 1941 in Woonsocket, Rhode Island, the son of Edith (Carr) and Michael Wasylean. Phil was raised in Blackstone, MA, where he attended local schools and graduated from Blackstone High School. The first in his family to attend college, Phil studied to become a teacher at what was then Worcester State Teacher's College, now Worcester State University. Following graduation from Worcester State in 1963 with a degree in English and science, Phil served in the Peace Corps in South America, where he became fluent in Spanish. He went on to earn a Master of Arts degree and a master's degree in teaching from Rhode Island College and a Master of Science degree from the University of Rhode Island. Mr. Wasylean taught at LaSalle Academy in Providence, RI for many years before moving on to St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Dover, NH. Mr. Wasylean finished his career at Lawrence High School in Lawrence, MA, retiring in 2004.

A passionate and celebrated educator and humanitarian, Phil received many notable honors throughout his esteemed career. He was a Pew Grant recipient and was one of only four Massachusetts teachers to become a Kennedy Teaching Fellow in 1992, an award given in recognition of outstanding teaching. He was featured on the Boston television program, "Chronicle", for his bilingual instructional methods and strategies. Phil was also one of only 15 educators nationwide chosen to serve on the National Board for Professional Standards for Bilingual Education for which he proudly served for 5 years. In 1999 he earned the New Hampshire Hero Award for saving a man from drowning in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where he maintained his winter home.

Phil was also a dedicated traveler, thespian, and generously engaged patron of many arts and human service organizations including The Ogunquit Playhouse and The Hampton Playhouse where he spent 35 years as an actor and entertainment director.

A beloved teacher for 42 years, Mr. Wasylean taught English, Spanish, social studies, English as a second language, bilingual education, and drama, where his classrooms came alive with creative presentations and lively discussion. He took an active interest in his students' career plans and encouraged them to pursue their goals, much like what his college professors at WSU did for him. He was a yearbook advisor, media specialist, and drama director and producer. He led humanities and writing workshops at the local, regional, and national levels, and published several scholarly articles.

Worcester State University changed Phil's life so profoundly that its current and future students are the primary beneficiaries of his philanthropic gifts. A pioneer in his own right, Mr. Wasylean was the first individual to make \$1 million-dollar unrestricted gift to WSU, the largest in the university's history at the time. In 2004, with deep gratitude, Worcester State named its first new dormitory in more than 25 years, Wasylean Hall, in his honor. In 2009, Mr. Wasylean received the Distinguished Alumni Award for Outstanding Service to Alma Mater, the highest non-degree recognition bestowed by the University on an alumnus or alumna for his many years of dedicated service and philanthropy to Worcester State. He was later honored with the I. Robert Freeland Award in 2015 for exemplifying the spirit of benevolence to WSU of the late I. Robert Freeland, a founding member of the Worcester State Foundation.

After making his historic gift in 2004, Phil continued his philanthropic endeavors, personally endowing a scholarship and lending his support to alumni gift initiatives providing incentive to help other reunion classes make an indelible mark at the University. In addition to Phil's endowment at WSU, he maintains a scholarship at Lawrence High School for graduates who wish to attend WSU. In recognition of Phil's outstanding scholarship, affinity, and significant leadership contributions to his alma mater, an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters was conferred to him in 2017.

Phil has come to epitomize exceptional loyalty, commitment, and dedication to philanthropy through his steadfast support of local community as well as his alma mater which was like family to him. Phil's legacy endures in the countless students whose lives he has inspired and transformed through his generous gifts both as a teacher and philanthropist.

Mr. Wasylean was predeceased by his parents, Edith (Carr) and Michael Wasylean, and his brother, Robert. He is survived by his dear friends and neighbors of Hampton, New Hampshire, and his Worcester State University family.

A Celebration of Phil's life will be held at Worcester State University on April 26, 2020 at 12:30 p.m. at Wasylean Hall. Gifts in memory may be made to the Phillip M. Wasylean II Endowed Scholarship at Worcester State University c/o University Advancement 486 Chandler Street, Worcester MA 01602.

Comments



“ Mr Wesylean Was My High School AP History teacher at Lawrence High School. He his way of teaching was always thought provoking. He was one of the reasons I pursued my History Major in Umass. During my college years he would always touch base to see how i was doing. He always had a joke or two but always stressed to us to be a "Renaissance Man". Its been few years since we touched base i lost his number and just last week i was cleaning out some old paper work and saw a letter he had sent me during my college years. When i read about his passing i was very saddened and moved because Ive lost track of how he was doing.He truly loved his students, and always made the extra effort to show us that he cared. God Bless Him and may he rest in peace. He lived a full life and a life of impact. Much Love to You Mr Wesylean.

Julio Ramos - February 10 at 11:58 PM



“ I have found memories of Mr. Wasylean as a student at Lawrence High School (Class of 93). Rest in Peace.

Wanda P. Ortiz , Esq.

Wanda P. Ortiz - February 07 at 03:47 PM



“ "fond memories"

Wanda P. Ortiz - February 07 at 03:50 PM



“ So very sorry - I've known Phil from several gyms over the years. Always friendly and so loved wintering in Puerto Rico ! RIP Phil. You deserve peace!

Ellie Zalesky - February 06 at 07:01 PM



“ I taught with Phil at Lawrence High. He was a teacher who always cared about his students. Even after all those years, I still received a Christmas card each year from him filled with his latest news. Rest easy my friend.

Dora Antonellis - February 06 at 02:22 PM



“ Phil concluded his teaching career at Lawrence High School as the Media Specialist in the Lawrence High School Library. He served as Chairman of the Faculty Advisory Board and was instrumental in Lawrence High School regaining its accreditation.

He was an active member of the Lawrence Teachers' Union and a friend to all he met. He made a difference.

Frank McLaughlin
Past President
Lawrence Teachers' Union

Frank McLaughlin - February 06 at 12:13 PM



“ To Phillip's Family: I'm so sorry for your loss and he was truly a wonderful person. I knew Phil from the Dentist office, I was the receptionist and he was always a wonderful man. He was kind and caring and loved life. Everyone should have such a wonderful outlook on life. Rest in Peace Phil! Prayers being said for you and your family during this journey.

Grace Maxfield - February 04 at 11:17 PM



“ To Phillips family, knew of him as the neighbor down the street from my cousin Ernie. Every holiday that we spent at Hampton Phillip would stop by and enjoy our Portuguese Sardines and letting us know that we were smelling up the neighborhood. He would tell me that my children all grew up before his eyes. Good family friend. One of the last time of leaving Ernies, Phillip was on his way to pray the rosary at Ernies bedside in his final hours. Thank you Phil. Meant so much to me. Faith and friendship are forever in us.
Maria (Nazaré) Joe, Sean, Jason, Philip, Nathan and Kyle Lobao. We will forever miss you. Rest in peace.

Maria (Naz) Lobao - February 05 at 02:51 PM



“ Philip use to bicycle past our house everyday throughout the summers when Hampton Playhouse was open. Always a big smile, wave and "hello". When ever I think of the playhouse Phillips face always comes to mind. He was a forever fixture in Hampton and at the Playhouse, every summer. Rest in peace Phil. You brought smiles to many people.

Debra Noyes - February 05 at 08:18 PM



“ Had him in high school in 96 good dude always had good laughs before class started.

Carlos Dominguez - February 05 at 08:35 PM