



## Anthony C. Janetos

November 29, 1954 - August 6, 2019

Anthony Charles Janetos died peacefully at home in North Hampton, New Hampshire on August 6, 2019. The cause was pancreatic cancer. He was 64 years old.

Tony was the eldest son of five born to Dona and Peter Janetos on November 29, 1954 in Dover, N.H. Tony lived his early life in Durham NH, later moving to Hampton, NH. His childhood was an endless baseball game with his four younger brothers and random neighborhood kids, followed by swimming in the UNH pool. Tony attended Winnacunnet High School, playing soccer, basketball, and baseball, and graduating first in his class in 1971. He earned a Bachelor's degree magna cum laude from Harvard in 1976 and a Master's and a PhD in biology from Princeton.

Tony was a scientist and professor at Boston University at the time of his death. A professional mentor and friend, Thomas E. Lovejoy, described Tony as one of the finest and most thoughtful Global Change scientists. He said Tony was always open to new ideas and eager for constructive ways forward and "one always wanted to know: what would Tony think?"

Tony's brilliance and destiny in science were noted early. He had no recollection of being taught to read, which he was doing by age four. He recalled getting his library card as one of the most significant events of his

early childhood. Scientific discovery also began early at eight years old, when he was caught toying with a goldfish on mom Dona's ironing board. When asked what he was doing, he nonchalantly said he wanted to figure out how it worked.

Fast-forwarding to adulthood, Tony's research contributions began with the foraging habits of orb-weaving spiders, a paper still cited by scientists in that field. This work foreshadowed a lifelong interest in how living creatures- especially people- make important decisions about their future. After a post-doc at Harvard that honed skills in communicating science to decision-makers, Tony moved with future wife Valerie (whom he met playing softball in Boston) to the DC area where they lived and worked for thirty years and raised their family.

Over much of the 1980's, Tony examined his interest in humans' impact on the natural world through the lens of air pollution, beginning at EPA with its acid rain program. This led naturally towards work on climate change, landscape dynamics, and remote sensing, including eight years as a manager and team leader with NASA founding its Land-Cover and Land-Use Change Program.

Now an expert on science and policy more broadly, as well as an accomplished project manager, Tony spent the next fifteen years as an international leader in climate change science, science policy, and global environmental assessments. He advised the UN, worked on IPCC reports, and served at the Heinz Center for Science, Economics, and the Environment, the World Resources Institute, and the Joint Global Change Research Institute at the University of Maryland where he was Director.

In 2013, Tony had the opportunity to move back to his native New England to become the Director of the Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer- Range Future at Boston University and Professor in BU's College of Arts & Sciences

and Chair of the Earth and Environment Department. He helped put BU in the vanguard of universities acting to mitigate the impacts of climate change as Chair of its Climate Action Plan Task Force.

BU President Bob Brown recognized in a letter to faculty that “Tony was (and will ever be remembered as such) vital, energetic, engaged and intelligent” and that “in only a few short years with us, he had an enormous impact.”

Tony was involved with many scientific societies throughout his career, and held leadership roles in several national and international climate change study groups such as the National Climate Assessment. He wrote and spoke widely on the scientific, environmental, economic, and policy linkages among major global environmental issues, in particular climate change. He was an exceptional communicator to a wide variety of audiences, most recently invited to educate meteorologists on this topic.

A close colleague and friend at BU remembers Tony as a modest, loving man, and great fun to be with. He relished life and showered caring and love on his students, family, and friends. His four brothers saw how many friends he made, and even more impressively, kept them. A sister-in-law offered her own high praise: “Tony was a good egg.”

Tony was a great Dad, an excellent uncle to his many nieces and nephews, a dedicated coach of youth sports in Arlington, VA, and a positive influence on all he came in contact with. He was a devoted and kind husband to his wife of 34 years, Valerie Gamache. They shared a love of travel, the NH coastline, books, Scrabble, pets, softball and baseball and long distance running. Tony was a lifetime Red Sox fan and relished his own summers getting up to the plate and out in centerfield, most recently in “an old man’s league” in Boston.

Tony will be terribly missed by wife Valerie, his children Anna and Peter, brothers Jim (wife Dale Pollack) and Steve (Susan) in NH, John (Liz Watkins) and Greg (Rahel Crowley) in CA, sister-in-law Lisa Brideau (husband Mark), uncles Ron Reagan (Jane) and Jerry Reagan, aunt Amy Ebner, many nieces, nephews, cousins, two dogs, five cats, and countless friends and colleagues throughout the worldwide scientific community.

Services will be private. For more on Tony's contributions to BU and science, view [www.bu.edu/articles/2019/anthony-janetos-obituary/](http://www.bu.edu/articles/2019/anthony-janetos-obituary/) .

# Tribute Wall



“ Anthony C. Janetos

September 18, 2022 at 12:49 AM



“ I only learned of Tony's passing today because of my own illness. Tony and I worked together at NASA in the mid-90s when I was AA for Mission to Planet Earth and he was leading NASA's land use and land cover change program. His humane and judicious approach to humanity's sustainability and climate problems set him apart from others working in this space and it was clear to me he would grow into a valued advisor to the USGCRP and many other complex policy initiatives; so he did. And at BU, he led a new kind of institute whose remit is path breaking.

*At the personal level, we shared the same undergrad and grad alma maters. I remember with fondness a trip we took to Brazil to negotiate access of the NASA Blackbird to photograph the rate of deforestation from 90,000 feet above. Our principal negotiating tool was oceans of good white wine with which we plied a general in the Brazilian air force until he agreed that with us that data were indispensable, and besides he could have the pictures first and choose what he wanted us to have after seeing the results.. We got all we needed. In the fullness of time, this led to a Brazil-led program, Lambada.*

*We, BU, and the world lost him much too soon; he had more wisdom to contribute.*

Charles Kennel - September 03, 2019 at 02:47 PM

RN

“ Tony and I begin working together in the early 1980s to help lead the EPA's first National assessment of the impacts of climate change. I was the man on the ground so to speak, while Tony was the man in Washington, interacting with the Washington policymakers. We ultimately became close friends and until I retired in 2011 continued working together through all the major assessments of the US impacts of climate change as well as the global impacts for the IPCC. He was a powerful intellect. I felt quite honored that he asked me to join him for several small, select workshops with various entities including the Heinz organization. He had an impressive ability to work across scales and disciplines. His original dissertation and postdoc work was on spider Behavior, I believe, and he shifted from that to global climate and all the other ecological and social disciplines for a full integrated view of how the Earth system works. He was a very very talented person. And yes, he will be extremely missed by all.

Ron Neilson

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Ron Neilson - August 19, 2019 at 03:15 PM

BW

“ Tony was a genuine nice guy. He cared about people - his family, his friends and people he had never met and was never likely to meet. He was concerned that human activities were changing our climate and destroying biodiversity and adversely affecting current and future generations, particularly poor people in developing countries. Tony devoted his career to understanding the environment and making sure that governments and the public at large understood the impact of human activities, but even more importantly he showed that there are socially acceptable and cost-effective solutions. Tony was an excellent scientist with outstanding inter-personal skills - a rare commodity. He had the ability to communicate to his fellow academics, but also to students, governments and the public. It was a pleasure to work with Tony at NASA, and during the the IPCC and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessments. He accomplished much in his life, he will be remembered by many, and sorely missed by all that loved and liked him.

*Bob Watson, a former colleague and friend*

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**Bob Watson** - August 15, 2019 at 04:30 PM

CP

“ To Tony's Family, Heartfelt condolences to each of you in your time of sorrow. May God give you comfort and strength.  
Rest in peace Tony.

*Chuck Pierson WHS Class of 72*

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**Chuck Pierson** - August 14, 2019 at 06:01 PM

BA

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Bailey** - August 12, 2019 at 04:08 PM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Anthony C. Janetos.



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August 10, 2019 at 01:31 PM

AP

“ *A wonderful human being and a terrific scientist. He will be missed!*  
*Ari Patrinos*

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**Aristides Patrinos** - August 09, 2019 at 06:27 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket* was purchased for the family of Anthony C. Janetos.



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August 09, 2019 at 02:23 PM

DW

“ Tony was a wonderful friend and colleague. We worked closely together on assessments of climate change. His intellect was always amazing -- such great insights. He is sorely missed.  
Don Wuebbles

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**Don Wuebbles** - August 09, 2019 at 10:47 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Anthony C. Janetos.



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August 09, 2019 at 08:00 AM

JF

“ This is such sad news. Tony was an excellent scientist and community leader... but more importantly a wonderful husband, father, and friend. He touched so many lives and it was an honor to know him. Many, many thanks to his family for sharing him with us.

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**Jack Fellows** - August 08, 2019 at 11:42 AM

RD

“ A beautiful human being taken from us far too soon! Tony will be greatly missed. May his family, friends and colleagues find peace and comfort having been blessed by knowing Tony! Rest In Peace my friend.

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**robin damuth** - August 08, 2019 at 10:37 AM

AB

“ To Tony's family: Accept my condolences. Tony was a valuable member of the research community. I've known him for a long time...from when he was at the Heinz Center, to when he was at JGCRI PNNL to when he was at Boston U. He was a member of the Board of Atmospheric Sciences and Committee. Most recently he was the Chair of the Environmental Research and Education Advisory Committee at NSF. He had an impactful career and left us so early. May it help you to know that so many others grieve at this loss. Anjali Bamzai

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**Anjali Bamzai** - August 07, 2019 at 09:08 PM

LD

“ Always and will be forever grateful to Tony. It was a wonderful time spent as his postdoc. An optimist person who always see the bright things. He will be sorely missed. -Laurence Delina



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**Laurence Delina** - August 07, 2019 at 06:33 PM

MK

“ I am shocked and saddEned to learn of Tony's passing. I worked with him for many years at NASA Headquarters. He was a brilliant light within the institution and a wonderful friend. He will be missed by all who knew him. Rest In Peace my friend and colleague.

*Mike Kurylo*

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**Mike Kurylo** - August 07, 2019 at 05:47 PM

DK

“ Tony was and always will be a remarkable person. Growing up in Hampton and graduating high school with him you knew he'd go forward and make a difference no matter what he chose to do. His work will continue to make the world a better place. Sincere condolences to Val and family.

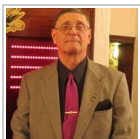
Debbie Kiernan - August 07, 2019 at 04:58 PM

ML

“ Marsha Learnard purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Anthony C. Janetos.



Marsha Learnard - August 07, 2019 at 04:18 PM



“ What an incredible loss. I began working with Tony when I arrived at NASA HQ in 1992. He invited us to a party at his house in Arlington, Virginia. He was an awesome leader in the Scientific community and a great guy too. And he loved the Patriots, Bruins and Red Sox.

Stan Schneider - August 07, 2019 at 04:07 PM