



Jay D. Harper

FEB 16, 1955 - SEP 9, 2024



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Dr. Jay D. Harper, known to many as “JD”, was a man whose story was characterized by abiding virtues of perseverance, generosity and loyalty. His story began on February 16, 1955, in Beaver, PA, and ended too soon when he passed away on September 9, 2024, in Pittsburgh.

Anyone who knew JD, knows that his academic pursuits were myriad and fundamental to understanding his place in the world. His academic journey started with his studies in chemical engineering at Carnegie Mellon University. His thirst for knowledge and, more importantly, his calling to serve others, led him to further his education with master's degrees in business and public health from the University of Pittsburgh and, ultimately, a medical degree from West Virginia University.

JD wore many career hats successfully. During the last two decades of his professional life, he served as the medical director of employee health at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, and was also an assistant professor in the School of Public Health. His colleagues admired his unwavering devotion to improving the health and safety of the Center’s workforce. JD’s leadership and expertise also extended into his active participation in various medical associations—where he was a respected voice. Working with resident physicians and mentoring public health students provided him great satisfaction and joy, and was among his proudest accomplishments.

Family was the cornerstone of JD’s story. He was the cherished son of the late Jay and Dorothy Harper of Beaver, PA, and the younger brother of the late William (Bill) Harper. He was a devoted husband to his late wife, Mary Ann Harper (née DaBaldo), whom he lost far too soon. To all who knew her, she was a remarkable woman, whose presence brought light, laughter and love to everyone fortunate enough to know her. JD’s ashes will be interred next to his beloved wife at the Jefferson Memorial Cemetery in Pleasant Hills, PA.



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JD's legacy will live on through his children and grandchildren, son Jason and his wife Mariko, and their children Benjamin, Adelaide and Eleanor, of Mercer Island, WA; daughter Kendra Woodford and her husband Kyle, and their daughter Sienna of Herndon, VA; step-son Robert Guido and his wife Barbara, and their daughters Giulia and Caroline, of Silver Spring, MD; and step-daughter Nicole Mitchell and her husband Dave, and their daughters Paige and Shannon Mahoney, of Canonsburg, PA. His integrity and determination will serve as lessons for all of us in the years to come.

JD would be disappointed if it were not mentioned that he was a proud “yinzer,” that is, a true native son of Western Pennsylvania. He was a lifelong and diehard fan of the Steelers, Penguins and, yes, even the Buccos. JD was also a voracious reader. When he found a subject that piqued his interest, he would dive in wholeheartedly—and the teacher within him enjoyed sharing his newfound knowledge and passions with others.

JD made a difference in the lives of appreciative family and friends by never hesitating to lend a hand, an ear, and wise counsel when needed. Our loss will be deeply felt in the years ahead.

In the spring of 2025, JD's children will reach out to family and friends to join with them in celebrating and remembering their dad. In remembrance of JD and Mary Ann, we would suggest a charitable gift to the National MS Society and the Amyloidosis Foundation to help them in their mission to support others living with these chronic conditions.



Tribute Wall

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Walter & Cynthia sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Harper family.



March 29 at 12:25 PM



Adrienne Wehr posted:

Dear beloved JD, I am so deeply grateful to have shared this earth walk with you as a cousin and a friend. I offer my hand and heart to all your family in this time of vast change. And I celebrate all that you brought while here. You shall ever shine brightly as a beautiful, bountiful model of kindness, generosity, perseverance, courage and grace...you gentle giant, you 🙏 Blessed Be, Blessed Be.

October 27 at 8:28 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Jay by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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