

## Reflections on Arnie Kaluzny

For Memorial Service at Carol Woods Chapel Hill NC

March 6, 2026

- First to Melissa and Carrie and Arnie's brother Dick and your families.....I am sorry for your loss.
- I am Donna O'Brien and I worked with Arnie over many years....mostly in the cancer program part of his professional life.
- We first met in the 1986 when I was a Fellow for the Accrediting Commission on Education for Health Services Administration and Arnie was a Commissioner along with other giants in our field including Steve Shortell who is here today.
- At that time, I was an Administrator at MD Anderson Cancer Center and I recall Arnie being excited about this new cancer program idea he was working on at the National Cancer Institute to bring cancer clinical trials to more patients in the community..... We had an immediate connection!
- Fast forward to 2005, I was asked by the NCI Director to help them start a new cancer clinical and research program to reach those in the community.
- Arnie was still working with them and we happily reconnected. The NCI Director wanted him to work on this new program, but he had one condition ....he did not want to have to write any reports.
- Well 10 years later he was a co-author on many papers and he and I wrote a book together!! He could not resist the importance of structuring evaluations and documenting the outcomes.
- As a result of this work, he received two NIH Directors Awards!!
- He and I went on to write other papers with our last in 2021 on the history of cancer control at the NCI to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Cancer Act ,, , ...and true to his expertise....how leadership shaped that history. Arnie was involved with **all** of that history.... with his contributions documented in the NCI oral history initiative.
- And Cancer was only a slice of what he was involved with!!

- More than what Arnie achieved.....he was a great colleague and mentor and ....he became a cherished friend. I am sure as many here can attest....he was a touchstone ....always interested in what you were doing and always willing to help.
- I think of Arnie as the “Grand Connector” ...he had quite a network ...global in fact and was generous in sharing it.
- At the kick off meeting for our large NCI project with the NCI Director about 30 people went around the room to introduce themselves ...just about every person said...and I worked with Arnie Kaluzny here or there. It was quite funny but not surprising!!
- Through Arnie I was fortunate to be connected to his many networks....whether through UNC, his health services research colleagues across the country, health care executives he had taught, his Michigan PhD classmates...quite an illustrious group, his Project Hope global contacts, etc.
- When Arnie made an introduction, it led to a warm welcome.
- I was working on a project for Intermountain Health so he wrote to Lucy Savitz...a favorite PhD student of his who was there at the time and who would be here today were it not for covid. She had me to dinner at her house in Salt Lake City just because I knew Arnie.
- I was speaking at a cancer conference and Arnie knew the person organizing it, Brian Springer, and connected us. Brian Springer who is also sorry he can't be here today met Arnie when he was working at Southern Coffee in Chapel Hill. Arnie was a regular and he said they always had the most interesting conversations and no surprise..... that led to Brian getting into the MHA program. He has now been a leader in many of the top cancer centers around the country. He said he owes his career to Arnie who helped him get his first job after grad school, and always stayed in touch. The funny thing is Brian never took a class from Arnie...Arnie was always interested in helping those in the program. When I spoke to Brian after Arnie passed away...we thought the best way to honor our “Kaluzny connection” was to write a paper together and thinking of Arnie....we better get that done!!
- He introduced me to Linda Kastleman who is here today. She had retired from the Gillings School and was invaluable as an editor for us and for Arnie where she helped with his article on the experience of living at Carroll Woods. And ....with his autobiography.....A life well lived which... with her help ...is a beautiful reflection on his life. She was a great friend to Arnie these last few years.

- His Michigan classmate and very long time friend David Barton Smith had to cancel plans to be here today due to the challenges of the recent blizzard and power loss on Martha's Vineyard. I think he is watching on line. He said well, ....what many have experienced....*"Arnie never stopped encouraging and helping ....he was a perpetually curious and humane human being."*
- He made a difference in countless people's lives across generations.....many making important contributions in healthcare which he described as a sacred endeavor.
- One constant for him of course was his wonderful family...Barb of course whose loss after so many years of marriage was so hard and unexpected. He was so proud of Melissa and Carrie and his three grandchildren ... Nicholas, Crosby and Heather. Thank you for sharing your father and grandfather with so many of us.
- I learned an expression from Arnie ...when he was working on his many collaborative projects... if someone was instrumental in holding things together but under the radar screen...he would say they were the "celestial glue." Well Arnie..... for many people in many endeavors you were, and through your legacy will continue to be.... "celestial glue" ... and we are all the better for that.... and grateful.