



CALIFORNIA STATE
UNIVERSITY
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Announcement

Office of Academic Affairs

Professor Ivan D. Kovacs Passed Away

Ivan D. Kovacs, Professor Emeritus of Human Development, passed away March 13, 2013. He began his career at CSU, Hayward (East Bay) in 1970, retired in 1999 and participated in the Faculty Early Retirement Program (FERP) through June of 2004.

A campus memorial is being planned. Details will be provided to the campus community.

The attached was forwarded to us by the family of Prof. Kovacs.

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A Celebration of
Ivan Kovacs

November 8, 1930 – March 13, 2013



Ivan Denis Kovacs, Amherst, Massachusetts was Born in Budapest, Hungary 11/8/1930 to Andor Lazlo Kovacs and Charlotte Kublin Kovacs. Ivan was raised in Budapest where the Cistercian monks schooled him. He was shaped by the experience of World War II. At age 10, Ivan was brought to a Swedish Protection House while his father was taken to a labor camp for a year. While he attended high school he competed in track for the Hungarian National Team. After high school, Ivan attended University in Budapest, where he furthered his understanding of the human experience and worked in a facility for severely disabled youth. Still haunted by the violence, oppression, and unrest of war and the Hungarian Revolution, Ivan attempted to flee his homeland twice. During his first attempt he was arrested, but with his second he found success.

In 1957 Ivan came to the US as a refugee and he eventually settled in Ann Arbor, Michigan where he got a Master of Arts in Psychology and a Doctorate from the Department of Higher Education at the University of Michigan. Ivan met his first wife, Sallyann Rubin, while at the University of Michigan, and in the years that followed he had his first four sons: Roland Thomas Kovacs, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Peter Vincent Kovacs, Modesto, California; Gregory Sean Kovacs, Los Angeles, California; and Andrew David Kovacs, Torrance, California.

Ivan moved to Detroit, Michigan where he taught at Wayne State University's Monteith College -a bold experiment at the time in interdisciplinary studies. He then moved to Hayward, California and began teaching at California State University, Hayward, where he founded the Department of Human Development at the age of 35. It was an innovative inter-disciplinary program. Ivan had a very significant impact on his students. Fostering their development and growth, he encouraged self-exploration, critical thinking and creativity. He challenged them to apply their knowledge and experience to the greater world. Many students reported that he had a profound influence on their lives as a result of his teaching.

In 1989 he met his current wife, Margaret Lucinda Wright, and had another son, Tristan James Kovacs, Amherst, Massachusetts. Ivan's loving influence also touched the life of Margaret's other son, Seth John Wright, San Francisco, California. Ivan loved his family very much and supported everyone with wisdom, patience, compassion, and a sense of humor that no one will ever forget. He truly believed in promoting equality, fighting stereotypes, and working to transform the legacy of racism.

Ivan's sons are now grown with wives of their own: Roland is married to Donna Dumm Kovacs. Peter is married to Christine Vicente-Kovacs. Gregory is married to Ellen Rochman Kovacs. Andrew is married to Lucia Becerra Kovacs. Some of them have sons of their own: Roland's sons - Benjamin Thomas Kovacs and Jeremy Steven Kovacs, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Peter's sons - Zachary Ashton Kovacs and Maxwell Vincent Kovacs, Modesto, California. Gregory's sons - Sidney Matthew Kovacs, Joshua Allan Kovacs, Los Angeles, California. He also has been blessed with two granddaughters. Roland is the father of Monica Alice Kovacs. Gregory is the father of Rachel Gail Kovacs. Andrew is expecting his first child - Isabella Marie Kovacs, Torrance, California.

Leaving the world a better place, Ivan passed away peacefully on March 13th, 2013 at the age of 82, surrounded by close family. Ivan will be deeply missed, but his love, wisdom, teaching and humor are his legacy to us. His influence and presence will forever remain.