

***Paying Tribute to Board Member Melvyn H. Schneider (1939-2016)***



The Siragusa family is deeply saddened to share the loss of friend, advisor and long-time foundation board member Melvyn H. Schneider, who passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on Monday, October 17, 2016 at the age of 77.

Mel Schneider grew up in Chicago, IL, where he attended Emmet grade school, Austin high school and graduated from Roosevelt University in 1960. He wed Barbara Kaplan in 1963 and they raised their three children in Skokie until moving to California in the late 1980s.

Although settled on the west coast, Mel never let go of his Chicago roots remaining loyal to all the Chicago sports teams, especially the Chicago Bears and his beloved Chicago Cubs, who ironically won the World Series shortly after his passing. Not just a fan, Mel was an outstanding basketball and softball player himself. He was involved with several non-profit and community initiatives and also served as mentor to countless young people, instrumental in shaping their professional and personal lives beyond measure.

In the early 1960s, Mel started as a junior accountant for the Admiral Corporation, the television and radio company founded/owned by Ross. D. Siragusa. The two became fast friends and remained close until Siragusa's death in 1996. Mel served as an advisor for Siragusa and later volunteered for nearly 40 years with Siragusa's nonprofit family foundation. He was the longest-serving member of each governing board of The Siragusa Family Foundation, serving from 1980-2016.

Mel was passionate about the charitable work of the foundation, providing insight, leadership and guidance in all aspects of grantmaking, administration and operations. He worked to bring organizations to the foundation for funding, including the American Brain Tumor Association, the Anti-Defamation League and the Exceptional Children's Foundation. His work as a board member influenced multiple generations of Siragusa family members. Throughout his service as a trustee and board member, Mel worked to promote the values of the foundation to enhance the quality of life of the underserved and to help people help themselves. His dedication and commitment to the foundation is cherished by surviving Siragusa family members and fellow board members. On November 5, 2016 the foundation passed a resolution recognizing his significant contributions and achievements bestowing upon him the honorary title of Director Emeritus.

Colleagues, friends and family members remember Mel as an energetic, patient and thoughtful person, with an admirable sense of humor and diplomacy, and a wonderful penchant for story-telling. He made lasting friendships and was loved by all who knew him. Mel Schneider gave much of his time to others, especially to the foundation and the Siragusa family. He has passed on a remarkable legacy and will be deeply missed.