



Kenneth S. DeSieghardt

July 30, 1959 - August 21, 2021

Kenneth S. (Ken) DeSieghardt, 62, passed away from COVID-19 on August 21, 2021, at Advent Shawnee Mission Hospital. Ken was born on July 30, 1959, in Camden, New Jersey. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Journalism from the University of Kansas in 1981, where he met his wife of 38 years, Sara (Sally) Beals, while volunteering with the Student Union Activities Special Events committee in 1977.

Ken's impressive career in Public Relations included health care and agency experience. In 2002, he founded DeSieghardt Strategic Communications, where he built a strong relationship with public school districts, government organizations, and businesses by creating surveys, analyzing responses, and developing the results-driven strategic plans needed to help his clients provide the best education for their patrons. The author of two books on effective school district communication, Ken received multiple Prism and Silver Awards from the Greater Kansas City Public Relations Society of America (GKC PRSA) from 2003-2008 for his demonstrably successful work. In 2008, Ken expanded and rebranded as Patron Insight, Inc., to focus on his passion for public education. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Award from the Missouri School Public Relations Association (MOSPRA) in 2019.

If the world handed out awards for enthusiasm, Ken would have received gold medals for his love of rock and roll; KU sports, especially basketball; the

National Hockey League (NHL); and film noir. He and Sally attended countless concerts during their years together, and the entire family enjoyed cheering on favorite teams. From sports to schoolwork, Ken was also and always a proud and vocal fan of his daughters, Aislinn and Áine.

Ken had Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency, a genetic condition that led to his lung deterioration. In 2019, his life was saved by an organ donor and an incredible medical team: Ken received a double lung transplant at Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, MO. The transplant gave Ken's family, friends, and clients two additional years with this smart, witty, kind, and loving man. For that, we are forever grateful.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Constance H. (Connie) DeSieghardt in 2014. He was survived by his wife, Sally; his daughters, Aislinn and Áine; his brother, Fred A. DeSieghardt; and his father, Fred O. DeSieghardt. Ken's father passed away Oct. 18, 2021. A combined memorial service for Ken and Fred will be held at 1 p.m. Friday, Nov. 12, 2021, at Knox Presbyterian Church, 9595 W 95th St. in Overland Park, KS. Masks are mandatory. The family also will be holding an open house for Ken that evening, beginning at 6:30 p.m., featuring his favorite music and food; the open house will be held at 19733 Birch St. in Stilwell, KS. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to either the Alpha-1 Foundation (alpha1.org) or the Barnes Jewish Hospital Foundation (foundationbarnesjewish.org) directed towards Transplant. To further honor and remember Ken, turn the volume up on some rock and roll, and learn more about being an organ donor (unos.org).

Tribute Wall

LC

“ I had the pleasure of working with Ken on various school related projects. Most recently he helped St. Louis Community College pass a long overdue levy increase last summer. Ken was a true professional who kept his customer’s needs first but was also honest in his assessments. I will remember visiting with him in St. Louis as he waited for and then after receiving his “new lungs.” He showed great courage through the transplant process. I know Ken loved his family very, very much and was so proud of his daughters. I am so sad to hear of his passing and will long have fond memories of our time together in various projects.

Craig Larson

Larson Craig - November 20, 2021 at 10:57 AM

DW

“ Ken and I first met during his agency years and he quickly became one of my favorite clients. We continued that relationship for 20 plus years. His wit and wonderful sense of humor always put a smile on my face. I will miss our talks about concerts we’ve been to and the sports we love. I think we solved all the problems the Jayhawk football and basketball teams have had the past 20 years. If only we would have shared that with KU!

I was a fortunate man to have known Ken. He will be missed. May his memory remain in us all.

Your family is in our prayers.

Don Weston - November 11, 2021 at 11:36 AM

AG

“ I’m so very sorry. I feel very fortunate to have known Ken and will keep your family in our prayers

Angie Glenn - November 10, 2021 at 08:37 PM

JB

“ I met Ken at a PR firm where we both worked. It was only my second job out of college (MU, but he never razzed me about that). I learned so much from him, both professionally and personally. I always thought of him as a role model and looked up to his quiet intellect. He was the kind of guy who could converse with anyone from any background and find something they had in common. I hadn’t seen him in years, but damn I’m going to miss him.

Jeff Berney - November 10, 2021 at 02:21 PM

RB

“ So very sorry to learn of Ken's passing. May his memory be a blessing.

ruth bigus - November 10, 2021 at 12:55 PM

SB

“ Kenny and I met when we were 8 and 9 years old as he peeked his head into the end of the refrigerator box I was rolling around in on our front lawn. He built my character as much as any friend in my life. We spent 1,000’s of hours together playing and making up games and hijinks. He has been a steadfast and fun friend all through our 6 decades and his passing so young is devastating to me. I shall miss him immeasurably. Much love to his dear family.
Sharon Bettis ❤️

sharon bettis - October 05, 2021 at 01:11 PM