



Frank R. Scarpitti

November 12, 1936 - February 28, 2019

Frank R. Scarpitti, a longtime resident of Newark, passed away on February 28, 2019. He was 82. Frank was born in Butler, PA and moved to Cleveland, Ohio at age 11. He attended junior and senior high school in Cleveland and graduated from Cleveland State University in 1958. He immediately entered graduate school at The Ohio State University, receiving his Ph.D. Degree in sociology in 1962. Although trained in criminology, his first professional position was as director of one of the first community mental health research studies, testing the efficacy of home care for schizophrenic patients. This research was published in the book *Schizophrenics in the Community*, and received the American Psychiatric Association's Hofhemier Prize for Research in 1967. Thus began a 44-year career of teaching, research and writing.

After spending four years on the faculty of Rutgers University, he accepted an associate professorship at the University of Delaware in 1967, moving his wife and young daughter to Radcliffe Drive in Newark, a home he and Ellen never left. Two years later he was promoted to full professor and appointed Chair of the Department of Sociology (later Sociology and Criminal Justice). He served in that position for 17 years over several terms. The year 1969 was also notable because their second child, a son, Jeffrey, was born.

Frank was a prolific research scholar and writer, authoring, coauthoring or editing 19 books and over 60 articles and chapters. He researched and wrote on mental health, crime, delinquency, corrections, deviant behavior, social problems, drug treatment and the role of organized crime in illegal waste disposal. His coauthored book, *Poisoning for Profit*, was widely cited by legal and legislative officials as the impetus for legal action designed to curb unlawful waste dumping. He was recognized nationally by being elected President of the American Society of Criminology as well as holding various offices in several other professional organizations. In 1981, he was elected Fellow in the American Society of Criminology, in recognition of his scholarly contribution to the intellectual life of the discipline.

Frank was also committed to the University of Delaware, particularly to ensuring a climate of equality. In 1968, he was appointed by the University President to Chair the Advisory Committee on Policies, Programs, and Services Affecting Blacks and Other Minority Group Students. The committee was tasked with recommending policies to improve the campus climate for minority students. They presented their recommendations in what became known as The Scarpitti Report, which had a large influence on policies designed to increase recruitment of minority students and faculty, and also ensure their representation on the Board of Trustees.

In 2006, Frank was named the Edward and Elizabeth Rosenberg Professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice and received the Francis Alison Award, the University of Delaware's highest faculty honor. Despite his various honors and awards, he was proudest of the many graduate students with whom he worked and who have assumed a variety of academic and governmental positions. Nearly 50 of them returned to Newark to attend his retirement celebration. In Frank's honor as a graduate student mentor, the Frank Scarpitti Graduate Student Award is presented annually to a graduate student in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. It is still not uncommon for faculty and students alike to ask, "What would Frank do?" when challenging issues arise.

The most important sphere of Frank's life was his family. Frank was a devoted husband and father, participating with Susan and Jeffrey in a variety of activities as they passed through their childhood and teenage years. For over 20 summers, the family moved to its farm in Pennsylvania, where they adopted a simpler lifestyle focused on the outdoors and the wonders of nature. For Frank, these were perhaps the happiest years of his life. Although he worked a great deal, he always had time for baseball, mystery novels, and old western movies, a subject he often lectured on.

He will be remembered as a kind, caring person, often generous to a fault, who once said he wanted to be remembered as a "good man." His family and friends believe he achieved his goal.

Frank is survived by his wife of 60 years, Ellen Canfield Scarpitti; a daughter, Susan Scarpitti Newstrom, son-in-law, George; daughter-in-law, Lisa Scarpitti; granddaughter, Alyssa Padilla and her children Bella and Matthew Castro; sister, Rita Bournique; brother Ronald; and various nieces and nephews. Frank was preceded in death by his son, Jeffrey, parents Frank and Geneva Scarpitti, brother Louis, and sister, Alice Lazor.

A memorial service will be held at a future date. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made in his honor to the University of Delaware, Gift Processing, 83 E. Main St., 3rd Floor, Newark, DE 19716, including in the check memo line "Frank Scarpitti Graduate Student Award in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice." Gifts can also be made on

the University of Delaware secure website, www.udel.edu/makeagift and including the same designation.

To send an online condolence please visit www.stranofeeley.com.

Comments



“ I cannot begin to make anyone understand the influence Dr. Scarpitti (yes, I will always refer to him that way) had on me. He embraced me when I was a freshman Sociology Major in 1970—one of the very few Black students not only in Soicioogy but also at UD. He became a mentor and help me get through some challenging times. Years later, he advocated for me to get a position at UD where I continue to work 30 years later. Whenever I saw him, he embraced me with open arms and that inimitable smile. I am so thankful that he was an integral part of my “village.”

Norma Gaines-Hanks - March 06, 2019 at 07:50 PM



“ Frank will be missed by all who were fortunate enough to know him. At the University of Delaware, he led by example and deed. A friend to many, his wisdom and kindness were greatly appreciated. He was a thoroughly good and decent person, always willing to lend a hand to assist others. He traveled his life's journey in a manner that sets a fine example for others to follow.

John B Bishop - March 06, 2019 at 07:35 AM



“ Frank, or "Juney" as I always called him, was a picture perfect older brother. Always there when I needed guidance of advice. I will never forget when as kids in Butler, Penna. every Saturday afternoon he would take me to a matinee to see our favorite western movie. I am truly honored to have had you as my sibling. You will be in our hearts forever.
RIP BIG BROTHER.
Ron and Helen Scarpitti

Ron Scarpitti - March 05, 2019 at 05:43 PM



“ A wonderful professor, a great family man, and a dear friend. So, so sad.
regards,
Suzanne Tuthill

Suzanne Tuthill - March 05, 2019 at 11:15 AM



“ Ellen,

I was so sorry to hear that Frank has died. Please accept my condolences. I recently lost my husband, so I know how you must be feeling. You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Bette Bournique

Bette Bournique - March 04, 2019 at 07:14 PM



“ Sweet Sincerity was purchased for the family of Frank R. Scarpitti.



March 03, 2019 at 11:31 PM



“ Ellen and family,
So sorry to hear about the death of Frank. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you during this time of grieving.
Karen Skurla

karen skurla - March 03, 2019 at 02:25 PM



“ Frank was an excellent teacher, a great scholar and gifted mentor. I had the privilege of learning from Frank in several graduate courses. He was an early mentor who continued to influence my graduate school experience, my career and my life. He was the chair of my dissertation committee. I'll never know how he tolerated, with such grace, the many drafts of my humble tome. He guided me with an intellect that inspired me.

Thank you Frank. I love you.

Henry (Hank) Fischer

Henry W. Fischer - March 03, 2019 at 01:17 PM



“ I was very blessed to meet Frank when Ellen and I were colleagues many years ago in the school counseling community. I admired Frank's devotion to his family and especially to Ellen. Frank always had a new author to share whenever I wanted to discover a new crime novel. His generosity and humble nature will surely be missed. My prayers go out to Ellen and her family.

Mary Maslar - March 03, 2019 at 12:30 PM



“ Frank was Chair of the Sociology and Criminal Justice Dept at UD when I started there in July 1990. He was a wonderful boss. He always had a smile for the staff and would stand in our office and chat. I am so sorry for your loss. He was a good man and I enjoyed working for him. May God comfort you and give you peace.

Linda Keen - March 02, 2019 at 06:57 PM



“ Thank you Uncle Frank... for everything.



Rick Bournique - March 02, 2019 at 04:42 PM



“ Watching Frank's strength, grace, and kindness over the years has been inspiring! It is hard to say good-bye after more than sixty years.

Judy Claps

Judith Barnes Claps - March 02, 2019 at 01:05 PM



“ Our hearts are so broken in the loss of your precious Frank. He was a fine beacon & pillar of society and will be missed by so many people he touched with his humble quiet persona. He mastered anything he set his mind to & become one top notch bocce player. Our heartfelt & sincerest sympathies & condolences to you Ellen & family. Love Grace & Keith Harris

Grace & Keith Harris - March 02, 2019 at 12:22 PM



“ Frank's kindness, quiet dignity, sense of humor, and sincerity as a friend will live in the memories and actions of all who knew and worked with him. He set an example, with his smile and humility, that is deeply shared and felt.

Gerry Turkel - March 02, 2019 at 10:24 AM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with Aunt Ellen, Susan and your family in this time of sorrow. Uncle Frank was such a blessing to our family and all the lives that he touched.
May you now find comfort and peace in your cherished memories.

Love, Mary & Lou Scarpitti



LOUIS J SCARPITTI - March 02, 2019 at 10:07 AM