



Dr. Gerard J. Putz

Dr. Gerard J. Putz, 79, of Elmhurst. Beloved husband of Sharon; loving father of Michael (Connie) Putz of Menlo Park, California, Kevin (Michael McNamara) Putz of Evanston, Illinois, and Jenny (Bob) Kopach of Elmhurst, Illinois; cherished grandfather of Hannah Kopach, Johnny Kopach and Meera Putz; son of the late Leonita and Jacob Putz; brother of Jacob, Mary Agnes, Diana, Louis and Jeanette and the late David; uncle to precious nieces and nephews; friend to many around the world.

Dr. Putz founded the national Science Olympiad along with his wife Sharon and his educational partner, Jack Cairns of Delaware, in 1984, and grew it to one of the largest and most prestigious team science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) competitions in the country. Over the past 35 years, millions of students and teachers who have experienced Science Olympiad credit the program with launching their interest and careers in STEM. Dr. Putz obtained a bachelor's degree in Science from the University of Detroit, then served as an active duty officer in the US Army, later gaining a Master's in Guidance and Counseling from Wayne State University, a Master's in Arts and Liberal Sciences from Wesleyan University, and a Doctorate in Secondary Education from Wayne State University. He began his career teaching high school Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science and Special Ability Science Programs for the Detroit Public Schools in the 1960s, then served as the Macomb County Science Center Director and Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Programs at the Macomb Intermediate School District (MISD) in Mt. Clemens, Michigan for more than 30 years. Dr. Putz lectured at dozens of universities and has made more than 100 presentations at science education and gifted and talented conferences across the United States and in Japan. After serving in the Reserves for more than 20 years, Dr. Putz attained the rank of Lt. Colonel in the US Army Air Defense Artillery. He served on the boards of many non-profits, associations and community groups and was chosen as the National Outstanding Science Supervisor by the United States National Science Supervisors Association.

Gerard was an avid traveler, sports fanatic, outdoorsman and number one fan of his wife's gourmet cooking. One of his favorite places on earth was Popham Beach, Maine, where he enjoyed some of his favorite things: lobster and drawn butter, fish chowder, bonfires, walks on the beach, cigars on the porch and a glass of Drambuie. He was a loving Gpa and Papa to Hannah, Johnny and Meera and took pride in their every accomplishment. Many people looked to Dr. Putz as a role model, leader and inspiration, and his wide influence in this world is likely immeasurable by any scientific method. Most of all, he was loved.

In lieu of flowers, memorials will be appreciated for a scholarship fund in Gerard's name and may be sent to: Science Olympiad, Two Trans Am Plaza Drive, Suite 310, Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181.

