



Brandeis University Eulogy for Professor Andrew B. Hahn

Brandeis University Faculty Meeting

September 9, 2022

Rapaporte Treasure Hall, Goldfarb Library, and via Zoom

**Delivered by Susan P. Curnan, Florence G. Heller Associate Professor of the Practice,
Director, The Center for Youth and Communities, The Heller School for Social Policy and
Management**

Welcome Senate, Faculty Colleagues, Deans, Provost Fierke, President Liebowitz. We are here to celebrate a great Brandeis citizen.

And, a special welcome to Andy's wife Liz, daughters Jillian and Shira, and Sister-in-law Sheila joining us today.

Our colleague and friend Andrew Barry Hahn, age 75, passed away peacefully with his wife and daughters by his side. He died on July 25, 2022 after an over-a-decade-long battle with Parkinson's disease. Andrew received a BA from American University in 1969, an Ed.M. from Harvard University in 1971, and his Ph.D. from the Heller School in 1978.

The Brandeis record will show that Andrew retired in 2014 after 32 years of dedicated service on the Faculty at Heller. But, we know he never left Brandeis and Brandeis never left his heart.

Indeed, during our visits over the past few years, Andy was quick to ask what was happening at our Center, with our students, with visionary deans and presidents.

Together, for nearly 40 years, Andy and I worked with 7 University Presidents, 7 Heller Deans, and consulted with 7 White House Administrations.

He was senatorial in government and foundation relations, a commanding and compelling "case maker" for our mission and always brought home new friends, partners, and yes, money to support our team & improve access, opportunity, and outcomes for so many disenfranchised young people.

He was both the glue and the charm that made our Center, and Heller, "home," generating prescient ideas and solutions to society's most pressing problems with boundless and contagious energy.

He served as Founding Director of the Sillerman Center for the Advancement of Philanthropy and was Co-Founder of the Center for Youth and Communities. Both Centers have gone on to conduct decades of impactful research on youth development, youth employment and the role of philanthropy.

At Heller, he was a beloved professor, "with a heart of gold" as students were fond of saying, and he was pleased to be awarded the Heller School's Mentoring Award in 2007 and

the Heller Alumni Award in 2020. Nominations and colleagues remarked on his instrumental role in raising the social justice profile of Heller in the world of programs and policies here and abroad.

In short, he was a Brandeisian and in his thought and action gave depth and meaning to *Tikun Olam* as we pursued our mission to “repair the world” of broken systems and outdated politics that perpetuated economic and racial inequities.

It’s been said that one makes a living by getting and a life by giving. He did both. He was smart, ambitious and competitive, and he was a mensch.

About 25 years ago, he started calling me his “work wife.” His Lizzi and my Lisa were okay with this. It meant we could count on each other, share inside jokes and secrets, be bluntly honest, grumpy, disagreeable, annoying – just like a real marriage! At one point, he gave me a mug. It read: “An awesome work wife is hard to find, difficult to part with and impossible to forget.”

I would say the same for my “Best Man.” At our wedding in the 1990s, Andy gave the Best Man toast. The good researcher he was, he wanted to get it just right for the occasion, an “Italian Wedding”, as he saw it, reflecting Lisa’s heritage. So, he researched Italian toasts. When the time came, he raised a glass and shouted out, “Biscotti!” Then, continued to talk about love and enduring partnerships. Always a sense of humor.

And, he should know! Liz and Andy have been loving partners and best friends for 60 years. (They met in 7th grade in Worcester!) Since then, Andrew enriched others’ lives as dearly beloved father, grandfather, family member, professor and loyal friend.

As in marriage, in our work life, we faced many challenges: Funding glitches/short falls, shifting political winds, anti-intellectual movements, growing disparities and inequities. Yet, as one of Andy’s students put it: ‘Andy’s light and belief in the power of young people is a powerful gift’ – coupled with his extraordinary reasoning abilities, relationships, and passion, (plus, an endless stream of tuna subs!), we got through. Indeed, the Center is rocking on to this day and carrying the banner and belief that “Enough is Known for Action” – the title of one of Andy’s books, now also the tagline of the USDOL’s capacity building efforts, meaning “knowing is not enough,” one must apply; willing is not enough; “We must do,” as Goethe inspired.

Through it all, our hard times were made easier, our joyful times sweeter because we walked this life together.

To paraphrase Maya Angelou, ‘People will forget what you said, forget what you did, but they will always remember how you made them feel.’

Though his impact on social policy, practice and research *is* archived at Heller; his menschness is forever in our hearts and minds.

If the aim of life is to spend it on something that outlasts it, as William James suggests, Andy has succeeded with the blessing of his beloved, intergenerational family and a sterling Brandeis legacy for social change leadership.

May he rest in deep peace.

Shalom