



Stephen William Mamber

July 24, 1954 - December 3, 2023

Stephen W. Mamber (69)

Of Alexandria, VA passed away Sunday, December 3, 2023 at Inova Alexandria Hospital. Loving husband to Susan Mamber; cherished father of Samuel Mamber. He will be deeply missed by his extended family, many dear friends and respected colleagues.

Steve was diagnosed with leukemia in May 2022 and began treatment immediately. He underwent a successful bone marrow transplant at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in February 2023. The leukemia was in remission, but an array of medical concerns complicated his recovery. He underwent two cardiac repair procedures and fought respiratory infections due to his brand-new immune system. He battled valiantly and survived the bone marrow transplant by 284 days. His strength and perseverance were admired by many, including his doctors.

Born in Brooklyn, NY on July 24, 1954 to Solomon and Eve (Katz) Mamber, Steve was raised in Oaklyn, NJ. He studied Earth Science and Microbiology at Rutgers University and earned his Ph.D. in Microbiology in 1982. His scientific career began in drug discovery, including researching cancer treatment medications, at Parke-Davis/Warner-Lambert in Michigan, Bristol Myers Squibb in Connecticut, and Beech Tree Labs in Rhode Island. He authored or

co-authored many scientific publications which can be viewed on PubMed under SW Mamber.

Steve moved to northern Virginia in June 2008 to work as a microbiological data analyst for the USDA Food Safety & Inspection Service, applying his expert knowledge in food borne organisms salmonella and listeria. Dedicated to his work and to his food safety colleagues, he continued working full time up to the final days of his life, working remotely from home via computer. He enjoyed nurturing the next generation of scientists, and for several years volunteered to teach a STEM class for 4th and 5th graders at an Arlington public elementary school. Steve and the classroom teacher published about the students' results replicating iconic experiments like, "How many licks does it take to get to the center of a Tootsie Pop?", the famous "Mentos in a Coca Cola bottle" experiment and measuring the amount of bacteria in samples that students collected on everyday objects.

Steve married his wife Susan (Eicher) on August 28, 1988, and they were blessed to welcome their son, Samuel Austin, in 1998. Steve shone at parenting, and his family was the central joy of his life. He enjoyed connecting with cousins and extended family near and far. Judaism was very important to Steve, and he belonged to several Jewish congregations throughout his lifetime, including Agudas Achim in Alexandria, VA.

Steve took up rowing crew as a Rutgers University freshman; as a senior in 1976, he earned a Varsity Letter in Lightweight Crew. Rowing became a lifelong pursuit, as he joined recreational crews in Michigan, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. He was proud to row several times in the Head of the Charles Regatta. Until 2022, he rowed with a crew in the Thompson Boating Center in Washington D.C.

Steve was an avid fan of Rutgers University sports teams, the Philadelphia

Eagles and the Phillies, and the L.A. Dodgers. His dream was to one day see the RU Scarlet Knights football team win a berth in the Rose Bowl.

Steve loved New York pizza “with crust so thin it defies gravity.” He greatly enjoyed bodysurfing on beaches from Rhode Island to South Carolina. Steve was a Star Trek fan from the beginning, and deeply admired his science heroes, Carl Sagan and Neil deGrasse Tyson. He was a longtime fan of singer-songwriters Leonard Cohen, Bruce Springsteen, and Warren Zevon. He was fond of quoting a bit of wisdom from Warren Zevon, who famously said in one of the last interviews of his life that we should try to “Enjoy every sandwich!” —that is, appreciate the simple things in life.

Graveside Service will be held at 11:00am on Wednesday December 6 at Agudas Achim Cemetery, 1033 S. Payne St, Alexandria, VA 22314.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society at [\[https://givenow.lls.org/\]](https://givenow.lls.org/) or to a charity of your choice.

Cemetery Details

Agudas Achim Cemetery

1033 South Payne Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Previous Events

Graveside Service

DEC 6. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Agudas Achim Cemetery
1033 South Payne Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Tribute Wall

PC

“*Dr. Mamber worked with students for years at Campbell Elementary in Arlington. He gave presentations about topics like vaccines, climate change, and space. He also prepared experiments for them to spark their interest in questioning, collecting data, and looking for trends. He inspired students to love science. He was an excellent example of a lifelong learner. The teachers and students at Campbell who benefitted from what he shared will be sad to hear of his passing. He was an incredible person who served his community in so many ways.*

Pamela Clark - January 01, 2025 at 08:42 PM

NW

“*Stephen was a wonderful friend and colleague. actually, I had no idea that he had passed away and I'm very sad to find this out now I know he was going through the bone marrow transplanting some heart surgeries, and I really felt that knowing how much he loved his family that he would survive and return to his work very important work. It's truly horrible to loose such a great friend. Stephen very strongly contributed to significant biomedical research in his drug discovery career. Stephen had a great intellect and sense of humor he will be greatly missed by everyone lucky enough to have known him. My sincere condolences to his family and all alike myself we grieve and forever respect him.*
Sincerely, Neal Wright

Neal Wright - May 18, 2024 at 05:07 PM

MS

“ I have been keeping Steve in my *refuah shlema tafilot* (prayers for a speedy recovery) since he became ill. I knew Steve from the passionate and enthusiastic way he took it upon himself to make certain we always had a quorum for *mincha* (afternoon) prayers at the HUD *Minyan* and to keep that tradition alive. I could see this steeled determination in his fight to get well, and I am so sad right now, that I feel I could cry. But Steve was one of those rare, amazing people you could love just by getting to talk to him in short conversations. He exuded an outgoing kindness, humor, and a great spirit that guided how he approached others, so I have those memories when I think of Steve to help deal with his loss. And I feel he would have wanted it that way. My heartfelt condolences to the family, though I know his memories will always be a blessing and will continue to be a source of inspiration in your own lives. *Hamakom y'nachem etchem b'toch sh'ar availai tziyon ee yerushalayim* – “May G-d comfort you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.”

Marv Sacks - December 21, 2023 at 11:42 AM

HG

“ *Baruch Dayan Emet*. Steve touched many lives leading the HUD *mincha minyan* for years before covid closed the city. He allowed countless of us say *kaddish* for our loved ones, each opportunity a *mitzvah*. G-d bless you Steve, and may your memory always be a blessing for your family and all of us.

Howard Griboff - December 21, 2023 at 11:18 AM

ST

“ Steve was a truly wonderful man with whom I shared the camaraderie of being on the same team at FSIS before my departure. He consistently extended a helping hand, demonstrating his unwavering support. Our shared love for sports provided us with countless enjoyable conversations, particularly fueled by his passionate enthusiasm for Rutgers. His vibrant spirit and warm companionship will be deeply missed, and I bid farewell to him with heartfelt gratitude. May you rest in peace.

Steve Tran - December 09, 2023 at 11:19 PM

SK

“ May Steve’s memory be a blessing



shellie Kalinsky - December 07, 2023 at 08:56 PM

RA

“ Steve was one of my best friends. Not only did we share an advanced course in FSIS where we met, but spent hours talking sports, college and professional, and sharing articles and opinions. I will miss him so very, very much.

Rori Aaron - December 07, 2023 at 07:29 PM

TK

“ Steve was unlike anyone I’ve ever met, a truly unique person with a curious mind, kind soul, and big heart. I’ve been his direct or second-line supervisor since I started at FSIS in May of 2020, and his passion and dedication to his work was unmatched; when he’d discover an error in a data system he’d take up the cause like he was marching on Washington. He was always willing to lend a hand to assist with a task or share his knowledge, and he possessed incredible knowledge. He also provided frequent comic relief that enhanced the team’s interactions and fostered engagement and friendship. The world will be a very different place without him but his legacy will live on.

Tamar Khafi - December 07, 2023 at 02:18 PM

JF

“ I’m so sorry for your loss Sue. I enjoyed meeting Steve.



Janet Fishman - December 07, 2023 at 12:59 PM

CA

“ I worked with Steve for a relatively short period of time, but when I was interviewing for the job, I called him to get a better idea of the duties and I was instantly enamored by his humor, honesty and extensive knowledge of biochemistry and food safety. He took the role of mentor and advisor to heart and was always available to answer even the most basic questions without judgement. I appreciated the windows into his personal life as well. His love of Rutgers and Star Trek definitely made it into the workplace :) Most of all, the pride he exuded when he talked about his family always made me smile. Like all of us, I wish I had more time picking his brain about all the random knowledge in his head, but I miss him and my thoughts and positive energy are with his friends and family.

Courtney Amundson - December 07, 2023 at 10:30 AM

LR

“ One of the best “Friends of Xi” around, Steve was always quick to troubleshoot technology, drive a carload during Bike to the Beach or just attend an Alpha Xi Delta event. He was kind and hilarious. But my favorite thing about him was how much he loved my friend Sue! He was an amazing example of a supportive and doting husband and a proud dad. I hope Sue and Sam both rest in that amazing love he let us all witness after they have been amazing caregivers to Steve over the last 1.5 years. May his memory be a blessing.

Lindsay Eichelman Ray - December 06, 2023 at 11:54 AM

FT

“ I worked with Steve on several projects and he always goes far and beyond to help, with a great a sense of humor. He will be truly missed!

Flora Tsui - December 06, 2023 at 11:28 AM

SK

“ *Sunil Kumar lit a candle in memory of Stephen William Mamber*



Sunil Kumar - December 06, 2023 at 11:04 AM

RW

“ *Rachel Whitaker lit a candle in memory of Stephen William Mamber*



Rachel Whitaker - December 06, 2023 at 08:27 AM

RM

“ *Ron & Stephanie Morton lit a candle in memory of Stephen William Mamber*



Ron & Stephanie Morton - December 06, 2023 at 02:48 AM

CR

“ *Catherine Rockwell lit a candle in memory of Stephen William Mamber*



Catherine Rockwell - December 05, 2023 at 11:16 PM

CR

What a wonderful person Steve was! He had a great sense of humor and was a great conversationalist. Every once in a while, Steve would reach out to me out of the blue to ask me veterinary questions about his cat - usually about some strange antic or behavior being displayed. The conversation inevitably would end in a good laugh. My deepest sympathies to his family. He will be greatly missed.

Catherine Rockwell - December 05, 2023 at 11:27 PM

KP

“ *I was known as Ramona Fishbag to Steve and admired his wit. You didn't have to wonder what Steve was thinking, he told you! He lived to share stories of his microbiology pursuits and would share how you could leave beef out on the counter, but not chicken! How mold spores grew and his sports! Goodness he loved and rallied his teams! A good man that will be missed and not forgotten! RIP, Steve.*

Kathleen Powekk - December 05, 2023 at 07:59 PM

IW

“ *Isabel Walls lit a candle in memory of Stephen William Mamber*



Isabel Walls - December 05, 2023 at 05:53 PM

IW

“ Steve was a truly dedicated scientist and co-worker. I was in 2 meetings with him last Wednesday November 29th. He did not come on camera because he told us he was not feeling well. But he spoke up, shared his thoughts, as always. I will truly miss him. He was knowledgeable, caring and willing to give of his time. He mentored 5 students with me over the past 3 years, and went over and above to help them understand and interpret our data sets. Nothing was too much trouble. I knew I could count on him to help out. Sending thoughts and prayers to the family. Sincerely, Isabel Walls, Senior Public Health Advisor, USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service.

Isabel Walls - December 05, 2023 at 05:53 PM

SB

Steve was a wonderfully kind man, with a fantastic sense of humor. I loved the twinkle he would get in his eyes when he was making a joke.

The tremendous love he had for his wife and son was obvious to anyone who had the good fortune to know him. He will be so very missed!

Sara Frankel Bermel - December 05, 2023 at 06:23 PM

BS

Baruch Dayan Emet. If it wasn't for Steve's HUD minyan leadership, I wouldn't have been able to say kaddish for my mom. He truly made a difference to so many lives and ensuring 10 people attended each gathering was quite an undertaking! By coordinating the HUD minyan, Steve did a tremendous mitzvah with each one of these gatherings! Seeing Steve and others at the minyan kept people's morale high often during difficult periods for minyan attendees. G-d bless you Steve, and may your memory always be a blessing for your family and for all of us.

Brandon Schneider - December 21, 2023 at 08:41 PM

AS

Rest in peace, my fellow PhD candidate on the third floor of Lipmann Hall, Cook Campus, Rutgers. I recall Steve's cheerful smiling face.

Adesh Saxena - December 22, 2023 at 06:17 AM