

Carnegie Mellon University

# Acknowledgments

*The Last Lecture*

## From Randy Pausch

As an academic, Randy Pausch would have loved to have footnotes on almost every page of “The Last Lecture,” explaining the origin of each anecdote and data point. But he knew it wasn’t meant to be that type of book, so he was grateful to have this space online to offer his heartfelt thanks to those who made the book possible by inspiring him, advising him and supporting him — in this project and all through his life.

Randy didn’t have the energy to finish these acknowledgments before he died. But he had spoken to me, his coauthor, about the people he’d like to thank. He had similar conversations with Jessica Hodgins, his close friend and Carnegie Mellon colleague. Together, in the days after Randy’s death, Jessica and I were able to put together this list.

It’s possible we’ve missed a few names Randy would have wanted here, but as he said, the good thing about posting online is that it’s possible to make additions.

So who did Randy want to acknowledge?

It’s clear in the book how much he admired his parents, Virginia and Fred Pausch. He had been passing along bits of their wisdom to friends and students for years, but he was honored to have this unexpected chance to share their wisdom with the wider world. His family helped

give this book life by creating some of his happiest memories. And so thanks go to his sister, Tammy Mason, his brother-in-law Al Mason, his niece Laura Woolley and nephews Christopher Woolley and Micajah Mason, his adopted sister Ruby Lu and her husband Brian Viard, his brothers- and sisters-in-law Bob and Jane Glasgow and Rick and Julie Glasgow, and an uncle and aunt, Willie and Karen Colston.

Randy was lucky to have friends who loved him, put up with him and stood by him. In particular, he wanted to express his appreciation for the valued bonds he built with his childhood friend Jack Sheriff, his college friend Scott Sherman, and his adult friend Steve Seabolt. He was so happy that they joined him for that last diving trip together. (Also, as the book project was developed, Randy felt lucky to have had Steve's advice. As Randy said in the book, Steve was like the brother he never had.)

The influence of his friends can be found all over the book, and many shared their time and memories during the reporting process. They helped to create reams of additional stories for Randy's children, even beyond what appears in the book.

Friends played many important roles in Randy's life — continuity and checks and balances among them. At a yearly event fondly known as the Fourth of July Party (although it was only held once on the actual holiday), a dozen of Randy's friends from grad school have gathered for a weekend together every summer since 1985. Randy hoped they would

continue this tradition after he's gone so that they can tell all the stories — good, bad, and silly — to his kids.

Randy told me he was especially grateful to Jessica Hodgins, who was at his side throughout his cancer treatment and whose research helped extend his life. Randy asked Jessica to help with various responsibilities once he was gone, and he was comforted to know that he'd left these things in her capable hands.

Chris Hoffman preceded Randy through the gauntlet of the aggressive chemo and radiation protocol he completed, and Chris was very generous with his research and advice. M.R. Kelsey sat with Randy for many long hours after the surgery and later made trips to Virginia to help as things got tougher there. Others who traveled to Pittsburgh, Virginia and Houston to be with Randy during various stages of his illness included Jack Sheriff, Denny Proffitt, Scott Sherman and Steve Seabolt. Randy also appreciated the care and kindness shown by Wanda Wyatt, his hospice nurse, and by Stacey Starsman, a nurse who is a friend of the family. Stacey would come by on a moment's notice to take Randy's blood pressure, to sit with him, or to do whatever was needed.

To the extent it's possible to love an institution, Randy loved Carnegie Mellon University. (He was proud that he was able to get Carnegie Mellon on the book's cover.). He particularly wanted to thank President Jared Cohon for his leadership, vision, and human touch.

There were so many colleagues whose influence Randy valued. Some are mentioned in the book. Others were unseen but vital players in the stories he told. Randy was grateful to Robbee Kosak, Jesse Schell, Sharon Burks, and to his partner at the ETC, Don Marinelli. Academics pride themselves on not really having bosses, but Randy felt his were wonderfully supportive. He wanted to thank Dan Siewiorek, Peter Lee, and Randy Bryant at Carnegie Mellon for their support of Alice and of his career, and Anita Jones and Bill Wulf, who got him started as an academic at the University of Virginia.

Randy also welcomed every opportunity to offer a heartfelt salute to the Alice team: Wanda Dann, Dennis Cosgrove, Gabe Yu, Steve Cooper, Caitlin Kelleher, Don Slater, Steve Audia, Dave Culyba, Barbara Conover, Madeleine Pitsch, Mike West and Cleah Schlueter. They will carry on his proudest academic legacy by releasing and supporting Alice 3.0.

Cleah, especially, has been a huge help to Randy and Jai by serving as a go-between to all the people from around the world who called or sent letters, packages and emails in the wake of the lecture and book. (Cleah also arranged for Jai's surprise birthday cake at the lecture, and Randy was grateful for that, too.)

Randy appreciated the media-relations work of CMU's Anne Watzman and Byron Spice, who spread word about his last lecture, indirectly

causing this book to come into being.

Randy wanted to thank his colleague Sylvia Berry, who shared with him her take on how women should deal with men who are romantically interested: “Just ignore everything they say and only pay attention to what they do.” Randy was thrilled that he was able to get Sylvia’s advice onto page 146 of the book, where his daughter Chloe can one day see it.

From his years at the University of Virginia, Randy was grateful to Gene Block, Denny Proffitt (Randy called him the greatest experiment-designer he ever met and the quintessential collaborator), Marva Barnett (an inspiration and role model) and Kirk Martini (an architecture professor who shared Randy’s view of learning through building things). Randy was especially grateful for the enthusiastic support of his friend and former UVA colleague Gabe Robins, who hosted a final reprise of his time-management talk. Getting the chance to speak that day, knowing he had such limited time left, had real significance for Randy. Gabe is also maintaining a Web site with Randy’s teachings and lectures.

Randy was always proud that he had so many impressive, hard working and big-hearted students over the years. He was honored to teach them, including those who got their PhDs under his watch. Some added insights to this book directly. Others taught him things that ended up being incorporated. He was grateful to: Robert Allen, Jonathan Ashton, R. Steven Audia, Ben Buchwald, Tommy Burnette, Brian Cadieux, AC

Capehart, Belinda Chang, Lydia Choy, Kevin Christiansen, Roddy Collins, Matthew Conway, Dennis Cosgrove, Thomas Crea, Dave Culyba, Mike Darga, Jim DeFay, Robert DeLine, John Detmer, Jim Durbin, Pramod Dwivedi, Adam Fass, Andrew Faulring, Simeon Fitch, Cliff Forlines, Branden Furlach, Rich Gossweiler, Sarah Hatton, Ken Hinckley, Ian Hoenisch, Drew Kessler, Shuichi Koga, Shawn Lawson, James Leatherby, Chris Long, Caitlin Kelleher, Moshe Mahler, Beth Mallory, Dan Maynes-Aminzade, Steve Miale, Adriana Moscatelli, Dan Moskowitz, Kimberly Passarella, James Patten, Adrian Perez, Jeffrey Pierce, Madeleine Pitsch, Tiffany Pomarico, Jason Pratt, Kristen Russell, Angela Saval, Peter Scupelli, Anne Shackelford, Joe Shochet, David Staack, Brian Stearns, Richard Stoakley, Dave Stern-Gottfried, Chris Sturgill, Desney Tan, John Viega, Jeff White, George Williams, Scott Witherell, and Nathaniel Young.

As Randy saw it, two of the heroes in the book are Michele Reiss and Andy van Dam. Jai and Randy have been supremely grateful to Michele for her wise guidance throughout his illness. And although Randy tried to mentor his students as Andy van Dam had mentored him, he felt there was no way he could ever repay him. So Randy was glad to share Michele and Andy with a wider audience.

Randy joked that “The Last Lecture” would be the first book to list the drug Gemcitabine on the acknowledgments page, since that drug helped him live long enough to see its publication. Of course, it wasn’t just drugs

keeping him alive. He received some of the best medical care available, and he often said that he was in awe of the doctors who treated him. They included: his surgeon Herbert Zeh at the University of Pittsburgh, Robert Wolff at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, and in Virginia, Michael Lee. Randy also was very impressed by the people he met and worked with at the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network and The Lustgarten Foundation. He was honored when PanCAN asked him to testify before Congress to seek more funding for pancreatic cancer research.

At Hyperion Books, Randy and I wanted to especially thank editor-in-chief Will Balliett for his editing prowess, his good humor and his heart; Bob Miller, for embracing this book with such fervor; and publicist Christine Ragasa for her hard work, smarts and great sensitivity while promoting our book. We also appreciate Ellen Archer, who took the helm as president and publisher at Hyperion in the middle of this project, and maintained a great passion for it. So many other people at Hyperion also worked diligently on “The Last Lecture,” including Jill Sansone, Corinna Harmon, Caroline Grill, Lauren Hodapp, Fritz Metsch, Bijani Mizell, Phil Rose, Navorn Johnson, David Lott, Vincent Stanley, Linda Prather, Kevin MacDonald, Mike Rotondo, Sarah Rucker, Jessica Wiener, Betsy Spigelman, Jane Comins, Maha Khalil, Beth Gebhard, Jean-Marie Pierson, Mike Rentas and Sharon Kitter.

Also, we owe our complete thanks to our agents, David Black and Gary



Morris, for their careful attention to countless details, and their dignified approach at every turn. At the Black Agency, we also wanted to thank Susan Raihofer, Leigh Ann Eliseo and David Larabell.

From the beginning of this project, Randy envisioned putting himself into a bottle that would one day wash ashore for his kids, Dylan, Logan and Chloe. Someday, they will read the book and come upon these acknowledgements. Randy got a kick out of the notion that, up the road, his kids would meet some of the people mentioned here. He told us that his children should feel free to ask questions about their old man. He hoped his kids would also thank these people again, on his behalf. Of course, Randy's greatest thanks were to Jai. She always thought he had a book in him, long before he gave his last lecture. She wanted him to share some of the advice he had collected in his life, and she even had a suggested title: "The Manual." Randy said repeatedly: This book would not have been possible without Jai's input, support and love. He was proud to say she was everything to him, and his greatest thrill was that this book reflects that.

Finally, Randy wanted to thank those of you who have read the book and embraced some of the lessons in it. The first three copies of the book are the ones that mattered most to him - those are put away for Dylan, Logan, and Chloe — but if you and your children are finding some worthwhile things within the pages of "The Last Lecture," well, please know that he was greatly touched and honored. — JZ

## From Jeffrey Zaslow

At The Wall Street Journal, I owe thanks to Clare Ansberry, for first recognizing that Randy's story would make a meaningful column, and to Mike Radakovich, Shawn Bender and Reda Charafeddine for helping to create the beautiful WSJ videos that accompanied my columns on the lecture. I am also grateful to my colleagues Bob Sabat, John Blanton, Hillary Stout, Mike Miller, Eben Shapiro, Glenn Ruffenach, Almar Latour, Marcus Brauchli, Roe D'Angelo, Alan Murray, Bill Grueskin, Mike Spector, Marshall Crook, Joseph White, Edward Felsenthal, Neal Boudette and Krishnan Anantharaman for their support of this project.

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Randy's family, friends, students and doctors graciously shared with me their memories of him. Their recollections led to a lot of laughs, and some tears, and their input was invaluable in helping Randy look back at his

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A special and grateful thanks to Jai Pausch for offering her honest and loving insights about her life with Randy.

Thank you to my wife, Sherry, whose feedback (and love) I value most in the world, and to my daughters, Jordan, Alex and Eden, for helping me see *The Last Lecture* through younger eyes. Meanwhile, in the words of a certain computer science professor, I won the parent lottery, and so I thank Harry and Naomi Zaslow for reading early drafts — and for everything else.

Finally, I offer my most heartfelt thanks to Randy Pausch. I have been forever changed by the time I spent with him, listening to his insights and stories. I saw his love of life from a front-row seat. He was special in ways I'm still trying to understand and process. I will treasure the time we spent together. Thank you, Randy.