

# J A R E D L . C O H O N

October 7, 1947 - March 16, 2024

---



Jared Leigh Cohon died peacefully in Ligonier, Pennsylvania on March 16th.

Jerry was born on October 7th, 1947 in Beachwood, Ohio. At age seven, he met the love of his life, Maureen “Bunny” Cohon (Nathanson), who was with him at his passing. He is survived by his daughter, Hallie Donner (Joshua); grandsons Nathan and Solomon; sisters Cindy Lowenkamp and Shelia Nathanson; and a loving extended family. Jerry’s love for and pride in his family was without equal, and he lit up with joy whenever the opportunity arose—and he made sure it arose often—to sing the praises of Bunny’s, Hallie’s and Josh’s profound commitment to the Pittsburgh community and Nathan and Solomon’s scholarly and personal achievements as young men of great character.

Jerry served as the eighth President of Carnegie Mellon University, from 1997-2013, during which time the university further grew as one of the pre-eminent institutions of higher education in the world. Throughout his presidency, Jerry was a staunch advocate for access for and support of all people of great talent, ensuring that the richness of the university community was enhanced by having people of all backgrounds in its faculty, staff and student ranks. He was similarly deeply committed to Carnegie Mellon being not just of the world, but in the world, and the university’s global footprint under his leadership continues to inform and bolster both the university and the communities of which CMU is a part in Asia, Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Moreover, Jerry was deeply committed to the Pittsburgh region, and he has been duly credited with far-reaching economic and social enhancements through both the university and his service on the boards of innumerable regional organizations and foundations.

Since leaving the Presidency, Jerry served as a University Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering and Engineering and Public Policy, as well as director of the Scott Institute for Energy Innovation. Jerry was also prominent on a national and international level. He served on the Atomic Energy Commission, the Homeland Security Council, the Carnegie Foundation, the American Association of Universities board (ultimately serving as Chair of that Board), and on a number of national and international corporate boards. He was a distinguished member of the National Academy of Engineering.

While Jerry's keen intellect and indefatigable energy were clear to all who knew him, his greatest attribute in this life was his depth of character. He was a role model for so many, and invariably those whom he inspired would speak glowingly and lovingly of his elemental decency, deep empathy and kindness. Whatever the circumstance, he was rock solid, with values clear and unwavering and that disarming humor that made you know, always, that everything would be okay. That legacy will survive him, through which we can all find strength.

Jerry Cohon received his undergraduate degree from the University of Pennsylvania and his doctoral degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, both in civil engineering. He served as Science Advisor to Daniel Patrick Moynihan prior to joining the faculty at Johns Hopkins University. While there, he was tapped to become the Vice Provost for Research, launching his career as a senior administrator and major influence in American higher education in the years to come. He subsequently became the Dean of the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale University, before being selected for the Presidency of Carnegie Mellon.

Services at Temple Sinai, 5505 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at 1:30pm with visitation starting at 12:00pm. Live stream available at [templesinaipgh.org](http://templesinaipgh.org). Internment at Homewood Cemetery. Shiva information available on request. In lieu of flowers, remembrances may be made to Alumni Theater Company ([alumnitheatercompany.org](http://alumnitheatercompany.org)) or Carnegie Mellon ([cmu.edu](http://cmu.edu)). Arrangements entrusted to Ralph Schugar Chapel, Inc.

The family will join with Carnegie Mellon University in a celebration of Jerry's extraordinary life later this year, when all who loved this great man will be able to gather in Pittsburgh and share our cherished memories of his extraordinary impact.