

DSI Mourns the Loss of Valued Member Mark Davis

Dear DSI Colleagues and Friends,

It is with great sadness that I write to inform you that Mark Davis, Professor of Operations Management at Bentley University, and DSI Fellow and Past-President, passed away on Wednesday February 24, 2021.



Mark was a long-time and integral member of the DSI community, serving in many roles at the Institute and Regional levels. He served as Conference Chair of the 1992 NEDSI Conference in Boston and was elected NEDSI President the following year; he had been serving on the Board of Advisors since then. Mark also served as Program Chair for the 2003 DSI Annual Conference in Washington DC, was elected a Fellow of the Institute in 2000 and served as President from 2006 - 07. In recognition of his service to NEDSI, he was the recipient of the 2020 NEDSI Lifetime Service Award. When fellow colleague, Maling Ebrahimpour heard of Mark's passing, he stated what all of us were thinking, "He is one of the giants in DSI and definitely for us in NEDSI."

Mark was a foundational scholar in service operations, with research articles focusing on the relationship between waiting times and customer satisfaction. He was also a co-author of both service operations and operations management textbooks. In recognition of his scholarly impact, Bentley University awarded him its highest research honor, the 2017-2018 Mee Family Prize for "a lifetime of research excellence."

Mark's teaching skills and devotion to his students were legendary. He stayed in touch with many of his past students, offering advice as they began their careers and his continuing friendship long after they graduated from Bentley. Wherever he travelled in the world (and Mark loved to travel!), he would contact his vast network of former students, who were delighted to reconnect with their beloved professor.

But more than the accomplishments in his professional life, Mark leaves a legacy of family, friends, and colleagues who love and respect him for the person he was. As news of Mark's passing spread, I saw so many beautiful tributes to Mark from colleagues, with stories of their personal connection to him. Let me add one of my own. I originally met Mark through one of the pancake breakfasts he hosted at Bentley University to bring together academics and practitioners in the Boston area. He and I went on to have a close professional relationship, co-authoring multiple research articles. We also became good friends. My husband and I had the honor of attending his 50th wedding anniversary party a few years ago, celebrating Mark and his wife, Carolyn (Cookie). After many loving tributes to Mark and Cookie, Mark stood up and said that he was asked by his healthcare providers whether he needed support during the cancer treatments he was then receiving. He told them that no one had more support than he had. All I could think was: what goes around comes around. Mark was always there for the people he cared about, and they were there for him when he needed them, none more so than Cookie.

On behalf of the DSI board and the entire DSI community, we offer our deepest condolences to Cookie, his sons and daughters-in-law, Andy and Sonia, Alex and Melissa, and his grandchildren, Brody and Jocelyn. Mark was one-of-a-kind and will be sorely missed.

Joy Field
DSI President-Elect