

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
DANIEL RAY SHARPLESS
(November 4, 1934-February 15, 2017)

Daniel Ray Sharpless was born in 1934 in Kitzmiller, Maryland. He was the son of David Woodrow Sharpless and Mary Kathryn (Sheetz) Sharpless. He came from a family of coal miners who settled in the middle of the Appalachian coal fields. While growing up in Maryland, he participated in a variety of sports including soccer, basketball, baseball and track. In addition to a busy athletic schedule, Dan also worked a variety of part time jobs. One of his favorite jobs as a teen was working as a movie theater projectionist.

Dan was the first in his family to attend college, studying pre law at Potomac State College in the early 1950s. Upon hearing that the GI Bill was about to expire, Dan left college to join the Army. He was first assigned to a military office clerk position in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. After a conflict with an Army colonel, Dan was reassigned to Korea and worked with the 8th Army engineers in Seoul, Korea. While stationed in Korea, he traveled extensively throughout the country. He also worked part time teaching conversational English to the faculty at the Korean Military Academy (which was the equivalent to West Point).

In 1956, Dan returned to the United States and attended West Virginia University and majored in Education. He completed his Bachelor's degree in 1958 from West Virginia University and then enrolled in officers training at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis, Indiana. Over the next ten years, Dan spent time in Fort Knox, Kentucky as the Head of the Finance Branch in charge of facilitating the pay of over 20,000 active duty soldiers two times a month. Dan was then assigned to Tripler Medical Center in Honolulu as the Recreation Services Officer. During his time in Hawaii he met his wife, a nurse, Yvonne Taeko Myagi, in 1961, and they were married in 1962. While at Tripler Medical Center, he was also able to attend the University of Hawaii and take Russian studies courses.

Dan left Honolulu in 1964 and went back to Fort Benjamin Harrison as member of their faculty to teach Russian studies. From 1965-1966 Dan commuted to Indiana University to take graduate courses in Recreation. In 1967, Dan was assigned to the 1st Infantry in Vietnam. He was the Chief of Recreation Services for the United States 1st Infantry position providing recreation services for thousands of US servicemen in a combat zone. During his time in Vietnam he was the project officer of the Bob Hope Christmas Show that included an audience of over 14,000 U.S. troops. The event was such a success that it was featured in an issue of *Park and Recreation Magazine*.

Dan returned from Vietnam and completed his Recreation Directorate at Indiana University in 1970. Following the completion of his degree, he worked in Washington, DC as the Chief of Recreation Services for the United States Army. Part of his job involved sitting in on Congressional Budget Hearings and traveling all over the world conducting studies on what soldiers wanted related to recreation service offerings on United States military bases.

Dan served a second tour in Vietnam in 1972-1973, this time as an advisor to a Vietnamese division and later with the Vietnamese government. Dan returned to Indiana University in 1973 and worked for Army ROTC. He was promoted to the Head of the IU Army

ROTC program with rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He retired from the military as Professor and head of the Military Science Department at Indiana University in July 1977.

After 1977, Dan Sharpless taught computer courses for Indiana University's School of Business. Dr. Ted Deppe hired Dan as a part time instructor to help establish the School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation's computer classes in the late 1970s. In the early 1980s, Dan assisted with the establishment of the *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration* and served as its first managing editor. In 1987, Dan assisted in the establishment of the New York State Park Management and Recreation Institute at Saratoga Springs, NY. From the 1980s until 2010, Dan worked as a Lecturer for the Department of Recreation and Park Administration (now the Recreation, Park and Tourism Studies Department).

Dan has not only taught computer classes at Indiana University, but has developed and taught an Armed Forces Recreation course, established, coordinated and supervised overseas internships and practicums, and provided students in the Recreation Department with academic advising services. For over twenty years, Dan has linked hundreds of Indiana University students with overseas internships with the US armed forces military Morale, Welfare and Recreation Services. The internships have allowed Indiana University students to experience military recreation service offerings on US military bases overseas. Similar programs have been coordinated by Dan at Kilauea Military Camp on the Big Island of Hawaii and Edelweiss Lodge and Resort in Germany.

Dan Sharpless not only served his country with distinction (five Bronze Star awards and the Legion of Merit from the US Army, and one of only thirty service men to receive the South Vietnamese Tri-Color Fourragere), but he has also served Indiana University and the field of Recreation with great distinction. He has assisted in the education of thousands of park and recreation professionals throughout the world and served as President of the Armed Forces Recreation Society and as its representative on the National Recreation and Park Association Board of Trustees. Dan has impacted the lives of many young adults, those serving in the US military and students gaining an education in the field of parks and recreation. Dan was one of the early proponents of the idea that members of the armed services were entitled to the same recreation opportunities as those provided the people they were committed to protect. His passion for the field of recreation, care and mentoring to his students, and ability to motivate young adults is a true inspiration. His legacy is his commitment to seeking out new challenges and inspiring students to experience what the world has to offer.

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