

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

Lewis Jay Polsgrove

(1939-2023)

Lewis Jay Polsgrove, emeritus professor of special education at Indiana University and a passionate local jazz musician, passed away peacefully at the age of 84 on June 28, 2023.

Born in Galveston, Texas, Lew was the only child of Lewis and Leona Polsgrove. His early years on the Texas Coast and in LaMarque cultivated an adventurous spirit that would define his life.

Lew's impact on the field of special education was profound and far-reaching. After completing his degrees in psychology at North Texas State University and serving in the U.S. Army, Lew began his career as a psychologist with the Kentucky Department of Child Welfare. This experience ignited his commitment to improving educational approaches for children and youth with emotional and behavioral disorders. He pursued a doctorate in education from the University of Kentucky, and soon after, he joined Indiana University as a faculty member. Over his 35-year tenure, Lew became a revered leader in special education, known for his innovative approaches and his dedication to advancing the field. He took great pride in mentoring students and colleagues, using creative methods such as daily comics to inspire and engage his students and mentees.

Lew made significant contributions to the field of special education, particularly in the areas of applied behavior analysis and the education of students with disabilities. He emphasized evidence-based practices and was instrumental in developing effective teaching strategies tailored to meet the unique needs of learners with disabilities. He also focused on the importance of individualized instruction and the integration of students with disabilities into general education settings. His work often highlighted the necessity of collaboration among educators, families, and support staff to create inclusive educational environments. He contributed to the development of professional training programs and resources aimed at enhancing teacher effectiveness in special education. Lew's research and publications influenced both policy and practice, making a lasting impact on the field.

In addition to his academic contributions, Lew was deeply involved in the Bloomington music scene. A talented saxophonist, he played a key role in fundraising efforts for Jazz from Bloomington and was a founding member of several musical groups, including "Nightcrawlers," "Cool Tonic," and "II V I (251)." In retirement, Lew enjoyed traveling with his family and friends, fly fishing, and following IU sports. He found solace in his woodland home, where he cherished the tranquility and the company of local wildlife. His vibrant spirit was also evident in the lively gatherings he hosted, often filled with banter and joy.

Lew is survived by his wife of over 60 years, Sue; his son Jay Polsgrove (Ann Georgescu); and his daughter Kiz Richter (Eric). His legacy of dedication to special education, his passion for music, and his loving presence will be deeply missed by his family, colleagues, former students, fellow musicians, and many friends.

We request that this memorial tribute to Lewis Polsgrove be presented to the members of the Bloomington Faculty Council, that it be preserved in its minutes and archive, and that after its presentation copies be sent to members of his family.

Theresa Ochoa
Professor, School of Education
Indiana University Bloomington