



Dr. Michael Cahalan, Mike as we knew him, inspired all of us in the Department of Anesthesiology in his role as chair, friend, and mentor. The news of his passing on March 9, 2019, came as a tragic surprise to most of us. There was immediate outpouring of grief amongst our colleagues as we mourned the unexpected loss of a dear colleague and friend whose life was cut short. We all longed for the opportunity to have given Mike a hug and say goodbye.

This special issue of the Department's Central Line newsletter is a compilation of some of our fondest memories and thoughts of Mike as a way of not only preserving these memories, but also as a means of helping us heal. Dr. Cahalan meant so many things to each of us individually and contributed so much to the success of the Department during his long tenure as professor and chair.

We will all strive to keep his incalculable legacy vibrant in our practice of medicine, and we will try to emulate his goodness in our lives outside of the hospital. Mike's smile and presence will be missed immensely.

Carina Jackman and Talmage Egan

Chair's Announcement to Anesthesiology Department and University Leadership

MARCH 9, 2019

DEAR COLLEAGUES,

It is with deep sadness and a heavy heart that I write to inform you of the passing earlier today of our dear friend and colleague Dr. Michael K. Cahalan. Mike had battled AML for many months now with great courage and grace, always with Marianne at his side. The Cahalans frequently expressed sincere gratitude for the expert care compassionately rendered by our capable associates at the Huntsman Cancer and University Hospitals, including many of our department faculty.

We have lost a giant in the anesthesiology community and a precious member of our department's family. We will mourn his passing for a very long time; there will always be a special place in our hearts for Mike. We will work hard to honor his immense legacy going forward.

I know Marianne would welcome your thoughts, prayers, and condolences during this difficult time. She will keep us posted about upcoming activities to celebrate the remarkable life and memory of our dear friend.

I am profoundly grateful for all the goodness that emanated from Dr. Cahalan and for how he influenced both my personal and professional life so positively. He was a prince of a man. I know you all share my feelings; we will miss him dearly.

Talmage D. Egan, MD
Professor and Chair

Dr. Michael Cahalan

1949–2019

Published in the *Salt Lake Tribune* March 12, 2019

Michael K. Cahalan, Professor and former chairman of Anesthesiology at the University of Utah Hospitals, passed away in Salt Lake City on Saturday, March 9, at the age of 69. He battled leukemia for several months.

Michael was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania where he attended Mercersburg Academy. He went on to Harvard University where he was an All-American swimmer, serving as captain of the swim team and winning many collegiate medals. Michael graduated from Temple University Medical School, completed his medical internship at Milton S. Hershey University Medical Center and residency and fellowship in Anesthesiology at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). He then joined the faculty at UCSF where he served as the Chief of Anesthesia for Pediatric and Adult Cardiac Surgery for most of his 22 years. His research interest primarily involved a then-new technology, Transesophageal Echocardiography. He used the first equipment brought to the United States in 1980 demonstrating the utility of the technology which permits real-time imaging of the beating heart during surgery and is now standard-of-care. In 2001, Dr. Cahalan became Professor and Chair of the Department of Anesthesiology at the University of Utah School of Medicine. He served as chairman for 15 years and remained on the faculty until his death.

Dr. Cahalan's professional life was characterized by success in research, teaching, clinical care and administration. He authored numerous scientific articles and book chapters and served as editor of multiple major medical journals and books. He was a visiting professor or invited speaker over 200 times around the



world. He mentored generations of anesthesiology residents and faculty colleagues in San Francisco and Salt Lake City demonstrating a keen ability to assess talent and help individuals develop their strengths. His leadership style was always congenial and fair-minded.

During his anesthesia training in San Francisco, Michael met and married Marianne Troy, who was the head cardiac surgery nurse at UCSF. They shared a vibrant and active life for over 42 years and spent most of their leisure time together. Golf, fishing, swimming, camping, cooking and travel were among his passions.

Dr. Cahalan will perhaps be best remembered for his character—calm, kind, funny and ready to entertain with a story. His point of view was informed by compassion and a strong moral compass. He put others at ease and accomplished more with persuasion than exertion of his power.

He is survived by his loving wife Marianne; sister, Beth Gillmor of Austin, Texas; brother and sister-in-law Thomas and Linda Cahalan of Park City, Utah and a large extended family and circle of friends.

A celebration of Dr. Cahalan's remarkable life will be announced at a later date.

Donations in his name may be sent to the Huntsman Cancer Institute. <https://give.huntsmancancer.org>

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Announcement to the Utah Society of Anesthesiologists

By Smitha Warriar, USA President

USA MEMBERS,

It is with deep sorrow that I write to let you know of the passing of one of our members, and a giant in our discipline, Dr. Michael K. Cahalan. Mike had a major impact on anesthesiology in the state of Utah, since his arrival here as chair of the University of Utah Department of Anesthesiology in 2001 and had served as ASA director for the state of Utah since 2011.

Mike Cahalan received his undergraduate degree in Chemistry from Harvard, where he was also an All-American swimmer, graduated AOA from Temple University School of Medicine, and completed Internal Medicine Internship at Penn State University. He transferred to the University of California, San Francisco, where he completed anesthesia residency and a research fellowship under Dr. Edmond (Ted) Eger, before joining the UCSF faculty in 1979. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1985 and Professor in 1992. He became Chair of Anesthesiology at the University of Utah in 2001, retiring from that role in 2015.

Mike began his career in research studying vapor anesthetics, but soon saw a new opportunity in transesophageal echocardiography. A sabbatical in the Department of Cardiology at the Thorax Centrum of Erasmus University in Rotterdam, the Netherlands in 1985–1986 gave him the expertise to become a pioneer in the intraoperative use of transesophageal echocardiography (TEE). Always an innovator, Mike helped make TEE standard in cardiac surgery. Beyond that, he recognized perioperative echocardiography had potential value beyond the cardiac operating room. At the University of Utah, he oversaw the development of a remarkable clinical and educational program that expanded the use of both TEE and transthoracic echocardiography to non-cardiac cases, the Emergency Department, the Intensive Care Unit, and the Preop Clinic, and developed a dedicated fellowship in echocardiography. In 2002, he was lead author of the American Society of Echocardiography and Society of Cardiovascular Anesthesiologists task force guidelines for training in perioperative echocardiography.

A consummate educator, Mike was also an early adopter of technology in education, mastering the difficult task of seamless incorporation of echo clips into PowerPoint presentations. His 1996 book, *Intraoperative Transesophageal Echocardiography*, won first prize for electronic media in the 1997 British Medical Association Medical Book Competition. As a co-editor of the textbook *Clinical Anesthesia*, Mike enthusiastically encouraged chapter authors to incorporate graphics suitable for turning into companion videos, beginning with the 7th edition.

As chair at the University of Utah, Mike elevated an already strong department and oversaw a period of unprecedented growth. He was a leader whose kindness and honesty made him a master of difficult conversations. He practiced patient-centered care before that was a buzzword, and his legacy is seen in the commitment to professionalism, research, and education to advance the exceptional patient experience he cemented in the department. Mike strongly believed in the value of our profession and was a great advocate for our patients. He was an engaged and involved leader of the USA and ASA, holding many significant roles over the years. Because of this passion and dedication to our field and desire to improve patient safety, even after Mike's retirement from the University of Utah he played an integral role at the state and national level for the advancement of anesthesia.

Beyond advancements in field of anesthesiology and leadership at the University of Utah and nationally, Michael Cahalan had enormous impact on his colleagues and friends, including those he trained, mentored, supervised, and collaborated with. Mike was the first physician I met in my training to value who I was outside of work and to genuinely encourage happiness both in and out of the hospital. He supported people not only for what their strengths were but also for their passions. He nurtured and provided pathways to allow each individual to rise to their potential and valued their contributions. He cared deeply about the wellbeing of the people he was around, none more so than his amazing wife Marianne. I personally was lucky enough to spend time out of the hospital with Mike and Marianne and that time spent with them was as educational and inspiring as anything I learned in the hospital. Mike was a great man and one of the most gracious and egalitarian people I have ever met. The legacy he leaves is strong and significant, and will last for generations to come.

My life was altered in its course the day I met Michael Cahalan, and for that I'm truly grateful. For those of you that knew Mike I'm sure you have stories of his impact on you. For those that didn't know him directly I can assure you Mike has impacted you in your practice in ways that affect you everyday (just look at the cover of your textbook). Please take a moment to recognize and pay tribute to an amazing researcher, anesthesiologist, husband, friend, fisherman, cook, and human, and be thankful for the legacy he leaves behind.

Smitha Warriar, MD

*Assistant Professor
University of Utah*



Dr. Michael Cahalan was the chair of Anesthesiology when I was a resident at the U of U. I knew he was a brilliant man with an impressive CV and strong leadership abilities, but what I didn't know is that he would become the most impactful mentor in my life. He cared deeply for the residents and was a father figure to those he led. I will never forget his kindness, warmth, ability to teach and love of good food. But most of all, I will never forget the compassion he exercised with me during a difficult time in my life. He didn't have to, but he did. Thank you, Mike.

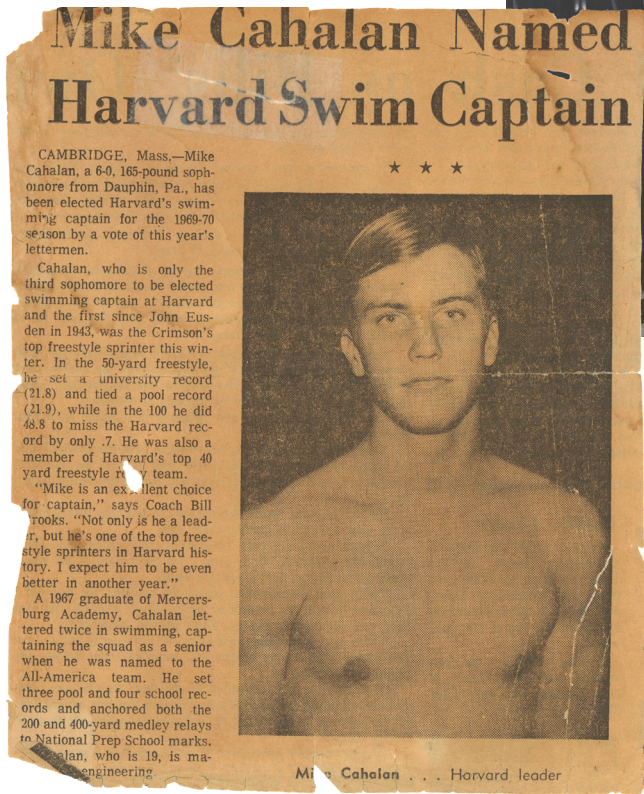
Vanessa Hadley, MD
*Former Resident
University of Utah*

Dr. Cahalan was a great leader, mentor and friend. Several times throughout residency, fellowship and after he gave me valuable guidance that has contributed greatly to my success. He was an example of professionalism. When not talking anesthesia we enjoyed discussing fishing, golf and cars together. My most recent memory of Dr. Cahalan was just before he became ill. In September, Mike and Marianne joined my wife and I on a weeklong journey through the beautiful mountain towns of Colorado in our sports cars. It was a pleasure to spend time with them away from the hospital as friends and car enthusiasts. I am grateful for his example and influence in my life.

Ty Call, MD
*Assistant Professor
University of Utah*

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

—John Quincy Adams



While working under Dr. Cahalan, I was always touched by how much he cared about each of us and our families. I remember the yearly resident meetings in which he would check in with us to make sure that we had everything we needed; be it housing, internet, study materials, etc. He would always ask about hobbies and would visibly wince if you mentioned sports that could be dangerous, such as backcountry skiing or cycling. He would proceed to encourage activities like hiking and cross-country skiing. He was aware of my affinity for riding bikes and would always ask me if I wanted to take up golf. He once had David and me over to practice on the driving range. After repeated efforts which often involved completely missing the ball and/or creating large divots in the perfectly manicured grass, I think he decided it best for us to stick with other activities. Not surprisingly, we weren't asked about golf again. However, we continued to make many happy memories with the Cahalan's at the Kamas Lion's Club range, the Green River camping trip, and over delightful meals. I feel incredibly lucky to have these happy memories and can't believe that we won't have the opportunity to make more. I am deeply saddened that my son will never get to meet Dr. Cahalan. I hope to honor his legacy not only in my career and teaching but also in following his work/life prescription with a healthy dose of the outdoors, time with good friends, a good glass of wine, and perhaps, taking up golf. To Mike...

Rebecca Desso, MD and David Desso
Assistant Professor
University of Utah

I will forever be grateful that I had the opportunity to train and work under Dr. Cahalan. He was truly an advocate for the women in our department and ensured there were ideal work options available to those of us with young children and working spouses. He built a department based on fairness and respect for everyone. He had a gift for teaching that gave each of us a thirst to want to learn more. My most vivid memory is my first time in the simulator as a CA-1. He was playing a clueless surgeon, covered in fake blood, making suction sounds and teaching us the importance of communicating with the surgeon about blood loss and how the patient is doing.

Sara Whittingham, MD
Adjunct Assistant Professor
University of Utah



As our department leader, role model, advisor, and an advocate over the years, Dr. Cahalan was one of a kind. In every conversation with Mike he asked about how we were and remembered our family members by name; when I was single he even asked about my dog Conrad. Dr. Cahalan made this seem effortless, but he worked hard to remember these personal details and to create a sense of belonging for each of us. Dr. Cahalan fostered development of an amazing culture in our department, but he nonetheless cautioned to ‘get your love at home’ as a reminder that attention to our relationships with family and friends would always be paramount. As an advisor Mike encouraged us to find our passion at work and then supported us along the way; he negotiated on my behalf for each of my School of Medicine positions. We did have to be careful though of our annual meetings with the chair; our spouses knew that we’d likely emerge having enthusiastically taken on a new responsibility for the coming year.

How great was it was to see Mike in the hallways after retirement as chair---cheerful, springing up the stairs, busy with textbook writing, and so intuitively remaining engaged while giving the department space to continue to flourish under the direction of our new chair.

Dr. Cahalan’s influence and legacy in anesthesiology are tremendous, but there are more everyday things that remind me of him:

- As I secure my endotracheal tubes with skinny tape, I hear Mike saying, “One piece of tape for the patient, one piece of tape for the anesthesiologist.”
- When I create the tape chevron for my a-lines, I smile a bit as I remember Dr. Cahalan demonstrating the

security of this method by lifting the patient’s arm by the tubing afterward.

- Sometimes I suggest that residents stand up straight or not bend over for procedures; as new residents, Mike reminded us that we had a long career ahead of ourselves in a physical job and that we needed to take care of ourselves.
- I most often limit my OR reading to print anesthesia journals, and even then, as I pull the journal from my bag I always think of Mike’s cautions against reading in the OR and the misperceptions it might create.
- Mike didn’t shout at patients to breathe or open their eyes to wake up; he allowed them to emerge from anesthesia and then calmly assessed their readiness for extubation.
- And, every time I give a mock oral for new graduates I am reminded of how Mike was able to use these mock orals to simultaneously terrify and support us as he effortlessly tangled us in our words and led us to say things we’d never do in real practice. He’d pause the exam, remind us of our excellent training, advise us to say what we’d really do, and then offer the encouragement that even if we failed the exam, we’d be better anesthesiologists because of the process.
- Out of respect for one another and as commitment to our patient care responsibilities, Dr. Cahalan’s faculty meetings always began and ended on time, and his habit of beginning and ending the meeting with good news items continues with Dr. Egan.

Danielle Roussel, MD
Associate Professor
University of Utah



There are many things that have impressed me about Mike Cahalan. He was truly a great man, and has influenced many people. The contributions he made to the field of Anesthesiology were incredible, but what I appreciated most about him was his humanity. He always focused on the person before anything else. As a resident, this was immense. His first question whenever you met with him was “How are you?”, followed by “How’s your family?”. And then there would be a conversation about these topics followed by how important it was to find a balance for all of the important things in life. It was evident how much he valued his family, especially his wife. Mike and Marianne have been such a great example of marriage being a true partnership, and something to aspire to. He always spoke about Marianne with high regard, and showed how much he cared for and loved her.

I was always impressed by how much he tried to build up everyone around him. He was so humble about his own accomplishments, which made him so approachable. There were some very critical times during my training that he played an incredibly important role, although he may not have ever known it. He was never too proud to talk about some of his own failures, and how he grew from them. Hearing about these situations coming from such an accomplished person gave me so much hope. I will be forever grateful for having known Mike and the influence he has had on my life. He will be greatly missed.

Michelle Curtis, MD
*Assistant Professor
 University of Utah*

I am a Critical Care specialist and anesthesiologist. I was a Clinical Professor of Anesthesia at UCSF, and chief of Critical Care Medicine at San Francisco General Hospital. I am now an anesthesiologist in the Sutter Hospital system in the Bay Area, California.

I was an anesthesia resident at UCSF when Mike Cahalan was a senior professor, and my fondest memory is actually of him outside of the cardiac OR. He was my attending for an ambulatory surgery procedure, and I was secretly rolling eyes at the thought that a cardiac anesthesiologist would be supervising my attempt at a brachial plexus block. How wrong I was!!!! Dr. Cahalan showed up with his OWN PERSONAL stimplex set for the block, and knew way too much regional anesthesia for a cardiac anesthesiologist. It turned out that he had always had a passion for regional anesthesia, and he taught me a lot that day about both brachial plexus blocks as well as the value of being well rounded and being intellectually curious. He was a great role model.

Ludwig Lin, MD
Sutter Hospital

It's June 2009. As a new member of the U's anesthesiology department, I find myself with a week of vacation during the Department's annual camping trip to the Flaming Gorge and I enthusiastically drive out to the Dutch John campground, excited that I am now part of a program with so many people who share my love of the outdoors. Here's the catch: it's midweek, and I failed to consider that not everyone has a week of vacation! As I pull into the campground, it suddenly becomes clear that the only people there are Mike and Marianne Cahalan, Marianne's brother Mike Troy, and Jen Davis. GULP! I feel intimidated; the only resident there with the Department's heads of state! What have I gotten myself into?!

Well...it turns out, I had gotten myself into a world of GOOD! Mike and Marianne warmly welcomed me and told me where to set up camp, right near them. They prepared lunch for me and got to telling stories from camping there from years gone by. All the while, Marianne insisted that, while camping, I call Dr. Cahalan "Mike." "Out here," she said, "we're just here to have fun!"

The next day, I rode with Mike and Marianne as well as Mike Troy out to one of their treasured fishing spots: Joan's Hole. Marianne and Mike Troy stayed near where we parked to fish there while Mike and I hiked up the river, fishing the whole way. I myself am a total amateur when it comes to fly-fishing. Mike, on the other hand, was the consummate pro. I watched in awe as he literally stalked a beautiful 18-inch rainbow. For anyone who hasn't been to Joan's Hole, it's double-black diamond fishing. Narrow, little river with lots of brush on the banks perfect for snagging your back-cast. But, if you know what you're doing, it's technical, demanding, and rewarding fishing. If you don't, it's fun to watch someone who does. As I watched Mike skillfully present his fly gently over the head of a totally unsuspecting rainbow and eventually pull a giant fish out of this tiny river, I was totally impressed with his patience, skill, and nuance. "Is there anything this guy isn't good at," I wondered.

Aside from witnessing Mike's skill and diligence, that day turned out to be hugely special for me for many other reasons. Mike and I probably hiked 7 miles or so, in and out of the river. We got to talk a lot, have lunch, and share stories on what led us each into anesthesia. And yes, we caught a few fish too....well, Mike did.

As I progressed through residency, I had the good fortune to work with him fairly frequently. I was ALWAYS impressed with how Dr. Cahalan could simultaneously be the world's expert on various topics, while also being a totally relatable, down-to-earth guy. During one of our cardiac cases, he struggled to place an arterial line



(as I watched in amazement) and I was SO relieved to see that this iconic, legendary clinician got every bit as frustrated as I did by not nailing an a-line. I thought, "Wow! Behind all the accomplishments and accolades, Mike's still one of us!" And that was just one of his many traits that made him so special and approachable.

I interviewed at many anesthesia training programs and only one Chairman's words stuck with me. "If you come to this program, we'll teach you to pursue excellence," said Dr. Cahalan. "There is a difference between success and excellence. As an anesthesiologist, you won't always be successful. You'll have days where, despite your best efforts, you will lose patients. Or have outcomes you hadn't anticipated. But as long as your pursuit is always excellence, you will be on the right path. And that is what we'll teach you here." Words that I remember even today.

Ever approachable and relatable, Dr. Cahalan had a tremendous impact on my career. From his first talk with me as a visiting medical student during which he taught a group of us about the alveolar gas equation to asking me to take on his myocardial ischemia talk at the Park City meeting to hiring me and creating a niche for me in our department, Dr. Cahalan always believed in me. He saw my strengths and helped me to pursue them enthusiastically. I do things in my practice every single day that I learned from him, and for that I will be forever grateful.

Patience, skill, and nuance....it turns out he didn't only exhibit those qualities fishing at Joan's Hole, but in everything he did. Mike...you will be sorely missed. The legacy you have left behind and the number of hearts and minds you've touched is something to which most of us can only aspire.

Respectfully and warmly,

Nate Birgenheier, MD
Assistant Professor
University of Utah



It's a huge travesty that we younger residents never had the chance to experience the anesthesia giant that is Dr. Michael Cahalan in the operating room, but my exposure to "Mike" as he tried to get me to call him on numerous occasions, was that he was assigned to be my faculty mentor. I'll be completely honest, the first time I met him, the impression that I was left with was, "oh...cool? seems nice, unassuming, has an easy laugh, wonder what his role is in the department?" Only later, as I was looking at the cover of our textbook and I see the name "Cahalan" that my feelings and facial expressions went in quick succession from 😊 → 😬 → 😬 → 😬 → 😬.

We only met a handful of times over the course of the year, but Dr. Cahalan was always very warm and even more so, very supportive of me, ensuring that I found a home in the department and was growing as an anesthesiologist. He was a resource I knew I could turn to and also pushed me to try even harder because even though he never leveled any pressure on me, like any good Sitcom dad, he was just a guy you didn't want to disappoint.

You'll be missed Mike.

Fun Facts:

- He taught me how to shoot a shotgun and didn't even laugh when I smacked myself in the face with the stock.
- He delivered my ITE results last year to Jen Chang thinking we were the same person. I get it though, Jen is a handsome, handsome man.

Kris Naowamondhol, MD
Resident
University of Utah

Even after he had stepped down as Chair, Dr. Cahalan had this knack of knowing when the staff was having a group conversation in the hallway or front office. He would appear out of nowhere and with a smile, he would always say the same thing when he saw us – "we should get you an office. I think I know someone who can help with that." I think I will always be waiting for him to pop around the corner and say those words once again.

Being a member of the support staff, it can sometimes feel as though you are just a tiny cog in the machine rather than an important member of the team and a part of the overall mission. Dr. Cahalan was always first to make sure that we knew our jobs were important to the success of the Department. He was a great leader and I learned so much from him both professionally and personally. Dr. Cahalan was a wonderful man and it has been an honor to know him. I will be forever grateful that he took a chance on me.

My deepest condolences go out to Marianne and family. I have no words to express my sorrow over your loss, may you be comforted by the outpouring of love surrounding you.

Katie Snow, C-TAGME
Academic Program Manager
University of Utah



When I first met Mike, I was a very junior faculty member who was preparing for the oral board exam. As is the case with many of us at that time, not only were we studying for the oral board exam, but also the TEE exam. To that end, I poured over video tapes of exam prep review courses. Mike was a prominent speaker on this topic and was often recorded on these video tapes. I felt as if I had met Mike before I actually met him. When I heard he was a candidate for the chair position at Utah, I was star struck. Could it be that a founding father of perioperative echocardiography was coming to Utah? It was a thrill to actually meet him.

As he took over as Chair, he inherited a dysfunctional Department that had just recently endured an uprising protesting unfair faculty compensation and clinical work expectations. He quickly showed poise and leadership as he got us back in the black and set a tone for a positive work environment with high expectations for clinical excellence and fair compensation. This was a much-needed stabilizing force in a time of uncertainty. It took a leader with a high emotional professional IQ. Faculty were impressed with Mike in action as he consistently looked out for faculty interests in some tough arenas. Through his example, our department's status rose to become a well-regarded physician group throughout the hospital.

Early on in my career, I would often have little clinical crises as a new attending where I would be faced with a dilemma that I wasn't sure how to handle. I often curbed Mike. He was ALWAYS helpful and reassuring.

I am now in my 12th year as an oral board examiner for the ABA. It was Mike who recruited me and his endorsement that got me the job. This has been a fulfilling part of my career. Through the ABA, I have met numerous academic anesthesiology colleagues and had the opportunity to participate in several professional service activities at a national level. This has enriched my professional career to no end! Without exception, every time I would go to an oral exam, several people would inquire after Mike. It would go something like this: "Ken, where are you from?" I would respond "Utah".

That would lead to: "Know Mike Cahalan?" or "How is Mike doing? He surviving Utah?" I quickly learned that he is held in high regard by many across the country.

Mike had a way of attracting very skilled clinicians to Utah. This raised the stature of our clinical offerings. I suspect many resident applicants gave Utah a good look because of Mike. His "star power" attracted the very best. His legacy is tremendous. As I visit with other colleagues from around the country, I have come to realize that not every group has a well-established anesthesia preoperative clinic, a 24/7/365 echocardiography service, a well-supported Acute Pain service, an innovative pain research group and thriving chronic pain service, and an emerging important role in critical care. Mike laid the ground work for all of this. Our department has a well-regarded presence throughout the hospital.

When my sister Josie was killed in 2004, he reached out to me to check on me. He was compassionate and his council during the days and weeks that followed was much appreciated.

When Jenifer was diagnosed with breast cancer, I was grateful for the outreach Marianne and Mike provided during this difficult time. Mike would often ask me how I was getting along and wished Jenifer and I the best through the chemotherapy, surgery, and radiation therapy. It made a difference!

We always enjoyed coming to your home for various Department functions. Mike was the consummate gracious host. He always made an extra effort to acknowledge all of his guests, even when there were a lot of them. Impressive.

Mike was an amazing man. I learned so much from him. I am a better person because I knew him. He left his mark on the world and I am so grateful that I knew him.

We all feel his loss greatly.

Ken Johnson, MD
Professor
University of Utah



“A gentleman and a scholar.”

Julia White, RN, BS, CCRC
Clinical Research Coordinator
University of Utah

Having experienced a number of different leaders while in industry, I came to admire Mike’s gentle but firm and principle-based leadership and the way he was able to connect to the people around him, on a very human level. He touched so many. Without Mike we would likely not have made our way back to Utah. For that and for the many memories, for example, the Flaming Gorge camping trips he led or the Rodeo he invited us and my late visiting father to, he will always have a special place in our heart. He left much too early. The loss we feel so acutely is directly related to the huge impact he had, the echoes of which will continue for a very long time.

Kai Kuck, PhD
Professor
University of Utah



While only three years senior, my friend Mike was always a role model for me. In the early 1980s, we practiced on different coasts—I was in Boston, he was in San Francisco. And when I was asked to start an intraoperative echocardiography program at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, I knew who to call. Mike was so generous with his time and supportive in his guidance, encouraging a focus on clinical quality and a commitment to learning and research from the outset. I remember a phone call from more than 30 years ago, during which he shared pearls for success, including choosing an important clinical problem that could be meticulously studied in our clinical practice. This drove our team to work together and perform careful, detailed examinations, which would provide value to our patients and lay building blocks for a clinical research enterprise.

Over the years, our friendship grew through our involvement as examiners for the American Board of Anesthesiology oral examination. I smile thinking of the days the ABA hosted exams at such golfer/examiner friendly venues as Gainey Ranch in Scottsdale and for many years beyond, concluding finally in Chicago, October 2014, with multiple visits to Eataly. Getting to know Mike on a personal level only amplified my regard and admiration. His soft-spoken calm demeanor belied his extraordinary intellect. His ability to convey complex information cogently and lucidly served as a model for me, as I tried to develop and refine my own teaching and lecturing styles. And more than anything, the loving husband, thoughtful friend, and wonderful man who was Michael Cahalan, set a bar for me that I strive to achieve to this day. Our world has lost one of its nicest human beings.

Jonathan B. Mark, MD
Durham, North Carolina



For many of us, the beginning of residency comes with angst. Did I choose the right field of medicine? Will I be a good clinical anesthesiologist? Did I select the best program for training?

Dr. Cahalan represented the calm in the storm of residency for me. He welcomed our residency class to the Utah anesthesia “family” with such enthusiasm that I knew I had arrived at the right program. From day one his passion and reverence for the practice of anesthesia inspired me. His immense knowledge motivated me and drove me to be a better physician. Dr. Cahalan recognized that residency is about extremely hard work, but that each resident can still be treated as an individual and part of the team each step of the way. He genuinely cared about our well-being and our life outside of the hospital.

Now a few years post residency, I realize how lucky all of us that trained under his leadership are. He contributed so much to my confidence as an anesthesiologist. I feel so grateful to have begun my career under his tutelage. He will be missed immensely.

Carina Jackman, MD
Assistant Professor
University of Utah

Mike was more like a father figure to me than a Chairman. And I would venture to think that most of us feel that way towards him. His death has been a deeply personal and sad event in my life.

Jeff Lu, MD
Professor
University of Utah

I feel so fortunate to have known Mike Cahalan. He had such a profound impact on my career and my life. He was a truly great human being. His innumerable accomplishments as a clinician, researcher, educator and department chairman are well known. As much as I admired him for all of those amazing successes, what made him so special was that he genuinely cared for the people around him. He cultivated peoples’ strengths, made them feel valuable, and nurtured their passions so that each individual had the opportunity to maximize their potential. He did this while never letting one lose sight of the importance of life outside of a career. Mike and Marianne were like my second family. I was fortunate to spend so much time away from work with them fishing, golfing, camping, having holiday dinners, and learning from all of his wisdom and insight. Those are times I will always treasure and never forget. I have had a few great people in my life and Mike was one of them. I often find myself asking, what would Dr. Cahalan tell me to do. The world isn’t as bright without him in it and I will miss him terribly.

Jen Davis, MD
Professor
University of Utah



I was fortunate to know Mike for 30 years. He was a kind and honest man who was my role model as a mentor and colleague, and for success in married life. He was the best I have ever seen at productively engaging in difficult conversations.

As a resident, working in the cardiac OR with Mike was a treat, especially when Marianne was there to pantomime the answers to his questions. On one memorable day, I was unable to find the IJ, despite multiple sticks. Mike took the (then very new) echo probe, placed it on the neck, and demonstrated the IJ was lying directly over the carotid. With echo guidance, I was able to place the central line. Mike captured it on video and used it as a teaching tool for years. He also reminded me of it frequently after I joined the team at Utah.

My favorite memories of Mike are from the department camping trip on the Flaming Gorge Reservoir, just above the dam and the Green River. He was in his element, presiding over a huge camping kitchen, cooking up bass and trout and handing them around, bring enough supplies to ensure everyone had enough to eat, telling stories by the campfire, and sometimes staying up past 9 pm.

Over the years, Mike tried to get me to pursue golf, cardiac anesthesia, and a FAER grant, all to no avail. I will be forever grateful that he finally succeeded in influencing my path and recruited me to the University of Utah.

Harriet Hopf, MD
Professor
University of Utah

We in the Pain Research Center are here only because of the vision, and persistence in pursuing it, of Mike Cahalan. In the most literal sense, we are here in the Department, the University, and in Salt Lake City, only because Mike saw the value of building a pain research component, and in 2000 boldly came to Seattle to recruit us from the University of Washington and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. For the five of us—I was lucky to count myself among a group of colleagues that included Dick Chapman, Yoshi Nakamura, Akiko Okifuji, and David Bradshaw—this was an unbelievable opportunity to make a difference in pain research. At that point, we had worked together loosely, but Mike perceived the latent synergy in our group, and offered a richly supportive environment to realize the potential of cohesive pursuit of our allied interests in pain research and clinical pain management.

Why did I agree to make the move? Well, of course, it was—literally—the opportunity of a lifetime. But always there are uncertainties, and I wrestled with these, weighing the promise against strong personal and professional ties. And not least, how I loved living in the Pacific Northwest. Of course, there are no guarantees about how things will turn out. But for me, it came down to a modest breakfast with Mike, just the two of us, in the University of Washington Hospital cafeteria. As we talked, it came to me with a certainty: I trust this man. Whatever the uncertainties, he will do his best to do the right thing. Although I dithered a bit afterwards, it was all superficial. I decided at that moment in the cafeteria. Ultimately, it was about trust. I believed him, and I believed in him.

This unimagined opportunity was a momentous transition for our group. Our career trajectories in Seattle were somewhat predictable. Here was a chance to take a leap into undiscovered, elevated country, to become more than we had been, to extend and exceed ourselves as valued members of this supportive Department. We leaped. And how grateful we all were for the leaping and the landing, safe, questing, and looking upward in this dazzling new academic and physical environment. It's just me, but in this transition and since, I've always heard the voice of Theodore Roethke, the University of Washington poet: "Yet for this we travelled/ With hope, and not alone/ In the country of ourselves/ In a country of bright stone." This country, our traveling to it, was down to Mike, who showed us the map.

Gary Donaldson, PhD
Professor
University of Utah



During his tenure as chairman, Dr. Cahalan provided very significant and essential support and leadership for the Anesthesia Department's Bioengineering/Anesthesia Research Laboratory. As an exceptional researcher himself he knew exactly how to encourage and motivate anesthesia faculty members and university graduate students in their research projects. He insured that each had the university facilities and resources they needed. He stayed informed and gave direction to keep the laboratory on track pursuing clinically significant research. His extensive network of academic colleagues were available as consultants whenever the need arose. We are deeply indebted to Dr. Cahalan and will long remember his kind and supportive leadership.

Dwayne Westenskow, PhD
Emeritus Professor
University of Utah

Dr. C taught me the value of being an anesthesiologist. I recall when I was working with Mike as a resident in OR 20. I was talking with the patient and told her I was "just the anesthesiologist". When I went to present the patient to Mike, he said, "You are not JUST the anesthesiologist...you are one of this patient's doctors. Never minimize what you do, and who you are."

He also showed genuine concern in me, as a person. Every yearly review began with, "How is your health?," and, "How is your family?" Then he would listen to my answers. He never judged what I was going through, and he always asked what he could do as chair to help.

Dustin Coyle, MD
Associate Professor
University of Utah

Mike Cahalan was the reason I moved to Utah. After 30 years at the University of North Carolina, I was looking for more contact with patients to enhance my understanding of Pain and Fatigue so I could make better progress in helping pain and fatigue patients. Mike understood this right away. He also understood the importance of cutting-edge research and allowed me to pursue high impact, risky research.

Mike initiated projects that no other Chair of Anesthesiology (or anyone else) could have. He

was the instigator of projects for treating major Depressive Disorder with anesthetics (Propofol and Isoflurane). This project alone has the potential to help millions of people in the US along. Only he had the courage to propose that we do the experiments here at the University of Utah. This is only one small bit of what Mike was about. But a huge inspiration to my wife and I.

Alan R. Light, PhD
Professor
University of Utah

My second year of residency was half-way done, and I was struggling. I was sleeping poorly and experienced lots of fatigue. One of the attendings on a specialty rotation said to me, “What’s wrong with you?” Around that same time, I did much worse on my In-Training Exam than expected despite studying hard. Concerned and confused (this was not like me), I went to talk to Dr. Cahalan. He told me a story of a previous resident who had struggled even more than I, to the point where he had to repeat some of his rotations. Dr. Cahalan said, “Years after his graduation, I ran into a nurse who worked with this former resident in a different state. She said, ‘Oh, we LOVE Dr. _____! He’s our favorite anesthesiologist!’ So you see, academic performance isn’t the only thing that matters. What matters in the end is that you’re a caring physician and a good person to work with.” This, coming from a man who was the pinnacle of academic achievement and excellence.

My “symptoms” got worse, and I had a few more negative comments thrown my way by some insensitive attendings. I thought I was burning out. Feeling no recourse, I burst into Dr. Cahalan’s office one afternoon in tears. Just finishing up a Vice Chairs’ meeting, he graciously ushered all others out and welcomed me with open arms. The first thing he asked me was if I felt “safe” from harm (self-harm or otherwise, which I fortunately did). Then he arranged for me to take a leave of absence without hesitation, without judgement. Fast forward a year to when I finally figured out what was wrong with me all those months: a large pituitary tumor was inhabiting my skull base, causing peripheral blindness and all sorts of hormone imbalances.

I’ll never forget how he treated me. The pursuit of a career in medicine can be unforgiving, as the “hidden curriculum” we teach and learn is one of self-reliance and survival-of-the-fittest. Others judged me, gave up hope in my abilities, said “She’ll probably be an ok anesthesiologist”... but not Dr. Cahalan. He had so much faith in me that he hired me on to his faculty. My interactions with him remind me of a great quote by Bernard Baruch, “Those who mind don’t matter, and those who matter don’t mind.” I’ll miss his calm demeanor, open-minded approach, and style of unwavering support for all those he mentored.

Dawn Baker, MD
Adjunct Assistant Professor
University of Utah

Setting: Dr. Cahalan’s office

Cast: Dr. Cahalan, professor & chair
Elizabeth Thackeray,
junior attending

Purpose: Annual interview

Dr. Cahalan: “Most important questions first:
How is your health?”

Dr. Thackeray: “Um. Fine.”

Dr. Cahalan: “How is your family doing?”

Dr. Thackeray: “Um. Fine.”

The stilted answers reflected my thoughts, which were along the lines of, “What is he playing at? Does he think I could possibly believe that the most important questions to him are how is my health and how is my family? I’m in my first year out of residency, trying my best to contribute SOMETHING to this impressive department; shouldn’t he be yelling at me to be more productive? No one else in my medical career, literally no one, has ever expressed concern about my health or my family. WHAT IS HAPPENING??”

Of course, Dr. Cahalan was genuinely concerned about my health and my family, in part because he knew that a healthy, happy faculty member is more likely to be a productive faculty member, but mostly because caring about each other is the right thing to do. His mantra of “Do the right thing!” set the tone for our department.

His commitment to backing up decisions made on call also set the tone. One busy Saturday, I delayed a less urgent ORIF for an urgent ex lap on a SICU patient. The delayed surgeon called, and said (among other things), “I just don’t want you to get in trouble when I call your chair.” I almost laughed at him; I was confident in my decision-making, but also absolutely certain that I would not be “in trouble” with Dr. Cahalan.

I am privileged to have known and learned from this great man.

Elizabeth M. Thackeray, MD
Associate Professor
University of Utah



As an interviewing medical student I remember he quizzed a table of interviewees about the alveolar gas equation, and then took the time to give us a brief lecture about the physiology of gas exchange. It was clear the entire time that his interest was in our success as budding anesthesiologists. He made an impression on me the first time we interacted.

Dan Oldroyd, MD
Resident
University of Utah

DEAR MARIANNE,
We will miss Mike so much!!! I will miss Mike's kindness, smile, always "open ear" for everything—inside and outside the operating room. I will miss Mike's wisdom and sage advice, his curiosity and deep love for life, "Mensch," medicine and anesthesiology. How working here for the department has changed my life! I'm deeply grateful and always will be deeply grateful for Mike's encouragement, support and trust in me. When I read the phrase "One life lived and so many lives touched" I thought of Mike. This is how I will remember Mike: A beautiful soul!! Hugs and love!

Doro Rosenberger, MD and Charlotte
Professor
University of Utah

Mike Cahalan was the most gifted anesthesiologist I have ever met. He was the most perfect department chairman a new attending could possibly hope for. He had an amazing ability to be firm and stand his ground on issues that are important to our department, and he always seemed to know the right thing to say or how to act in any situation. He was able to remain calm in the midst of absolute chaos, and on more than one occasion when I was having a difficult time I found myself trying to emulate how I thought Mike would act in my situation. In addition to being a brilliant anesthesiologist he was a wonderful person outside of work as well. I will fondly remember sharing dinner with him at Green River, and he always seemed to care about me as a human being. Mike always seemed to be smiling, and I will always remember how his smile would change in the most subtle way based on the situation (happy/bemused/sarcastic/upset). I will forever be grateful for the opportunity he gave me, and I will be forever humbled to say I could call him my colleague and friend.

Chuck Galaviz, MD
Associate Professor
University of Utah

STORY #1

In my last year of residency, I spent several months working on the physiologic studies for what would become the QED-100, now called AneClear. I was proud that I had completed my animal studies and showed that the hypothesis was physiologically sound. One day, I walked into Dr. Cahalan's office to share my data. He agreed that the experiment was a success. He then proceeded to tell me that I should share this with Dr. Edmond Eger at UCSF. To my surprise, he dialed a number on his phone and said, "Hi Ted, this is Mike. How are things in San Francisco? Hey, I have a resident who just completed his research in inhaled anesthetics. Would now be a good time to speak with him?" To my utter astonishment, he handed me his phone. Awestruck, I placed the phone to my ear and said, "Hi, uh, Dr. Eger, uh, my name is Derek Sakata. How are you?" This contact that Dr. Cahalan made for me, enabled me to fly to UCSF to present my research to the godfather of inhaled anesthetics who was Dr. Cahalan's mentor. Subsequently, this would then lead to me having coffee with Dr. John Severinghaus at his house in Ross, CA. Dr. Severinghaus was Dr. Eger's mentor. Dr. Cahalan fostered these kinds of relationships that bolstered my academic career. My hope is that I can pass this on and be just a fraction of the great man and mentor that he was to me.

STORY #2

Shortly before the end of my residency, I was recruited to an anesthesiology practice in then, beautiful Paradise, California. They were offering a sizeable salary and on my second interview offered to pay off my medical school debt and reduce the price for 80 acres on the Feather River on which to build my home. Knowing me better than I knew myself at the time, Dr. Cahalan convinced me that I would be miserable in private practice due to my academic interests. Further, he told me, "You don't even fly fish!" He, of course, was a major fly fisherman. Every day since then for now over 16 years his predictions have borne out to be true. I always held back from telling him that he was right (kinda like not giving into your parent and giving them the satisfaction). However, he was right.

STORY #3

Three to four years after my residency, Dr. Cahalan recruited me to be the director of anesthesiology at the John Moran Eye Center. At the time I was a new assistant professor. Even the department of ophthalmology thought I was too junior! I also questioned his wisdom in appointing me to this position. He warned me that this would be challenging but that I had his support. Part of this support was his masterful creation of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that let me



excel without initially being burdened with intricate human resource management issues and financial challenges. In retrospect, he knew full well how to nurture my administrative career. He was carefully guiding my career without me even knowing. About two weeks into my position, he asked, "What have you learned?" I thought about it for a second and said, "I got it! I know the over-arching issue with running ORs!" His eyebrows raised, like they would often if he was intrigued and said, "Oh? And what is that?" I then responded, "Unlimited want for limited resources!" His response, with a satisfied chuckle, was, "You have learned much in the first two weeks!" He saw areas in me which he could still mold even though I was beyond my residency. This required deep insight and wisdom. On occasion, especially the last 5-6 years, he would say, "You might consider being a chair of anesthesiology someday." The answer was and still is, "No thank you sir." However, if I could make even a fraction of the impact that he did for our specialty and in my life...

Derek Sakata, MD
Professor
University of Utah



I was working as a CRNA in the OR when Dr. Cahalan started his University of Utah adventure. Under Dr. Cahalan's leadership the anesthesia department became financially productive, the residency program grew into an excellent program, and I saw him mentor so many young doctors and prospective young doctors in their careers. He is a man that truly left a positive imprint in the lives of those he touched. He was a good, honest, hard working man. He was an excellent administrator.

I loved to sit with Mike at lunch because often he would share stories with us. Stories of growing up, stories of family, and professional stories. His stories were always so interesting and gave us an insight to his personal side.

When my 26 year old daughter had Guillain Barre he was so supportive. He recognized and supported the need for me to be with her during this critical time. He was always very kind to me and treated me with respect.

I have a great respect for Mike Cahalan and all that he did at the University of Utah and in the world of Anesthesia.

Sincere condolences to Marianne, Mike's wife. They seemed to truly be sweethearts and partners in life.

Carol Tanner, CRNA
Rn Anesthetist
University of Utah

I was fortunate enough to be Mike's assistant for almost 12 years. I watched him on almost a daily basis meet with people that wanted to discuss their careers, research ideas and a myriad of other topics. I sat in meetings and listened to him relay difficult topics in the most calm and professional manner. He truly was one of the most remarkable men I've ever had the privilege of working with.

Stories that I want to share that showed his calm and fun disposition.

1. I can remember when Vicki asked me if I'd take on the responsibilities of being the assistant to the Chair of the Department. I was a little nervous about the move but jumped head first into keeping his calendar, setting up resident and faculty interviews, typing letters and other things. I was in the position for about 1 week when he had me type up a letter. I got it completed and put it in his inbox on his desk. Several minutes passed and he walked out, placed the letter on my desk, stood at my side and said, "If you proof-read these Chris before you bring them to me you'll save us both a lot of time." Turned and walked back into his office. He was nothing but kind in relaying to me that I needed to step up my game.
2. He once walked around the corner from the main hallway toward classroom D and one afternoon caught 3 or 4 of the support staff playing hockey in the hall way with a stress relief hockey puck. He smiled and said, "Getting some exercise?" We all disseminated rather quickly to our various offices wishing we could fade into the woodwork.

One day that I'll remember forever was the last day of his chairmanship. When he was moving all of his belongings to his new office. We met in the hallway he walked over and gave me a hug. I told him it was an honor and a pleasure working with him for the last 8 years and without a beat he said no "the pleasure has been mine." Always kind and always had the ability to make others see their value.

A quote that describes how I saw Dr. Cahalan on a daily basis. "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." —John Quincy Adams

He inspired, led and taught! I will miss him more than words can express.

Chris Haber
Executive Assistant
University of Utah



was a resident at Utah from 2008–2012 and am now practicing in Colorado.

Remembering Dr Cahalan brings such a dichotomy of emotions. He was an absolute hero in anesthesiology and should have been a very intimidating person but instead he was such a kind, sincere and authentic man.

I first met him at my residency interview and shared such an easy relaxed conversation.

The first case I was assigned to as his resident was for a very sick urgent cardiac patient. I was so incredibly nervous to work beside him as this was one of my first cardiac cases but again he was calm, kind and led with such a gentle confidence.

My best memories are socially when we were invited to dinners at his home and we could all casually talk about golf and fishing and the Green River fishing trips where he was so much in his element teaching us all to fish and how to tie a fly. (“All of my residents should know how to hand tie a central line” 😊)

I quickly learned that his name and reputation in our field is so widespread. When interviewing for a private practice job, I had just been at the Cahalan’s home for the chiefs dinner and I asked to use Dr Cahalan as a reference. When I interviewed and had Dr Cahalan’s number listed, the president of the hiring group asks, “this is THE Dr Cahalan, so if I call, he will answer?” He was clearly as awestruck as many of us are in his presence. I had planned to stay on at Utah to do a fellowship but when my dream job in Colorado offered me a position, he said “you are ready, go out and do us proud!” Dr Cahalan, I hope I have done just that.

He will be greatly missed by many but his influence will last for generations of anesthesiologists.

Anne W Estares, MD
*Former Resident
University of Utah*

worked with Dr. Cahalan for a relatively brief time but I feel so blessed for the opportunity I had to get to know him and learn from him. I so admired his balance of leadership and humility. He always made those around him feel like a valued member of the Anesthesia Family. A few fond memories come to mind. During my first resident recruitment season I got to know Mike better; when he had a little time between interviews he would tell us stories about his competitive swimming days in college, his own residency experience, and how he and Marianne met. His adoration of Marianne is a rare and beautiful relationship I think we all can learn from.

Many times support staff members would have impromptu “meetings” in the hallways discussing this or that, and if Dr. Cahalan walked by he would always jokingly say to us, “We should really invest in some office space for all of you.” This has now become a tag line among our ranks. When he stepped down from Chair he still was kind enough to check in with Katie and I during recruitment season. He would pop his head in our office and ask how the current group of resident applicants was measuring up, and if everyone was behaving themselves. He will be sorely missed and I only hope he knows how much he is loved and admired.

Analyse Erickson
*Academic Coordinator
University of Utah*



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In Memoriam
Dr. Michael K. Cahalan

SATURDAY, MAY 4

6:00–9:00 PM

The Natural History Museum of Utah

301 Wakara Way, Salt Lake City, UT 84108

*This information will be posted on our department website.
Please feel free to distribute it to Mike's friends and colleagues.*

