



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the sudden passing of Dr. David J. Rickard, a beloved brother, uncle, cousin, friend, physician, mentor and artist who left this world on October 25, 2024 at the age of 62. He is survived by his brother James H. Rickard Jr. of Lake City, PA and sisters Judy A. (Jack) Fouser of West Mifflin, PA and Dory J. Rickard of White Oak, PA. He also leaves behind nephews Brett (Dina) Fouser, Brian Fouser and Brad Fouser, along with two great nieces Brynn and Dessa, aunts, uncles, and numerous cousins. He was preceded in death by his wonderful and loving parents James H. Rickard Sr. and Ida Mae (Herder) Rickard of West Mifflin, PA.

Dave always knew that his calling was medicine, but he took a few detours along the way. He spent many summers at Conneaut Lake, PA and treasured memories of his dear friends at the Lake and his old antics. He received his Bachelor of Science in Psychology at the University of Pittsburgh in 1986, a Master of Science in Clinical Psychology at Ohio University in 1994 and graduated with a doctorate from the Ohio University of Osteopathic Medicine 2010. Dave completed his residency in internal medicine in 2013 at Summa Health in Akron Ohio where his exemplary skill and empathy set him apart. Dr. Rickard went on to specialize and complete a fellowship in hospice and palliative care medicine in 2014, establishing a standard of practice that became known not only for medical excellence but also for an atmosphere of acceptance, selflessness and hope. Dave was also a founding board member for the John W. Clem recovery house in Athens, OH.

Dr. David Rickard dedicated his life to the service of others, shaping the lives of countless patients, students, and friends with his unmatched compassion, wisdom, and commitment to the healing arts and the AA recovery community. For more than a decade, Dr. Rickard cared for his patients as if they were family, earning a reputation as a physician who treated the person, not just the illness. His ability to listen, understand, and provide holistic care made him a pillar of the medical community. Patients often spoke of him as a "healer" in the truest sense, a man whose presence alone brought comfort. He was well-known for trying to bring joy to his patients' days and through altruistic acts.

Beyond his clinical practice, Dave was a passionate educator and artist. He mentored many pre-med students and resident physicians. His former students remember him as a guiding light - encouraging, welcoming, and always generous with his time. Dr. Rickard believed in nurturing not only the medical skills but also humanity in medicine. He also introduced many of his students, friends and colleagues to the practice of pottery making. This was yet another one of his passions. Dave formed beautifully glazed mugs, bowls, vases and more that were well-

known in the hospital, AA, Kure Beach and clay communities which he bestowed on his friends and neighbors. He credited his dear friend YiFenn with igniting his passion for pottery. He never made a penny on any of his creations, yet often donated his artwork to underprivileged shelters.

Dave was such a sweet, gentle, decent man and everyone he met could see that immediately. He had an ability to put people at ease and could easily laugh at his mistakes. He often shared books of encouragement and usually wrote a kind message inside. Novant Hospital in Wilmington, NC plans to create a library named after their beloved Dr. David Rickard. Dave was such a cool and down to earth person, even after becoming a doctor. He continued to be approachable, friendly and helpful.

Such a tragic loss to a great person. Anyone who met Dave came away with a sense of peace and feeling that he truly cared about them. His untimely sudden death is a heart wrenching reminder of how unpredictable life can be. One of the nicest and kindest people in the world, he would give the shirt off of his back for anyone in need. His bedside manner with patients was beyond top notch. Family and friends are devastated by the loss of Dave and need some time to process this tragedy. Celebration of life services will be planned further in the future, probably one in Pittsburgh and one in North Carolina.