



## Arlan "Arlie" Norman

March 26, 1940 - July 31, 2021

Arlan (Arlie) Norman, aged 81, died suddenly on Saturday, July 31, after suffering a devastating stroke. Efforts to save him allowed his family time to be with him in his final hours. There has been an outpouring of grief that serves as a testament to his impact on all who knew and loved him.

Arlie was born and raised in North Dakota, received his PhD at Indiana University and established his career in Boulder, Colorado, where he was professor of chemistry at the University of Colorado and served as the Associate Dean of the College of Natural Sciences. His long career at CU in research and teaching led to numerous publications and awards. In that time, Arlie and his wife, Diane, raised their two children in Boulder where they embarked on a lifelong love of the outdoors, whether hiking, camping or skiing.

With Diane, Arlie came to Bellingham in 2003 as the Founding Dean of Western Washington University's College of Sciences and Technology, a position he held for eight years. Throughout his career, he was committed to high quality science education. The Normans quickly grew to love their new community in the Pacific Northwest. Arlie joined the Bellingham Rotary, the Technology Alliance Group and chaired the board of the SPARK Museum. He was also a faithful partner in Diane's deep involvement in the Bellingham Festival of Music.

Arlie was brilliant, yet humble, curious and always interested in others. He shared his love of travel and adventure with friends and family. An active, involved father and grandfather, he loved spending time with daughter, Hilary Benson, her husband David, and their three children in the Seattle area. And, he was a proud, devoted father to his son, U.S. Army Colonel Geoffrey Norman, his wife Stephanie and their two sons, through their frequent moves around the country and deployments overseas.

Arlie is survived by Diane, Hilary, Geoffrey, and five grandsons; his sisters Doris Steingraber and Twyla Chun. A small family service is planned now, with a celebration of his life sometime in the fall.

\* \* \* \* \*

Arlie has been honored at WWU with a scholarship fund established in the College of Science and Engineering. Named the Arlan Norman Award for Excellence in Student Mentoring, the fund recognizes his contributions as the inaugural Dean of CSE and his lifelong dedication to mentorship, science and education.

Throughout his life, Arlie worked to inspire the best in innovation, curiosity and excellence in science education. In lieu of flowers, please consider honoring his memory with a gift to The Arlan Norman Award for Excellence. [Click here](#) for more details.

# Tribute Wall

DM

“ *To all the Norman family  
I am so very sorry. He was great guy had the pleasure to meet  
him 3 years ago when I first started working at the barbershop  
ever since I always looked forward to cut his hair once a month for  
3 years and enjoy our wonderful conversation. My deepest  
sympathy to the family*

---

**Diego martinez** - August 11, 2021 at 12:00 AM

DS

“ *Dear Diane, Geoff & family,  
You have my deep sympathy at the loss of your husband, father,  
and friend. May you find some peace in the knowledge of his  
extraordinary life and achievements and his love for you.  
David Skaggs*

---

**david skaggs** - August 08, 2021 at 12:00 AM

DM

“ *I join with others in expressing my profound sadness at the passing  
of my colleague and friend. The world is a poorer place without him.  
My deepest sympathy to his wife and family.  
Dennis*

---

**Dennis R. Murphy** - August 07, 2021 at 12:00 AM