

## WALKING IN MEMORY

"Gary never complained to his siblings, me and Mitch, in spite of the constant pain he endured," says Gary's sister, Susan Kushner. "He was the best big brother we could ever have. He had a wonderful outlook on life and fought scleroderma with all his being. He was loved deeply by so many."

After 20 years of battling scleroderma, Gary Dvoskin died in 1999 at the age of 52. His children were very young when he passed away. Samantha, Matthew, and Adam (only 11 years old) were devastated but have been able to move forward and have loving families of their own. His wife, Judy, was able to focus on her children, and has been blessed with six beautiful grandchildren: Grant, Gabi, Jeremy, Brooke, Brett, and Hunter. Gary's parents, Jeanette and Philip, despite their advanced ages, constantly transported Gary to the doctors and facilities. They never gave up hope for his cure, and it was a great shock to them when he succumbed to the disease. "Gary was an extraordinary person. He had such a warm, caring attitude and continued to maintain this throughout his years after being diagnosed with scleroderma," says Susan.



Susan had been contributing to the Scleroderma Foundation for many years when she received a notice about the first Scleroderma Walk to be held in Columbia, Maryland. Very excited about the event, she gathered information and notified all of Gary's family and friends. It wasn't until the 2nd year of the Walk that Team Gary was officially named at the suggestion of one of his sons. The members of Team Gary have been participating in the Greater Baltimore Stepping Out to Cure Scleroderma Walk since its inception in 2011. Because of the closeness and support of Gary's family and friends, Susan says Team Gary has raised enough money to receive honors as #1 individual and/or #1 Team for the past several years at the Walk. In the photo above, Team Gary is represented by Judy and her children and their families, Susan and some of her family, and his brother, Mitch. The t-shirts everyone is wearing has a drawing of a sousaphone, which Gary played in the marching bands he participated in early in his life.

"Our hope for the future is that the annual Scleroderma Walks will raise enough funds to help find a cure for this most devastating illness," says Judy. [Register today to join Team Gary and others at our 2016 Walk!](#)

## A TRIBUTE TO GARY DWOSKIN

Gary worked for many years as Director of Contracts



and Grants for the National Academy of Sciences, and prior to this position he worked at the Agency for International Development (AID). During his tenure he was able to travel to many countries throughout the world, experiencing different cultures and customs.

As a college student, Gary played in the University of Maryland's marching band and later in the Redskin's band. He loved to share stories of meeting the players and traveling with them when they played in different cities. Gary went on to become an attorney after attending Baltimore Law School. "Our family was so proud of him when he passed the Maryland Bar Exam on the first try and was also admitted to the DC Bar," says Judy.

Three months after graduating, Gary became a father for the first time to their daughter, Samantha. Two years later when they were expecting their second child, Matthew, Gary was playing on a softball team. During this game, he hit three home runs! The next day, Gary started to notice his joints were bothering him. The family attributed it to his great performance on the softball field the evening before. Unfortunately, that was not the case. By the end of the month, Gary had lost a considerable amount of weight and was having difficulty swallowing. After months of testing, Gary was diagnosed with scleroderma. "We had never heard of this illness and had to learn what the future would hold," says Judy. "We were heartbroken to discover there was no cure and limited treatments to suppress the symptoms. Our family carried on and lived as normal a life as possible. We were fortunate to welcome another son, Adam, into the family."

Gary continued working and throughout the years won the admiration and recognition of the Academy and was awarded several honors for his work. He became the president of the National Grants Management Association (NGMA). In honor of his legacy, NGMA established the Gary E. Dvoskin Award to be given to all outgoing NGMA Presidents. The award bestowed in Gary's name reflects the high personal and professional ideals and humanity that Gary's life and career epitomized. In the late 1980's, Gary became the first two-time President of NGMA, a tribute to the respect and confidence he engendered in his colleagues. "There is much in Gary's career to both celebrate and emulate," says Gary's boyhood friend, Paul Posner. "He brought high standards of integrity and decency, a sharp intellect combined with a passion for justice and a compassion for people."

One of Gary's most endearing and enduring qualities was the style, the grace, and the wit that he displayed throughout his many relationships, both private and public. He inspired great loyalty among his own staff and respect and confidence among those he faced across the table. This had little to do with his position and everything to do with what he gave to others. He nurtured his staff, spending hours giving them the benefit of his knowledge and experience. He showed a consideration and respect for friend and adversary alike, conveyed as always with a disarming and engaging humor.

"Gary's good works throughout his career provides guidance to us all in addressing emerging and difficult challenges," says Paul. "If he were here today, Gary would wonder what all the fuss was about. He would tell you to build on his own good works with your own. He would guide you with a warm and friendly hand and remind you to never forget who you work for but to remember that you must work with all types across many cultures to get the job done best. And he would, regardless of the personal pain and suffering he endured for so

many years, spare not one second to dwell on his own struggle. Rather, he would smile and ask you, how you are doing - offering encouragement, advice, and above all else, good humor. That's the kind of leadership NGMA has recognized with the Gary E. Dvoskin award - many aspire to it, few achieve it."

Gary died on January 25, 1999. It was Gary and his wife, Judy's anniversary that day. "Gary was a strong minded man who had made up his mind that he would live his life to the fullest in spite of this terrible illness," says Judy. "He had always enjoyed being with his family and friends and continued to spend as much time as he could doing so. He even continued to go to the beach when he was on oxygen and eventually in a wheel chair. Gary's amazing attitude was a lesson to be learned by many. Gary never asked why this happened to him."

The Scleroderma Foundation Greater Washington, DC Chapter is very grateful to the Dvoskin family for sharing their memories of Gary with us and for inspiring all of us. We also thank them for their efforts to help the Chapter raise funds through our Walk for scleroderma research and to provide support services and educational forums to our members and their families.

## 2016 STEPPING OUT FOR A CURE WALK

**5 DAYS UNTIL THE WALK!**

**[Register Today!](#)**

**6th Stepping Out to Cure Scleroderma  
Greater Baltimore Walk/Run  
May 21, 2016**

**Atholton High School Track  
6520 Freetwon Road  
Columbia, MD 21044**



Hosted by the Scleroderma Foundation Greater Washington, DC Chapter and Sponsored by the Atholton Athletic Boosters and SGA.

**Many thanks to all of our participants this year and past years.  
Your support is very much appreciated.  
See you on Saturday!**

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