



Dr. Robert L. Porter

JUN 17, 1958 - MAR 21, 2019



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Hamlin & Hilbish
Funeral Directors

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Dr. Robert L. Porter

JUN 17, 1958 - MAR 21, 2019

Dr. Robert “Bob” Porter, age 60, passed away on March 21, 2019, after fighting as hard as he could against a sudden cardiac and respiratory illness.

Bob was born on June 17, 1958, in Clinton, South Carolina. He moved to Howey-in-the-Hills as a child and lived in Lake County for the majority of his life. Bob was raised on E. Magnolia Ave. by his mother Joanne Holland and his grandparents Harriet and Kenneth Porter. At the age of nine, Bob developed osteomyelitis in his left hip that restricted his ability to walk. He lived at the Harry Anna Crippled Children’s Home in Umatilla for a full year as doctors treated his infection. Bob was told that he would never walk again, but he used that as motivation to get well. He would practice walking at night and eventually showed the doctors and his family that he could in fact walk again. Soon after his release from Harry Anna, Bob’s mother was tragically killed in an auto accident, and he was raised by his grandmother.

Bob graduated from Tavares High School in 1976 where he enjoyed playing tennis and singing in various choral groups. His dream had always been to follow his grandfather’s footsteps as a graduate of the Naval Academy. He received a Presidential Appointment, but on his last physical exam was told that his childhood hip injury prohibited him from being accepted. Bob then attended UCF and earned a degree in Electrical Engineering. He was selected to enter the Manufacturing Management Program at General Electric Company, which resulted in moves to jobs in New Jersey and Virginia as an Automation and Design Engineer. During this time Bob was responsible for automating several GE manufacturing plants in the U.S. and Singapore.

Bob worked for NCR/AT&T from 1985-1993 in Lake Mary as the Director of Manufacturing and Automation Design. During this time Bob earned his Executive MBA from Rollins College in 1990 and graduated top of his class. He was also awarded the Class Leader/Scholar by the faculty. In 1997 Bob started his own consulting company called Management Insights, Inc., and then became a founding director and Chief Operating Officer at Florida Choice Bank from 2001-2006.



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Bob completed a Ph.D. in Management from UCF in 2010 and was then honored to be a Graduate Faculty Scholar at UCF allowing him to lecture on the undergraduate, graduate, and executive level. Bob played a key role in the Capstone course for undergraduate seniors, and his innovations in that course continue today. Bob's research interests included innovation and creativity, CEOs and Boards, and negotiations. During his time teaching, Bob focused on business strategy, conflict management, and organizational theory. Bob became the Executive Director of the UCF Executive Development Center in downtown Orlando and absolutely loved working with professional and executive MBA students in courses and workshops.

Bob's last year of work included serving as the Executive Director of Economic Development and Strategic Initiatives for Osceola County and most recently as the President and CEO of Florida Virtual Schools.

Bob devoted his career to improving companies as an engineer, manager, consultant, and teacher. He loved helping others find their "sweet spot" in life at the intersection of three things: what you do really well, what you really enjoy (your passion), and what others really appreciate you for.

Bob met Terry Thompson of Eustis in 1979 through mutual friends and they were married on August 2, 1980. Daughter Alicia was born in 1984 while they lived in Virginia, so Bob and Terry returned to Lake County to be closer to family. Michael was born in 1986, and John in 1992, completing the Porter family. The family lived on Lake Joanna and enjoyed time on the lake swimming, boating, and water skiing. Bob always supported Terry in her position as a piano teacher and homemaker, and he encouraged his children to do their best and to follow their passions in education and life.

Bob's hobbies included cycling, reading, listening to music, and watching Star Trek. He rode his bicycle almost every Saturday morning, usually with a group of "crazies" from the We Must Be Crazy Bike Club. Bob was giving of his time and knowledge when it came to helping other cyclists train and fix their bikes. He could often be found in his "workshop" tightening gears, changing tires, or building a new frame. Bob also loved motorcycles and spent many years riding and collecting different kinds.

Bob loved reading and learning. His home office was always filled with books, and he often gave books to his friends at Christmas with personalized notes in the front covers. He enjoyed listening to music and NPR. On Saturday afternoons, the house would be filled with the News from Lake



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Wobegon and Prairie Home Companion. Bob played the guitar and would often play or listen to guitar music as a way to relax. He passed on his love for reading and music to his children and many others in his life. Bob was also known as a “Trekkie” because of his love for all things Star Trek. His passion for space and science fiction is also something that he instilled in his children and grandchildren.

Bob is also fondly remembered for his ministry in Lake County that spans decades. He began working in youth ministry at First United Methodist Church in Tavares in 1979 and continued while living in Virginia. Bob and Terry led shepherding groups, taught college and career Sunday school classes, and held many other ministry roles at Trinity Church in Eustis. Bob served on the board at Trinity for years and also invested his time and knowledge into what was best for the church. His legacy as a teacher and mentor will live on through the lives of everyone that he impacted.

Bob is survived by his wife of 38 years Terry, his daughter Alicia (Russell) Clayton, and his sons Michael and John (Taylor). He was the grandfather to four precious girls Emily & Elizabeth Clayton and Marlee & Maddie Porter. He is also survived by his father Dr. Davis (Ellen) Holland and many other family members who loved Bob dearly.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you make a donation to the Dr. Bob Porter scholarship fund in Bob’s memory so that his passion for business, teaching, and learning can live on!

<https://www.ucffoundation.org/porter>.


A celebration of life service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, March 25, at Trinity Church (890 Abrams Rd., Eustis, FL 32726).


Condolences, memories and photos may be shared on the tribute wall.

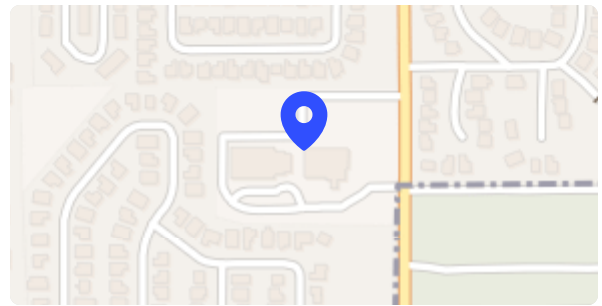


Memorial Ceremony

 **Monday**, March 25, 2019

 11:00 AM ET

 **Trinity Evangelical Free Church**
890 Abrams Road, Eustis FL 32726





Tribute Wall

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Meg Porte posted:

I brought my mother to Dr Porter in the 90's. He took good care of her fx wrist I recall. My name is Meg Porte, my husband was Dr. Robert Porte, and we practiced also in Ft. Lauderdale. Every once in a while, we received calls for your husband's office, and I believe you might have also. Two beautiful doctors with different gifts. God Bless

August 13 at 10:19 AM



Michael lit a candle in honor of Dr. Robert.

His confidence in me bolstered my self esteem and early success out of college. Astute, empathetic and generous, he recommended life changing books like "The Noticer" and "The Road Less Travelled". Books that helped me form a foundation that I rely on to this day. I am forever grateful to this man and am deeply saddened by his passing. My heart goes out to his family.



December 22 at 1:47 PM



Melih Beser posted:

The opportunity to speak with Dr. Porter was my only reason to go to the UCF Alumni events. Being the smartest man in the room, he was always busy talking with guests... He would see me, nod to acknowledge, finish his conversation and give me my annual 15 minutes of Dr. Porter time to catch up, talk business, etc. His wisdom was grand. My condolences to his family.

May 20 at 8:21 PM



Cindi Bean posted:

My sincerest condolences to the Porter family. I am so sorry to hear of Bob's passing. He was a man who cared deeply about others and took the time to help you achieve your absolute best. Bob made a huge impact in many lives. I am honored to have worked under Bob at Florida Choice Bank and the training and encouragement he gave me to become a leader with integrity.

May 18 at 4:59 AM



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Megan Mobley posted:

I am so sad to have come across this. Dr. Porter was truly the best professor I ever had the pleasure of learning from. He was one of the people that was in my life shortly, but shaped it profoundly. A brilliant and kind man that took the time to encourage me and build my confidence. I still treasure the recommendation letter he wrote for my very first job out of college, and believe it or not, I've never been able to get rid of his class notes and assignments! The lessons last a lifetime. My prayers are with his family. May you find some peace in knowing that he truly changed lives.

May 17 at 4:39 PM



Brian Nelson lit a candle in honor of Dr. Robert.

Dr. Porter is one of the most intelligent & gifted teachers that I have ever known, & I will always appreciate the impact that he had on me as a young professional in the CBA undergrad program at UCF. May the Lord bring peace & comfort to his family during this difficult time, while knowing that he will be deeply missed by all who knew him. God bless, BRIAN L. NELSON Romans 1:16-17 NKJV



May 16 at 6:09 PM



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Diana Dawn Scott posted:

This may be a bit long, but I want to share Porter's gift of caring. I met Porter when he was CFO at Florida Choice Bank. He encouraged me to start my college career (AA), he is one of the reasons I am now working on my PhD. He was an amazing man, and from what I know, a great dad and very proud grandpa of his little girls. Over the past 15 years, Porter was a big part of my life (Life Coach/Mentor/Friend). He helped me through my daughter's drug addiction and coached me in all aspects of my adventures. I often found myself wondering what Porter would do in my situation. Those who really knew him can relate... Porter would give a slight nod of his head and sometimes bow with honor and humility (even if he was on the right side of the argument) and say something with such profound insight. Most often, I find myself saying that I am too busy to meet for coffee, or to have lunch with a friend. I am too busy to help my grandmother, or to talk to my dad about his hobby. Or I will procrastinate washing my dog, because I am too busy.... Well, my grandmother passed away before I could help her, my dad just recently died before I could sit with him, my dog just drowned in the lake... maybe he was trying to wash himself, and now my dear friend, Porter.... I promise that I will see you in Heaven for that cup of coffee. If there is something that you need to do in life, I have learned to just do it. Porter and I corresponded mostly through email and I just found some of his encouraging words of wisdom, one of which touches on the subject of "busy". Porter wrote: "Everyone is always busy, it's just what you choose to do with your time that looks different from the outside. For instance, every camera lens is always in focus, on something... maybe not what you want, or expect, but it's always focusing on something. I think that someone sitting on a couch watching TV is busy... ;o)" I will close with something that he would text me as he remembered me and my family's struggles, and I am most positive that he would say this to his family right now. "Take a deep breath and focus on the key things for the day..." - Robert Porter "Do not give up hope on your situation or the things that are important to you in life - the bad seasons will pass... the good will come through for you." - Robert Porter I love my husband dearly, and can't imagine losing him... I feel for the whole family (Terry and kids)... my condolences... This is my last email to you, my dear friend, SR, I miss you already! All my best, PD

March 23 at 5:21 PM



Diana Dawn Scott lit a candle in honor of Dr. Robert.



March 28 at 1:02 PM



Wendy Holt-Stone posted:

Dr. Porter was my professor in grad school. I found him knowledgeable, funny, and gracious and I learned so much from him. This is such a shock. My condolences to his family.

March 26 at 3:07 PM



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FC

Farshad Charmforoosh posted:

I heard of Dr. Porter's passing this afternoon. I am shocked and deeply saddened. His departure from the EDC left a void that is difficult to fill. His leadership and professionalism were unmatched. My sincere condolences to the Porter family. He is and will be missed. Farshad Charmforoosh

March 25 at 2:05 PM

DS

David Schmidt posted:

I am stunned and saddened to hear about Bob's untimely passing. While I didn't have the privilege of knowing Dr. Porter well, I enjoyed my conversations with him and admired him both personally and professionally. To his wife Terry, daughter Alicia, sons Michael and John, and the many who loved him: I hope that you find God's comfort and embrace during these trying times. I hope that your sadness turns to joy with the wonderful memories you made with Bob during his time with us. I can only imagine the countless lives and hearts he touched. My condolences and heartfelt prayers to all of you. David Schmidt

March 25 at 6:16 AM

DW

Dwight posted:

Bob was one of the smartest men I've ever met... always reading, always learning, always teaching. He will be missed. Praying for Terry and the kids. -db

March 24 at 3:54 PM

MS

Mike Sheahan posted:

Those of us who worked for Bob at UCF were saddened to hear of his passing. I'll always remember his support for my return to full-time work after I'd earlier reduced my hours. He was an engaging delegator, typically preceding an assignment with an admission that he needed a staff member's assistance. As such, how could one not accept his request? In my case, that prompted several rewarding years of providing support to visiting MBA students from Spain and South America. Terry may recall once meeting up with us at Disney, as our staff was escorting a cohort on the same day that she was enjoying park time with family. That chance meeting—our staff furthering one of Bob's work goals, alongside his own family's enjoyment—reinforced to me his exceptional balance, seamlessly valuing both the professional and personal in his life. My heartfelt sympathies to Terry and all the family. - Mike Sheahan

March 24 at 1:17 PM



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TH

Tammy Holt posted:

Terry and family, I am so sorry to hear about Bob's passing. He was a great boss who took care of his staff and always wanted them to do their best and succeed in life. He made a big impression on my life as well as my co-workers. I am praying for peace and comfort for you all. Tammy Holt

March 24 at 9:55 AM

JJ

Joan And Jerry Cox posted:

As parents, we were especially grateful for the mentoring that Bob provided to our son Justin during his college years. Our hearts go out to the family as they begin the hard journey of learning to live without the living presence of their dad and husband.

March 24 at 6:16 AM

JB

Jim Beyer shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Bob, who I met at church (Trinity) introduced me to cycling, even arranging my first road ride by borrowing a bike for me. I later went on to earn a coveted Leadville belt buckle with Bob riding various training events with me and the "mountain division" of the Crazyes. I consider Bob a friend, a mentor, and an inspiration. Bob you will be missed, especially as the "Head Crazy."



March 23 at 5:21 PM



Media

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Jim Beyer shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

March 23 at 5:21 PM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Dr. Robert by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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