

BERNARD BLAKEMAN (BLAKE) HOUNSHELL

September 4, 1978 - January 10, 2023

In Memorium



Dear Blake, we lost you - our child, brother, and friend - a year ago on January 10, 2023. Because of your success as a Washington-based political journalist and editor, your death by suicide was so newsworthy that online news, blogs, and social media lit up within minutes of its confirmation. Some of these articles captured your remarkable career in online political journalism at Foreign

Policy, Politico, and The New York Times. Some highlighted your role in this fast-paced profession as a mentor, motivator, editor, and friend in and out of the newsroom. A few tributes also emphasized what an incredible, dedicated husband and father you were to your wife Sandy and beautiful children David and Astrid and the sheer delight you took in them. We treasure all we learned from your college classmates, former colleagues, friends from far and wide, and members of your close-knit community in the Palisades neighborhood of Washington in the wake of your death. But no one can fully measure the depth and breadth of your rich forty-four years with us.

We all had glimpses of your intelligence, wit, creativity, kindness, ambition, talents both hidden and demonstrated, and your zest for life and making your world a better place. We knew how you always believed you could will things into being, whether learning a difficult new language, cooking a new dish in the kitchen, or creating a new publication, because you always seemed to be able to do these things. We each experienced your creative bursts that fueled great outputs of work, unique perspectives, and ambitious undertakings.

But none of us grasped how the deep, dark trough of bipolar disease that had remained quiescent during most of your adult life took control of your brilliant mind over the last weeks and days of your life. We know so imperfectly how much you despaired that you could not will yourself into wellness both mentally and physically. We too despair - and grieve - that your pain was so great that you chose to end your life. Your death snuffed out a bright light in our lives that we had always known.

Still, today, on this first anniversary of your death, we choose to celebrate your rich life, to be always grateful for the inheritance you left us of the family you and Sandy created, to know that you deeply loved them and us, and to declare our abiding love for you and the joy you brought us throughout your life. We also remain thankful to all those who have comforted us during the past year; we have been immeasurably touched by their generosity and kindness.

Your best friend from Pittsburgh, Adam Pollock, concluded his January 16, 2023 eulogy by citing the Hebrew proverb, "May your memory always be a blessing." It is and always will be.

Much love,
Mom, Dad, Jennie, and Eric
January 10, 2024

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org.