

CYRIL H. WECHT, M.D., J.D.



Cyril H. Wecht, M.D., J.D., 93, passed away peacefully on May 13, 2024. He leaves behind his loving wife Sigrid, four children David (Valerie), Daniel (Anna), Benjamin (Flynn), and Ingrid (Harold), and eleven grandchildren (Dylan, Sophie, Zoe, Gabriel, Nathan, Jacob, Sarah, Alexander, Macey, Emma, and Jessica). Cyril was born in Pittsburgh on March 20, 1931, to immigrant parents Nathan and Fannie Wecht,

and raised in Bobtown, McKees Rocks and the Lower Hill District. A standout student, violinist and athlete at Fifth Avenue High School, he graduated as Class Valedictorian and went on to the University of Pittsburgh, where he distinguished himself as President of Phi Epsilon Pi fraternity, Concertmaster of the Pitt Symphony, Business Manager of the Pitt News, and President of the YMCA, among many other honors. After earning his medical degree at the University of Pittsburgh Medical School, Cyril was called into his country's service, and proudly served as a Captain in the United States Air Force. It was there that he met his wife Sigrid, herself an immigrant, who also was serving in the United States Air Force. After they both were honorably discharged, they married at Rodef Shalom Congregation in Pittsburgh, and lived briefly in Baltimore, where Cyril obtained his first law degree from the University of Maryland while working in the Medical Examiner's Office, and where their first child, David, was born. After returning to Pittsburgh in 1963, Cyril and Sigrid had three more children, Daniel, Benjamin, and Ingrid, and Cyril obtained his second law degree, this one at Pitt. Cyril embarked on a long and stellar career combining his training in medicine and law, and his then-rare expertise in the nascent field of forensic pathology. Early on, Cyril juggled four jobs -- as a forensic pathologist/deputy at the Coroner's Office, as an Assistant District Attorney/medical-legal adviser to the District Attorney, as a pathologist at the Veterans Administration Hospital - Leech Farm, and as an attorney practicing with his friends David and Roslyn Litman. He went on to win election to several terms as Allegheny County Coroner, where he modernized the office and made it into an international model, attracting trainees from all over the world. He later served as Allegheny County's first Chief Medical Examiner. Cyril also was elected County Commissioner, County Democratic Party Chairman, and President of several professional organizations, including the American College of Legal Medicine, the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, the American Board of Legal Medicine, and many others. Cyril founded the Pittsburgh Institute of Legal Medicine and the Cyril H. Wecht Institute of Forensic Science and Law at Duquesne University, where he taught for some sixty years. He was the first civilian permitted to examine the evidence from the assassination of President John F. Kennedy at the National Archives, and the first person to discover that the President's brain, and related material, was missing. He was the nation's foremost critic of the Warren Commission's infamous single bullet theory. He personally conducted tens of thousands of autopsies, consulted and testified in countless criminal and civil cases, spoke around the world to professional, lay, and student groups, held several faculty appointments, authored dozens of books and hundreds of scholarly articles, and collaborated on numerous film and television projects, including the award-winning films JFK and Concussion. He worked avidly and expertly to discover the truth surrounding deaths and injuries suffered by others, and brought comfort and justice for countless grieving and victimized families around the globe. He loved Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, and, although he traveled the world, he never would consider living anywhere else (save for his two years of military service and his brief time in Baltimore after discharge). Most of all, Cyril loved his family, and made the happiness, well-being, and education of his wife, his children and his grandchildren his top priority in life. He also was blessed to share the love and affection of many close and lifelong friends and colleagues, most of whom have departed from this realm as well. Services, Interment, and Shiva Private. A public memorial service will be announced in the future. In lieu of flowers, contributions in Cyril's memory can be made to Stand With Us, www.standwithus.com, PO Box 341069, Los Angeles, CA 90034. Arrangements entrusted to **RALPH SCHUGAR CHAPEL, INC.**

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