

PHILIP D. KWAIT



Age 45, of Planet Earth (all of it), died unexpectedly on September 15, 2024. Phil's heart made him put his family first. He is survived by his mother, Ann Murray Sloan; his four siblings, Michelle Kwait, Joseph Kwait, LeeAnn Kwait and David (Julia) Kwait; and his nieces and nephews, Carter, Colby, Conrad, Aliah, Theodore, Molly and Louis. There are really no words to describe the depth of love he felt toward his nieces and

nephews, each as individuals in their own right. He was predeceased by his father, David J. Kwait.

Phil left behind a collection of friends too numerous and varied to count, or even describe accurately. Phil saw goodness in everyone and always looked for the positive in every person he met. His ability to bring people into his world and make them better for it is among the biggest losses that we mourn. His ability to carry relationships across continents and decades, without losing any real connection when he eventually came back into your orbit, was remarkable. His commitment to making the effort to reconnect with the people he cared about is something we can all learn from. However, what made Phil one-of-a-kind was how wide and varied his friends were. There was nobody he would not engage with and nobody he could not connect with in the sole pursuit of positivity.

His career was amazing to witness, his family and friends had a front row seat to a true entrepreneur, constantly pivoting his vision toward success. He began his work life by detailing relatives' cars, mowing lawns around the neighborhood and otherwise hustling. One might expect that this was all in anticipation of going to college, but it was actually to fund an enormous saltwater aquarium that sat in his parents' town-wide gathering spot, a.k.a. basement, in McMurray, Pennsylvania. Eventually, he graduated from UCLA and went to work in the service industry in Chicago and San Francisco. In between, he discovered a passion for travel that became his first career. His next bit of entrepreneurialism was to connect countries with developing economies to established sources of capital from across the world and this was all done by him and in-person.

He saw and appreciated more of the world than most people ever will. It comes as no surprise that he found his true passion in environmental preservation, specifically clean energy. Watching the fits and starts of what eventually became Fellowship Energy was a masterclass in never being afraid to fail to ensure success. There were entire weeks of nothing but Phil and his laptop, where he was so intensely focused on a spreadsheet that you would forget that he was in the room until he started planning dinner at 10 a.m. So many of us have experienced those passionate, late-night conversations about the environment, the opportunities around clean energy and how all of this probably had to involve some collaboration between him and whoever he was talking to. Through Fellowship, Phil proudly accepted the 2019 Department of Energy SunShot Award to Expand Solar Access to Nonprofits. His business efforts will survive him and will continue to honor his legacy with every new innovation, project and relationship.

Whether you were his family, one of his innumerable best friends, a business partner or likely some combination of the three, remember Phil as his best self - the guy who was trying to literally save the world because he cared that deeply about each and every one of us.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to the following environmental causes:

<http://Climatecabinet.org>

<https://www.edf.org>

<https://www.lcv.org>

Send condolences post-gazette.com/gb