

DR. JAMES V. MAHER



Dr. James V. Maher, Provost Emeritus and Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh, died peacefully at his Squirrel Hill home, on November 21, 2024. He was 82.

Maher is survived by his wife, Angela Braunstein Maher, to whom he felt blessed to be married for 58 years. Family always was his highest priority and he also was deeply devoted to and very proud of his children and

grandchildren. He is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Robin and John Maier, by his son and daughter-in-law, Jim and Andrea Maher; and by six grandchildren, two with spouses, Jay and Sidney Caierley, Jack and Bella Maier, Tom Maier, Ella Maier, Jimmy Maher and Lorena Maher. His was also thoroughly devoted to his Catholic faith, which he deeply infused into both his family and professional life.

Maher was born and raised in the Bronx. Broadly educated but with a focus on physics, he earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Notre Dame and his master's and doctoral degrees from Yale University. Prior to joining the University of Pittsburgh as an assistant professor of physics in 1970, Maher served as a post-doctoral research associate in the Physics Division of the Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago.

During his tenure as a Pitt faculty member, Maher served as chair of the Department of Physics and Astronomy, director of the Scaife Nuclear Physics Laboratory and as a resident fellow in the Center for the Philosophy of Science. He also served as a visiting scientist at the Niels Bohr Institute in Copenhagen, the Kernfysisch Versneller Instituut in Groningen, Netherlands and the College de France in Paris, as well as the Argonne National Laboratory. An elected fellow of both the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, he published 94 papers in refereed journals, mostly in the fields of nuclear physics and statistical condensed matter physics. He also presented 22 invited talks and another 128 contributed papers and presentations at topical conferences and physical society meetings.

Maher was named Pitt's Provost in 1994 and served with distinction in that role for 16 years. During that time, the University made significant strides on many fronts—dramatically increasing applications for admission, elevating the academic credentials of admitted students, while also boosting enrollments, promoting instructional innovations, adding substantially to on-campus housing, enriching the quality of student life, enhancing research strength, while moving into critical new areas, creating programs for the commercialization of technology, implementing plans for the development of facilities and infrastructure that would support academic ambitions, while maintaining fiscal discipline and reaching out to alumni, donors and other friends in markedly more effective ways.

As Provost, Maher was chair of the University Planning and Budgeting Committee, the Information Technology Steering Committee, the International Coordinating Council and the Council of Deans. He was also chair of the University's Facilities Planning Committee and a member of the Information Technology Committee at Pitt's partner institution, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and was principal liaison to the Academic Affairs and Libraries Committee of the University of Pittsburgh Board of Trustees.

When he stepped down as Provost in 2010, the Trustees honored him through a resolution declaring that he had "through a combination of exceptional skill, broad experience, good judgment and hard work, provided outstanding service to the University and played a prominent role in elevating the University into the ranks of the country's finest research universities." The Board also noted that he had "earned the admiration, affection and respect of the members of the Board of Trustees—as well as Pitt's administration, faculty, staff, students, and alumni—for his integrity, dedication, loyalty and devoted service to the University."

At that same time, then-Chancellor Mark Nordenberg, named Maher a Senior Science Advisor for the University, stating that "as is absolutely clear from his long record of distinguished service as Provost, Jim Maher is a unique institutional asset." In commenting further on Maher's service, Nordenberg said, "It is hard to imagine anyone being better at his or her job than Jim Maher has been as our Provost. Among the many positive qualities that he brought to this key leadership position are his extraordinary breadth of knowledge, a well-developed ability to identify talented individuals and to anticipate academic trends and a deep dedication to Pitt that has extended across most of his adult life."

Patricia Beeson, who served with Maher as a Vice Provost and succeeded him as Provost, said, "It is difficult to fully capture in words what a great leader, colleague and friend Jim has been to so many of us. Our University is so large and complex, with so many opportunities to pursue and challenges to meet, that Jim's willingness to continue helping us deal with particular issues, tied to his experience and expertise, can only add strength to our overall team."

Maher served on numerous national and local committees and boards, including the board of the MPC Corporation, which was created to foster research partnerships between Pitt and Carnegie Mellon. He served on the WQED Multimedia board of directors, as well as the boards of the Pittsburgh Technology Council, the Carnegie Science Center, and the Pittsburgh Tissue Engineering Initiative. He was a commissioner of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and was on the board of directors of BioOne.

Throughout his career, he contributed time and talent to the Catholic church, ultimately serving as chair of the Board of Regents of the St. Vincent Seminary, along with serving on the boards of St. Vincent College, the Catholic Commission on Intellectual and Cultural Affairs and the board of the Pittsburgh East Regional Catholic Elementary Schools.

Maher served as chair of the Council of Academic Affairs of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and was a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU) Intellectual Property Task Force that authored the formative 1999 report on university intellectual property. He served on the AAU/National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC) Task Force on Accreditation, which developed a set of principles adopted by the AAU and NASULGC and accepted in modified form by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation. Invited by the AAU and Association of Research Libraries, he participated in writing the influential Tempe Principles on Scholarly Communications, guiding the transformation of the scholarly publishing system.

Friends will be received at **JOHN A. FREYVOGEL SONS, INC.**, 4900 Centre Avenue, at Devonshire Street, (freyvogelfuneralhome.com) on Friday, November 29, from 2-4 and 6-8p.m. Funeral, Saturday, Mass of Christian Burial, St. Mary Magdalene Parish, St. Bede Church, 10 a.m. In lieu of flowers, remembrances may be made to:

Angela and James Maher Scholarship Fund
at the University of Pittsburgh
Office of Institutional Advancement
University of Pittsburgh
128 North Craig Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Or to the:

Catholic Relief Services
Attn: Donor Services
228 West Lexington Street
Baltimore, MD 21201-3443

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