



Dr. Leon Liem

June 26, 1964 - June 28, 2021

Dr. Leon K. Liem passed away peacefully in his sleep surrounded by loved ones on June 28, 2021 after a hard-fought battle with non-hodgkin's lymphoma.

Leon was born in 1964 in Bandung, Indonesia, to Dr. Chris and Julie Liem. Leon immigrated with his parents and two sisters to New Jersey at the age of 4.

He studied electrical engineering at MIT and earned his MD at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He followed in the footsteps of his father, a neurologist, and became a neurosurgeon, completing his residency at University of Maryland. His love of learning later drove him to earn his MBA from George Washington University.

Following his medical training, Leon served his country in the armed forces as a neurosurgeon in the US Army. In 1996, his service brought him to Tripler Hospital in Honolulu, and Hawaii became his home for the rest of his life. He opened up a private practice and operated on patients across the islands for over 20 years. He valued his work over everything and is remembered by his colleagues and patients as a gifted, compassionate and caring physician who was a lifeline for so many.

Leon had a bright and energetic personality and loved life fiercely. He had an uncanny ability to connect with people in a deep and positive way and treated everyone as if they were family. He loved bringing friends together and touched many lives with his generosity and passion for life. While he was known to his friends for his sharp wit and often being the smartest person in the room, he was also the biggest goofball, always being quick to laugh at himself.

His free spirit and zest for experiencing life carried him to seek adventure at every opportunity, frequently traveling to new places, experiencing concerts and music festivals, attending sporting events and bringing along others for the journey. Win or lose, Leon was a lifelong fan of the New York Mets and Miami Dolphins.

Leon is also remembered by his many talents. He was a skilled and intuitive musician who taught himself to play the piano, guitar, harmonica, flute, and saxophone without any formal lessons. Many admired his ability to pick up any instrument and learn to play it well. He was an irreplaceable member of his band "The Pebbleworkers." As with music, he welcomed any challenge, oftentimes taking on difficult projects just for the sake of learning something new. As a kid, he took great pleasure in taking apart and re-constructing his computers.

Leon is survived by his daughter Stephanie, son Alex, girlfriend Van Huynh, sisters Lisa Lau and Janet (John) Adams, and loving extended family and friends. He will be dearly missed by many.

A private service will be held in Westfield, NJ on Saturday July 10th, and a celebration of life will be held by invitation on Saturday, July 24th in Honolulu, HI. Please email sliem10@gmail.com if you would like additional details.

Leon's family requests that no flowers be sent.

For those who wish, donations in memory of Leon may be made to the Lymphoma Society at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Online donations may be made using the following link: <http://mskcc.convio.net/goto/Leon>.

Checks, made payable to Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, should be mailed to: Attn: Community Fundraising, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, Office of Development, PO Box 27106, New York, NY 10087. Please indicate on the check memo line that the gift is in memory of Leon Liem.

Comments



“ Dr. Liem saved my husband's life twice in 2015, performed a series neck and brain surgeries. My husband went into a coma due to a serious infection, among dozens and dozens of doctors treating my husband, Dr. Liem was the ONLY doctor who told me to keep hoping. Miracle did happen, and my husband came out of coma after three months and came out of the hospice alive. We followed up with Dr. Liem a couple of times over the next few years and he was always confident, positive and reassuring. He is the smartest and most capable doctor I ever met. If not for Dr. Liem, I would have lost my husband years ago. When we needed Dr. Liem's advice recently, we were told that Dr. Liem was no longer with QMC. I thought he transferred to some new position and took an even bigger role in the field. I searched to see where he went. Shockingly, I found his obituary. I can't express how sad I am. He always appeared to be so energetic, so fit and so optimistic. I can't believe what I see. His passing is a big loss not only to his family but also to the whole community he saved and inspired. We will miss Dr. Liem dearly and I am sure he is now becoming an angel and still looking after all of us.

- Ioana

Ioana Hale - November 04, 2021 at 02:16 AM



“ Dr Liem saved my life in 2015 after he removed a large brain tumor. I wasn't myself at the time and didn't get to show my appreciation. I didn't know that we were both in the army and that we both played the saxophone. You're right, he always had an upbeat personality and a smile on his face. Thank you to his family for sharing him with Hawai'i. His work will be deeply missed. Aloha

Jill Faleafine - October 01, 2021 at 04:21 AM



“ 2005^

Jill Faleafine - October 01, 2021 at 04:24 AM



“ I grew up in Springfield, NJ with Leon. May he Rest In Peace . I remember him smiling and I am so glad he made the most of his beautiful life:

Jennifer Malin Reiser - July 11, 2021 at 03:08 PM