In Memory of Dr. Kenneth Lawenda

The ARBO Board of Directors and Staff are saddened by the loss of Dr. Kenneth Lawenda who passed away on April 16, 2023, after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Dr. Lawenda was elected to the ARBO Board of Directors in 2021 and was serving on the Executive Committee as Secretary-Treasurer this year. He was actively involved with ARBO for many years, serving on the COPE Governing Committee, Judicial Council/Resolutions Committee, OE TRACKER Committee, and CELMO Committee.

Dr. Lawenda graduated from Southern California College of Optometry and practiced optometry for nearly 40 years in Beverly Hills, California. During this time, he was active in the California Optometric Association, where he served as President. He also served for eight years on the California Board of Optometry. Dr. Lawenda relocated to British Columbia, Canada, and served on the British Columbia College of Optometrists for two years. He eventually moved to Montreal, Canada, and started practicing in Vermont. He served on the Vermont Board of Optometry since 2016 and was a member of the Vermont Optometric Association. Dr. Lawenda was active in the American Optometric Association and volunteered on several committees where he worked on the Federal Level with Legislators in Washington DC, discussing eyecare related issues that had state and national implications.

A respected clinician and leader, Dr. Lawenda leaves behind a legacy of contributions to ARBO and the profession of optometry. His involvement in various state and national organizations gave him vast experience in legislative and regulatory issues in the profession of optometry. Dr. Lawenda’s years of service to the profession connected him with a multitude of people from differing backgrounds, and his network of colleagues enabled him to be a unifier when dealing with challenging issues. His background in leadership positions, both on the state and national level, provided him with the insight that the main concern of regulators should always be to protect the public’s health and welfare and he worked hard to spread this message throughout the optometric community.

Dr. Lawenda was passionate about continuing education and lifelong learning. He loved music and photography and often shared stories and images from his travels on social media. He leaves behind a legacy of contributions to ARBO and optometry and many in the profession will miss him greatly. He was the beloved husband and soulmate of Myrna Harrison. Loving father of Brian Lawenda and Karen Lawenda. Devoted ‘Pappy Ken’ of Alexis Tahlia and Ronin Harrison. Son of the late Sylvia Blumen and the late Morris Lawenda. Dear brother of Marilyn Lawenda and the late Robert Lawenda, and brother-in-law of Sharon Lawenda.

Contributions in his memory may be made to the “Ken Lawenda Memorial Fund” c/o the Jewish General Hospital Foundation, (514) 340-8251, or http://secure.jghfoundation.org/goto/Kenneth_Lawenda