

Dr. Lewayne Gilchrist



Lew was 76 and died peacefully on January 25th, 2018 on Mercer Island, WA. She is survived by her husband, Jim '61, and 2 sons, Hart and Matt. She and I met in graduate school at Stanford, and were married in 1963. The University of Washington tribute below explains her long career as a college professor. She loved it.
Jim Gilchrist '61

Dearest Friends and Colleagues

With profound sadness, we write to share the news that our beloved former colleague, Dr. Lewayne Gilchrist, died suddenly last week, apparently of a heart attack.

Lew served the School community in countless ways. She was the School's first Associate Dean for Research, 1988-1995, Director of the Doctoral Program from 2000-2003, Director of the NIMH-funded Prevention Research Center from 1996-2001, and interim Dean from 2003-2004 during a transitional time for the School.

As our inaugural Associate Dean for Research, Lew worked tirelessly to increase the amount of NIH-funded research within the School, which served to make us the top ranked School in the country in terms of federal research funding. She was an immensely gifted and generous mentor to faculty and doctoral students alike, supporting their efforts in writing grants, conceptualizing and designing research projects and writing for publication. A highly respected prevention researcher, she was renowned nationally and internationally for her scientific contributions in the areas of HIV/AIDS risk reduction, drug use among pregnant and parenting teens, and prevention of other unhealthy behaviors such as smoking and drinking among teens. Her collaborations with colleagues Mary Gillmore, Diane Morrison and Susan Spieker (Nursing) led to one of the longest longitudinal studies of parenting and pregnant teens ever conducted. An extensive number of publications in peer-review journals resulted from these studies, as well as a large number of impressive doctoral dissertations.

In her highly distinguished 18-years as a tenure-track faculty member, she worked with more doctoral students than any other faculty member in the history of the School.

Indeed, at her retirement party, she was given a quilt with every patch contributed by faculty, staff, doctoral students and alumni (please see attached picture). She derived tremendous satisfaction from such mentoring and collaborating. Indeed, the School's Doctoral Mentor Award bears her name in recognition of her exemplary commitment to doctoral education. This commitment is most recently reflected in her exceptionally generous gift to the new Advancing Doctoral Education and Leadership Endowed Fund, which will be used to provide additional supports to doctoral students.

Those of you who knew Lew will recall the many personal qualities that endeared her to colleagues and students. kind, wise, generous and generative, she was quick to share her time and talents with others and was always the first to roll up her sleeves to do whatever needed to be done to advance the School's goals. She was both brilliant and down-to-earth, strategic and humble, diplomatic and candid, scientific and passionate, classy and authentic, hard-working and fun loving – and a true mentor and colleague in the finest sense of the word.

We will miss her quick, oftentimes dry wit and hearty laugh; her keen intellect, absolute integrity and sense of fairness, deep curiosity and lifelong pursuit of knowledge about a wide range of topics; her compassion for and commitment to highly vulnerable populations, particularly mothers and children; her pride in being a graduate of our MSW and doctoral program; her love of travel, the arts and learning about different cultures; and her joy in her two sons and five grandchildren. Always vibrant and upbeat, she was truly enjoying her healthy retirement years.

No matter what challenges she was facing in her faculty or administrative roles, Lew often closed her emails with an uplifting "Onward!" And so all of us who have benefitted from her innumerable contributions to the School and to our lives, we will move our School community "onward", as one way to honor Lew and extend her great legacy.

We will let you know about a celebration of Lew's life, which will be held in a month to six weeks. For those of you wish to send expressions of sympathy to her husband Jim, the address is: 7430 SE 40 Street, Mercer Island WA 98040-3432.

With our deepest regards,

Nancy R. Hooyman, MSW, PhD

Hooyman Professor of Gerontology

Dean Emeritus

Co-PI, CSWE Gero-Ed Center

University of Washington School of Social Work

Edwina S. Uehara, MSW, PhD

Professor and Ballmer Endowed

Dean in Social Work

School of Social Work