



John Si Nahra

May 8, 1950 - August 21, 2020

Si Nahra

Born on May 8, 1950 in Bangor, Maine to John J. Nahra and M. Hilda (Fowler) Nahra, Si Nahra attended St. John's Grammar School. He spent his high school years at Sacred Heart Juniorate, Ipswich, MA, anticipating a future as a seminarian for the Salesian order, a plan that changed. Si attended Colby College in Waterville, ME and graduated in 1972. A high number in the draft lottery spared him from being sent to Viet Nam. After graduation, he worked as a researcher for the State of Maine; his work there, conducting Medicaid research, let him discover his interest in large-scale health data and analysis. He found the field compelling enough to motivate him to start on a path of graduate study to enhance his expertise.

With that plan in mind, Si moved to Michigan for four years of advanced study at Michigan State University from 1973-1977. After completing the research required to write his dissertation, he earned his Ph.D. in Political Science in 1985. While working on that degree, he moved to the Detroit area where he worked at the Detroit Area Health Council, at the same time lobbying the legislature in Lansing on behalf of the uninsured. For eight years Si served as Director and Vice-President of that council.

While working on efforts of that kind, Si met and fell in love with the woman who would become his partner in work and in real life for the rest of his days. In 1983 he married Judy Mardigian, and together they soon built their home in Plymouth, MI. Judy shared Si's interest in the health data field in general.

More specifically, the couple shared a lively interest in starting a business of their own, with an eye to creating innovative services built from medical claim databases. Through their combined efforts, they founded Health Decisions, Inc. a company that survived for thirty-four years; more remarkably, it remained relevant and survived the digital revolution, an accomplishment that made Si proud, as he said during the last days of his life. That company held to the personal values of its two founders who always served as mentors to their employees, in whom they maintained a personal interest.

More business opportunities presented themselves. Si served as a founding partner in 2005 of Part D Advisors, and in Accumulation Technologies, LLC. Along with John Eggertsen, Bruce Liebowitz, and Pat Coleman, Si worked in a close and productive collaboration that resulted in enduring friendships and other significant outcomes. Taken together, Si's work in his own company and in these related ventures, his efforts radically transformed business practices with respect to health care. His efforts helped transform the way employers evaluate the health care they offer, and ways in which various payers may be held accountable.

Si and Judy's family life together was marked by shared interests and shared love. The kind of family that enjoyed each other's company at family dinner every single day, they also created a bond through their interest in sports. Lifelong Michigan State supporters, following Si's example they cheered at games for decades. But Si also cheered for his children's efforts: he coached Charlie's basketball team, attended countless games in baseball, and never missed a swim meet to cheer on his daughter Sandy. Their family looked forward to annual vacations, always spent in a place Si called "up North," Michigan's Leelanau Peninsula. In fulfillment of a lifelong dream, in 2016 Si and Judy built a home together in Omena, the place he loved best. There, Si particularly enjoyed walking Omena Point and enjoying their beach on Omena Bay. Si died a happy man, having encouraged his children with the words, "Follow Your Bliss," and having lived to see that they had learned that vital lesson.

Si is survived by his wife Judy Mardigian; son Charlie Nahra; daughter Sandy Hopwood (husband Jonathan Hopwood); sister Nancy Nahra; brother-in-law Willard Sterne Randall; brother Frank St. Lawrence; sister-in-law Patty St. Lawrence; sister-in-law Amy Hecht; brother-in-law Paul Hecht; sister-in-law Carol Lienhardt; brother-in-law George Mardigian; nephew Adam Lienhardt (wife Megan Lienhardt); niece Lucy Randall (husband Joe Jackson); niece Natalie Sinicropi (husband Pat Sinicropi); niece Taylor St. Lawrence.

The family is hosting an online Zoom Meeting for Si's memorial service.

Friends are encouraged to sign on by 12:45 PM. The information is as follows:

Topic: Si Nahra Memorial Celebration

Time: Aug 30, 2020 01:00 PM America/Detroit

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82076280392?pwd=cHpncDhFWFJ0V3VXQnBDNnQyZEU1QT09>

Meeting ID: 820 7628 0392

Passcode: sinahra

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Si's memory to the Leelanau Conservancy, <https://www.leelanauconservancy.org/donate/>. To share a memory, please use the share a memory tab on this webpage.

Tribute Wall



“ *John Si Nahra*

December 07, 2023 at 05:11 AM



“ *Dear Judy,
I was so sorry to hear of Si's passing. I only was able to meet you both briefly, but the love you had for each other and your family was palpable. My thoughts are with you and your beautiful family.
Chris, RN
Univ of Michigan Health System
Ann Arbor, MI*

Chris Friese RN - September 04, 2020 at 12:15 PM



“ *Beautiful and heartfelt ceremony. Judy, the two of you built a wonderful life. My heart goes out to all....*

Judy and Fred - August 30, 2020 at 09:13 PM



“ *Such a beautiful ceremony! I mostly knew Si For his community involvement. It was an absolute pleasure hearing all about his amazing life! My deepest condolences to Judy and the family.*



Dianne Gonzalez - August 30, 2020 at 01:16 PM

RK

“ *Si was a great neighbor, always looking out for things in the neighborhood. We enjoyed our chats when he would walk the dog and when we saw each other in the yard. He was very caring and never missed an opportunity to inquire as to our welfare and that of our children. Si's upbeat and positive attitude on life was always encouraging and will be missed.*

Our deepest condolences to Judy, Charlie and Sandy. We will keep you in our thoughts and prayers.

Rick & Teresa Kuehnel

Rick Kuehnel - August 30, 2020 at 11:02 AM

LR

“ Si has been a big part of my life for over 20 years.

What started out as a part time job turned into a warm friendship. Si was my boss, mentor and eventually a good friend. We went through a lot over the years and everyday was an adventure at Health Decisions.

I was always learning something new about Si, I never met a more well rounded and diverse person. He had an interest in the arts and supported me by going to various pottery exhibits I had over the years.

He so loved to mentor people and share his knowledge. He was one of the calmest humans I have ever met, also one of the smartest, though he never bragged.

One time I asked him why he never signed his name using his Ph.D. credentials. He said something to the fact that he was not into all that pomp and circumstance stuff. On occasion when needing his signature on a document I would state “This one needs a Ph.D.” and we would laugh. I so enjoyed hearing his hearty laugh.

They say you can tell a great man by his family, and Si had a great partner in Judy along with two wonderful children who have grown into their own. My thoughts are with Judy, Charlie and Sandy. Please know that I am grateful to have shared your father, he was in a way a surrogate father to myself.

May you all find peace in comfort in the fact that your husband and father was greatly loved and touched many lives. Si really embodied the meaning to life on this earth, be kind and spread kindness.

I hope that time will turn your grief into peaceful happy memories, I know there are many of them.

Leslyn Rank

Leslyn Rank - August 28, 2020 at 04:15 PM

RJ

“ Si was definitely the most memorable boss I ever worked for. During the 16 years I worked for him, he had a positive attitude with everything that was thrown his way. He always had a unique catch phrase to sum up every situation. He took great pride in his business and employees. He truly enjoyed his profession.

You could count on Si for a cheerful greeting every morning, even on those days he was hunched over with bad back pain, He was there and ready to participate in all the staff meetings, birthday lunches and company events. And if you needed a review of any new release at the movie theatre, he was that go-to person.

Judy, Charlie and Sandy, you will surely have many great memories to build on in the future. Si would want it that way! I will keep you in my prayers, Roberta.

Roberta Johnson - August 28, 2020 at 02:32 PM

LR

You are right about the movies! Si loved the cinema and would leave early on Wednesdays to go see a movie by himself.

Leslyn Rank - August 28, 2020 at 03:58 PM

AM

“ Si was always such a kind and supportive person - especially of those around him that wanted to learn. He was a huge advocate of life long learning. I was so fortunate that as a fresh college grad (a brash one at that), he was willing to take me on and mentor me. It was like drinking from a fire hose as Si was one truly an expert in his field. He offered all of that with no promise of anything in return. It's my only hope that the dialogues that eventually formed when I learned enough to keep up with Si made his efforts worthwhile.

One memory that I'll always remember came from my first year in the real world (after graduating college). Two days before Thanksgiving, while I was at work, someone burglarized my home and stole most things of value. I came in the next day pretty despondent about the violation and losing the things I'd acquired in my short time since recovering from the days of being a poor college bum. Si, aside from being there to listen, offered me both some time off to deal and some “bonus options for some extra work” to help me cover the financial hit. We all knew the latter was a way of helping me financially during a time of need that was thinly veiled so as to keep my fragile pride intact – something much needed. That is the kind of person that I'll remember in Si, caring for others and always thoughtful.

To Judy, Charlie and Sandy: We so sorry for your loss and Si will certainly be missed and well-remembered. It was obvious all how loving and proud he was of the three of you. I am so grateful that you had some moments together in the end and wish you peace and solace during these dark days. He's in the next realm waiting and you'll be reunited again.

Thoughts and Prayers,
Andrew, Justine and Teddy Madonna

Andrew Madonna - August 28, 2020 at 10:30 AM

LK

“ Si was a great boss and great friend. He always treated his employees like family, and cared about how we were doing. Si was often providing encouragement and showing us the positive side of things. He treated us with the upmost respect and appreciated all the hard work we accomplished and often was cheering us on. We will certainly miss his great smile, and his hearty laugh. God has him now, safely tucked in His loving arms. To Judy and the Mardigian family we share our heartfelt condolences. Best and fondest regards, from Linda and Mike Kaneris.

Linda Kaneris - August 27, 2020 at 05:39 PM

GO

“ I always enjoyed my conversations with Si. We could talk about anything including politics and religion. I was looking forward to talking to him about the upcoming election and my political conversion. If you don't know it by now Si, I am surprisingly to the left of you now.

Shelley, Andy, Jenna and I have the entire family in our thoughts and prayers. Judy, we will contact you later on when things are a little calmer.

We will see you on Zoom on Sunday.

Gerry and Shelley Olexsey - August 27, 2020 at 03:04 PM

JJ

Always enjoyed visiting with Si during marching band and school board days. Fondly recall his “coaching” when ruining for the board and being the Treasurer of my campaign committee. We look forward to being part of Sunday's memorial service.

John & Jean Jackson - August 27, 2020 at 10:51 PM