



Paul Steven Thurk

March 30, 1970 - January 15, 2021

Paul Steven Thurk passed away suddenly at the age of 50 years- old on January 15, 2021. Paul was a good, humble man who would have surely hated the following tribute which will call attention to an extraordinary and important life. In this tribute we will highlight his accomplishments; however, Paul was particularly proud of his failures, or more accurately, his ability to pick himself back up and learn from failure to become a better professional, husband, father, and person.

Paul was daring and passionate about his work, his family, and making the world a better place. A 1988 graduate of Eden Prairie High School - where he was Homecoming King, member of the varsity soccer team, and captain of the varsity downhill ski team - he chose the uncommon path by leaving the comforts of home for the unfamiliar streets of South Carolina to sell books door-to-door for the Southwestern Book Company.

After graduating in 1993 from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, he joined a New York City-based supplier of electronic equipment to the computer industry. His work enabled the company to expand operations to Asia and he completed his tenure there as Director of Asia-Pacific Operations.

In 2000, he earned an MBA from the McCombs School of Business at the

University of Texas and was selected as a Kauffman Fellow for the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation - a prestigious program designed to train the next generation of innovative and disruptive thinkers to fuel the burgeoning technology and venture capital industry.

Paul worked over 20 years in venture capital at ARCH Venture Partners. He built companies that brought positive impact to people around the world by developing important and lasting relationships at all levels, from the scientist and entrepreneur to the executive suite. His efforts brought the entrepreneur's dreams to life and enabled products which make our lives better.

His venture career began with a focus on semiconductors, advanced materials, electronics and optoelectronics and played a key role in ARCH's partnership with Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Energy. As co-founder and initial CEO of Innovalight (acquired by DuPont), he was featured in Business Week in 2004. He later co-founded and was CEO of the successful startups CoolEdge Lighting and Pinon Technologies, and participated in the development of Kotura (acquired by Mellanox), Nitronex (acquired by MACOM), Cambrios Technologies, and Semprius.

In 2011, Paul was promoted to Managing Director and established ARCH's European office in Dublin, Ireland where he worked tirelessly to connect entrepreneurs, researchers, corporations, and academic institutions on the European continent. His focus shifted to genomics, cell and gene therapies, and other novel therapeutics leading to the founding of Carrick Therapeutics, Genomics Medicine Ireland (acquired by WuXi NextCODE), and Pretzel Therapeutics. An inventor himself, he held patents in a wide array of fields. In 2016, he and his family returned home to Minnesota and established an ARCH office in Minneapolis.

Paul loved his family dearly and was a tremendous husband and father. He and his wife, Catherine, were partners in the truest sense of the word. They shared the good times and the bad. They made obstacles opportunities and showed that failures and pain were merely steppingstones to better days. Their love and partnership enabled them to be amazing parents to Jack, Mikey, Ashley, and Willy. While the kids will surely miss their father; his love, leadership, and fearlessness have made them into a tightknit group with big hearts, daring dreams, and the brightest of futures.

Paul's work enabled his family to share amazing adventures: ice hotels, European castles, bier gartens, alpine mountains, sailing trips exploring Mediterranean & Caribbean islands, Olympic games, and Middle Eastern deserts. Opportunities to live in the hot (Austin, Texas), the wet (Dublin, Ireland), and the cold (Minnesota) led to valued friendships with people from around the world.

Paul's smile and energy were infectious. He lit up a room with his warmth and humor. A self-proclaimed and never-proven cowboy, he loved his Chevy Silverado pickup truck. He also loved spending time with his kids and any reason to have a wood-burning fire. He was particularly proud of his 2020 Thurk family fantasy football championship - a feat he achieved with little to no actual understanding of football. He made our hearts smile.

We live in a time of great distress, anger, and fear. Paul lived in that time too. His response was to put his head down, ignore the noise, and work all the harder to make this world a better place. Although we grieve for a husband, father, son, brother, and friend; may his example be a light to guide us towards a better tomorrow. Paul is survived by his wife, Catherine Thurk; his children Jack, Mikey, Ashley, and Willy; his father, Robert Thurk; and brothers Jeff (Angie) Thurk and David Thurk. He is preceded in death by his mother,

Judy Thurk

Please see our care site at lotsahelpinghands.com/ if you would like to help the Thurk family through this difficult time. Enter “Thurk” under “Join a Care Team”. In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to Yellowstone National Park, Khan Academy, the American Heart Association or Second Harvest Heartland.

A private Mass of Christian Burial will be publicly livestreamed at 11 AM on Saturday, February 13, 2021 via the following link: youtu.be/...

Washburn-McReavy.com Edina Chapel 952-920-3996

Tribute Wall



“ *Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Paul Steven Thurk.*



February 11, 2021 at 06:26 PM



“ *Sad to hear of your loss of a wonderful man; thank you for sharing his story and all of his accomplishments.*

*Rev. Dr. Lanny Law
Citizen of USA and IRELAND*

Rev. Dr. Lanny Law - January 24, 2021 at 02:05 PM