

Professor George Edwin Relyea - Obituary



It is with great sadness that the School of Public Health shares the devastating news that our beloved colleague, Professor George Relyea, died on Friday, January 28, 2022 at his home in Memphis, TN. He was born April 27, 1954 in Augsburg, West Germany and moved to Memphis as a child.

George was part of the University of Memphis for 50 years. He received his BBA in Economics and Quantitative Management in 1977, MA in Economics in 1981, and MS in Applied Mathematics in 1982. He then joined Statistical Services where he became Senior Statistician and Manager of Academic Systems for Web Technology. In 2000, the Center for Community Health recruited him as Director of Data Management and in 2007 George joined the new

School of Public Health where he became Associate Professor in the Division of Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Environmental Health.

George loved to teach and his easy-going nature and ability to explain complex information in plain English reduced the anxiety of countless statistics students over the years. He developed many applied statistics courses over the years, published over 200 academic papers, mentored many graduate students, and served on over 400 dissertation and theses committees. George also served as a Faculty Senator.

He worked hard and always had an open-door policy at work. When not teaching, he usually could be seen hunkered down at his desk at all hours and often on weekends, meeting with students and colleagues, or running SAS analyses for the innumerable consulting projects he juggled constantly. Virtually any student or faculty member who conducted quantitative research at the U of M over the past several decades knew and admired George, and could share stories of his helpfulness, kindness, and quiet humor. He leaves a gap that cannot be filled.

A scholarship fund for the School of Public Health has been created in his memory. Donations may be made at this link: supportum.memphis.edu/Relyeascholarship