Celebrating the Life of

Ralph J. Shapiro ’53, J.D. ’58

SEPTEMBER 2, 1931 – AUGUST 14, 2024

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“Ralph and I shared a passion for our Eastside roots. He attended Roosevelt High School and I attended Garfield High School. He had his Rough Riders stationery. We both are grateful for the education and opportunities UCLA gave us.”

ANTONIA HERNÁNDEZ '71, J.D. '74

UCLA alum

“Ralph was one of the pillars of my life. From my childhood through today, his kindness, wisdom and generosity have helped guide me. I am so blessed to have him in my life.”

CHRIS LIEBES

UCLA alum

"Dear Ralph and Shirley, You have truly paid it forward. The beauty of the Shapiros is you cannot separate them. You have always been one. Two wonderful, committed people who have left an incredible legacy for today, tomorrow and the future. Thinking of you both resonates your smiles, laughter and thoughtfulness for others. You have been our friends...

UCLA alum

for 71 years and have enriched every life you have touched. Leonard relished the Fort Ord stories when he and Ralph were in the army together. I will miss Ralph's big hugs...but I still have you. I send my love to you, Lauren, Allison and Peter."

BOBBIE (BARBARA R. KOLOD)

UCLA alum

"As I mentioned to Shirley, Ralph's life should not be counted in years but rather in the number of lives he touched and made better. I know this first hand and am humbled and honored to have known him."

KAREN CHENG, M.D.

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“On behalf of the UCLA School of Nursing, I send my deepest condolences to the entire Shapiro family. Ralph Shapiro has impactfully improved the lives of people living with disabilities across Los Angeles and beyond. His generosity and support of nursing through the establishment of the Shapiro Family Endowed Chair in Developmental Disabilities enables UCLA Nursing to appoint Professor Lauren Clark, a national...

UCLA alum

expert in developmental disabilities, as the endowed chair. Under Dr. Clark's leadership, Ralph Shapiro's vision continues. His memory will forever live on in the lives of those he has helped. Thank you, Ralph, for all you have done for UCLA and humanity."

LIN ZHAN, PH.D., R.N., FAAN, DEAN,
UCLA SCHOOL OF NURSING

UCLA alum

“Ralph was a genuine friend who generously supported UCLA and the judiciary. He did so much for many of his friends and charitable causes. He lived an extraordinary and exemplary life and he will be missed.”

ELWOOD '62, MBA '64, J.D. '69, AND CRYSTAL LUI

UCLA alum

“The best man I ever knew and best friend I ever had. Saved my daughter's life, gifted a substantial donation to the pro bono Securities Arbitration Clinic I founded at Pepperdine Law School and always gave me sage down-to-earth advice whenever I asked him. Loved that guy!”

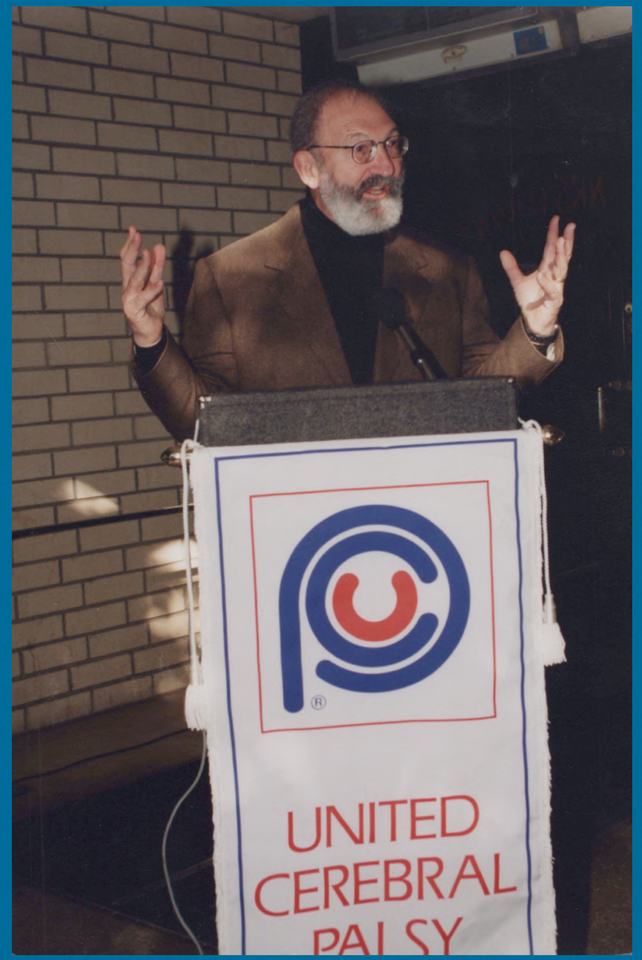
BOB UHL

UCLA alum

“Ellen and I loved and revered Ralph. We are, unfortunately, out of the country on December 5 and deeply regret we cannot attend. Please convey our heartfelt condolences to Shirley and her children and grandchildren.”

KENNETH ZIFFREN, J.D. '65

UCLA alum



A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“Ralph Shapiro was an extraordinary human being. He was a big man, both physically and intellectually. My connection with Ralph was based on our love of great wine and food. Sharing a great bottle of wine with Ralph, while listening to his stories and experiencing his sense of humor, was a always a joy.”

JAMES BOYD DAVIS

UCLA alum

“We will forever love Ralph for friendship - and grace.”

ROBERT '60, J.D. '64, AND MILLY '61 KAYYEM AND FAMILY

UCLA alum

“Ralph always embodied both fierce decency and personal kindness, an extraordinary combination for such an accomplished man.”

JERRY KANG

UCLA alum

"Ralph was part of my life since the day I was born. He and Shirley were among my parents' very best friends. Ralph was larger than life. He was warm, wise and always made me feel like I was the most important person in the room. Ralph and Shirley gave and gave and gave. They have always wanted to make everyone around them better. There was no one like him and I will miss him dearly."

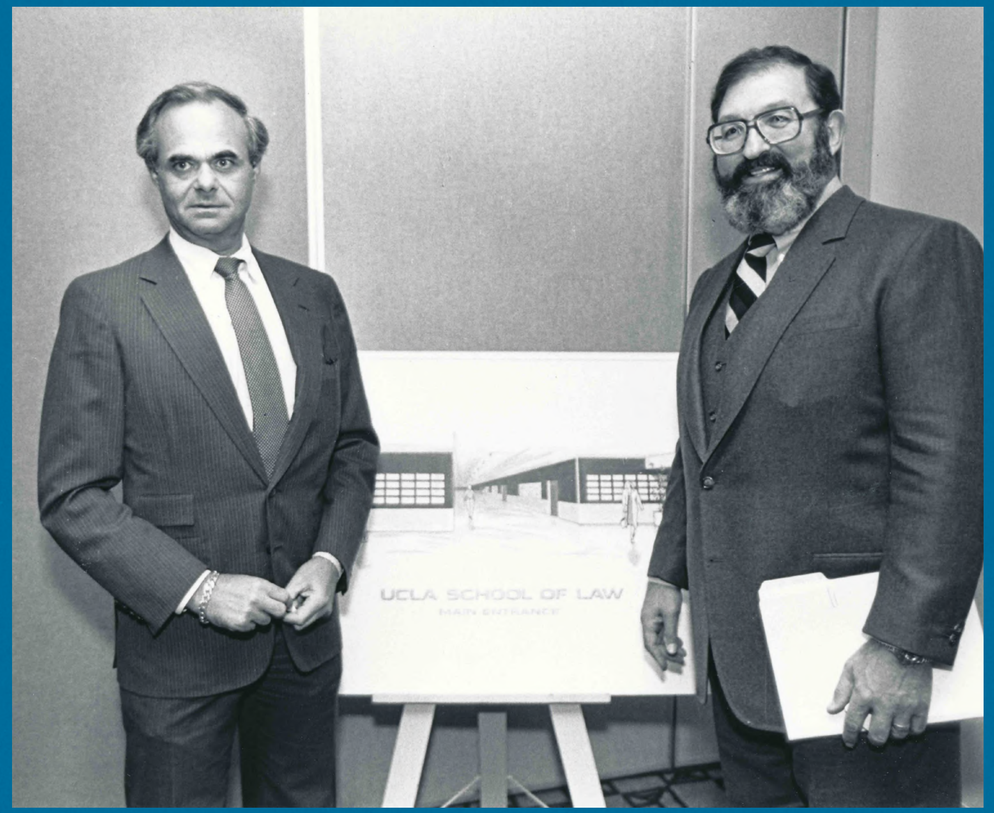
ALISON LIEBES GARDNER

UCLA alum

“Thank you for including us in the celebration of Ralph's rich and long life. We love Ralph and Shirley and are saddened by his passing. What a wonderful man - a big teddy bear with a great smile and such warmth and generosity. We will miss him!”

DAVID AND LESLIE OFFER

UCLA alum



A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“A dear friend who will be deeply missed. Ralph was a special human being with a heart of gold who shared his wisdom and his treasure for the benefit of others. May his family find peace in the memories of Ralph's life.”

DETROIT FLANAGAN

UCLA alum

“Ralph was a king among men. He was a mensch in the truest sense of the word. We will miss his kindness, his love of everything UCLA and his deep appreciation of wine and sushi!”

JOANNA AND BOBBI ELLIOTT '58

UCLA alum

"We loved Ralph as family and he was always there to help or advise; there is no one to compare him to as he was one of a kind. We loved him and have trouble thinking I will not see or be with him again. He has been so kind and giving; there is not room here to recount everything. If there is a heaven, he is there. Much love from me and my family."

BONNY AND RICHARD LANGENDORF

UCLA alum

“Ralph, a man with a big heart, was a mentor to many of us and a great supporter of UCLA. His dedication to the University, from generous donations to active involvement in various initiatives, has left a lasting impact on the community. I often sought his advice, and he never failed to provide me with wise counsel. Ralph was like a grandfather to our family. Seventeen years ago, when we arrived in L.A., Shirley and Ralph welcomed us...

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with open arms. I remember the first time we met; he greeted us with a warm smile, instantly making us feel at home in a new city. There are countless cherished memories with Ralph that I hold dear. I find myself longing for the simple act of shaking his big, warm hand."

HITOSHI ABE

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“Ralph was a giant of a man whose wisdom, generosity and love touched all of us. He made our world a better place and inspired all of us with whom he came in contact. He will be missed, but his memory will be cherished. With Love,”

LYNN, M.D. '68, AND MARK '63, L.L.B. '66, EGERMAN

UCLA alum

“I was Alison’s roommate at Duke and the moment I met Ralph and Shirley, I knew it would be for a lifetime. Ralph was so warm, funny, brilliant, kind, fascinating and larger than life. He embraced everyone and also became dear friends with my parents. I loved Ralph and miss him so much.”

ADRIENNE SALISBURY

UCLA alum

“Ralph was a remarkable and inspiring human being. I will always remember him with admiration and great gratitude for his generosity to the Luskin School and UCLA.”

ANASTASIA LOUKAITOU-SIDERIS, INTERIM DEAN, LUSKIN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

UCLA alum

“Bumping into Ralph at meetings and social events on campus was always a great pleasure. His neurology visits as my occasional patient were no less a treat for me. I scheduled him as my last visit so we might have time to chew on each other's latest notions. His empathy, curiosity, insights, kindness, skills at solving problems, generosity and philanthropy were simply stellar...

UCLA alum

Ralph and Shirley's good deeds have solidified so many of the nodes of UCLA's social and intellectual networks. We can hope that many of us will use his wise ways and actions as a model for our own good deeds."

BRUCE AND BARBARA DOBKIN

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“Ralph was a sincere friend and a source of wisdom, strength and unwavering support. We will forever be grateful for the impact he had on our lives.”

NO-HEE AND YULY PARK

UCLA alum

"I knew Ralph for close to sixty years, and in a word, they don't make a finer human being in all regards. This view can be shared by all of the people that are here today, and all the thousands that have benefited from his wisdom and generosity and friendship. What a legacy! With love, to Shirley."

BUDGE OFFER '60

UCLA alum

“Ralph was a very dear friend to both my husband, Milton Louis Miller, and me. We go back a very long time, at least 70 years. It was always Ralph and Shirley. Together they did so much for so many people with love for all. Ralph will be missed by all who knew him and loved him.”

MARCEILE (MARCY) MILLER

UCLA alum

"Ralph Shapiro and his wife, Shirley, have been an incredibly important presence in my professional life from the beginning of my UCLA career, starting in 2012 at UCLA Law. Ralph was part of the hiring interviews for my then position, asked the most meaningful questions, and had tremendously insightful and thoughtful responses to all of my questions It was that conversation that sealed my hope of coming to UCLA to work. His...

UCLA alum

reputation as a pillar of the L.A. business and legal community was larger than life, but it was the kind, intelligent, fair and considerate person he was in my interview that set the foundation for a transformative working relationship. His lessons and example of leadership will stay with me, and I am grateful to have known him."

LINDSEY A. WILLIAMS, UCLA HEALTH SCIENCES DEVELOPMENT

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“The generosity and warmth of Ralph Shapiro and his family will linger and resonate well beyond his time with us here.”

WILLIAM L. OPPENHEIM

UCLA alum

“Memories of Ralph’s wonderful stories and his phenomenal generosity.”

DAVID EISENBERG

UCLA alum

“Ralph Shapiro embodies what it means to be a Bruin. I will be forever grateful for his unwavering support of my career at UCLA. His generosity has inspired and supported multiple important research endeavors in the field of orthopedic surgery and sports medicine. It has been an honor to have known Ralph and his family. Rest assured his memory will live on in every new discovery and in our hearts.”

SHARON L. HAME '85, M.D.

UCLA alum

"Ralph was as generous and kind as anyone I've ever met. He was also a human catalyst for others to find generosity within themselves - what he described as joy from giving. What's more is that his philanthropy was usually behind the scenes, without fanfare, and always with the goal of making things better for others. I think the greatest legacy he leaves is that he has inspired so many to give with the same spirit...

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For a man with so much education and life experience, he was always quick to give credit for his success to others - UCLA, his friends and mentors, and of course his beloved Shirley. I am better for having known Ralph, and feel fortunate to call him a friend and mentor who continues to inspire me."

BEN ANSELL, M.D. '92

UCLA alum

“Ralph was inviting, friendly, fun, intelligent and always a joy to be with. I treasure the memories that my late husband, Chuck Gelfand, and I had with him.”

INEZ ROSTON GELFAND

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“Ralph gave selflessly to support people with disability through many organizations, including the Center for Cerebral Palsy. We are profoundly grateful for his belief in us and for his investment in our shared mission. His legacy lives on in the communities that he strengthened and in the hearts of all who were touched by his generous spirit.”

EILEEN FOWLER, M.S. '86, PH.D. '90

UCLA alum

“Ralph, our treasured friend of many years, you had a huge heart that gave so much to so many. We hold your memory close. With love”

LENNIE '57 AND BERNIE '53, LL.B. '58 GREENBERG

UCLA alum

"Thank you Shirley, Allison and Peter for including me. I regret that I will not be attending. Know that Ralph has been a mentor, an example, a guide and a friend for the 23 years I have been with United Cerebral Palsy."

RICK MACDONOUGH

UCLA alum

“I have known Ralph my whole life. He and my father had been friends since high school, they attended UCLA together and they officed together for many years. Ralph was one of my idols growing up. As a child I met Bill Walton at his house. We enjoyed camping with his family. And due to his graciousness, we sat courtside at UCLA Basketball games. My kids loved that. We wil miss him.”

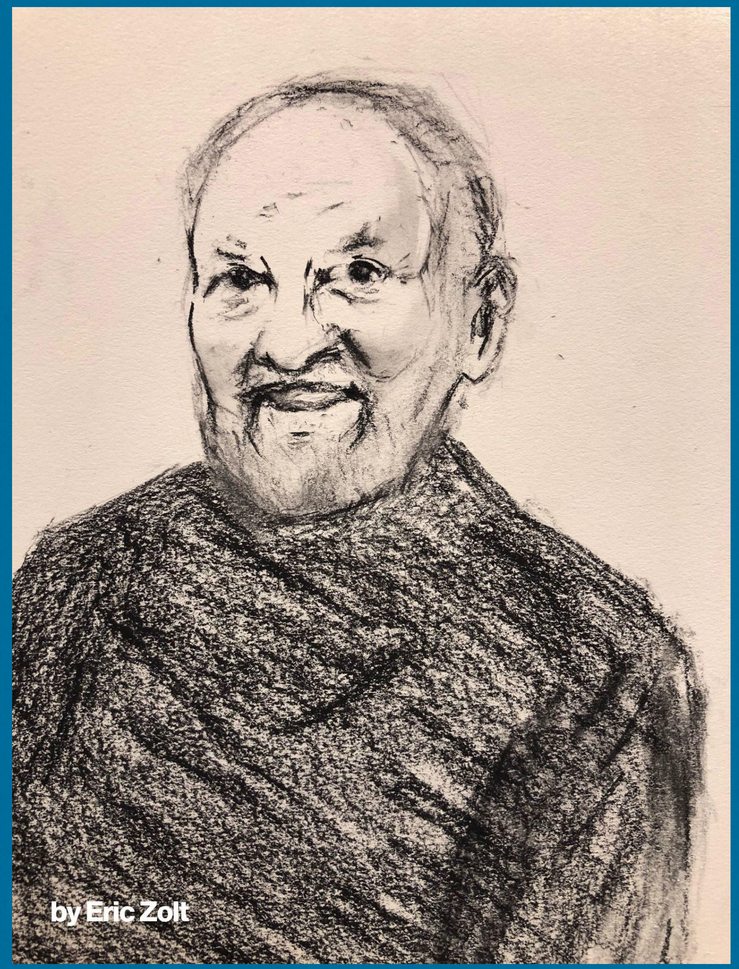
LEE GOLDRING '86

UCLA alum

“Ralph's humor, wisdom, generosity of spirt and resources, keen sense of observation, loyalty, compassion and endless drive to make the world a better place were always on full display. I will forever be grateful for the time I spent with him.”

KAT CARRICO

UCLA alum



A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

"Ralph Shapiro changed the entire trajectory of my life for the better. I will carry Ralph in my heart for the rest of my life and strive to help others as an outward expression of his (and my) spirit. Ralph gave me permission to see myself as I was, not as I was told I needed to be. Thank you, Ralph. If they had emojis here, I would add lots of hugs and hearts!"

ANDREA EBERLY, M.D. '90, FAAEM

UCLA alum

"There aren't enough superlatives to fully describe Ralph. He was a gem of a human being, a UCLA treasure and a world-class mensch! He never failed to make me question long held assumptions and consistently inspired me with the breadth of his curiosity, the depth of his compassion and the abundance of his generosity. I will miss him dearly, but his captivating stories, life lessons and infectious laugh are imprinted in my heart. May his memory be for a blessing…."

RHEA TURTELTAUB, VICE CHANCELLOR, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

UCLA alum

“He was a big bear of a man; who was a gentleman who always had a kind word; a smile; who did good. He was loved and respected.”

SUE FREEDMAN

UCLA alum

“Ralph was one of the loveliest human beings I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. I will miss him.”

LAURIE LEWIS NEVILLE

UCLA alum

"I had the privilege of collaborating with Ralph Shapiro and his family on funding for a chair in developmental disability, programmatic activities and scholarships for nursing students interested in the field of disability. This was one of the highlights of my career as dean of the UCLA School of Nursing. Ralph was a champion for nursing education and encouraged other donors to follow his lead. He understood how important nurses were in supporting the care and quality of life of people with developmental...

UCLA alum

disabilities, a population that at that time had received limited attention in discussions of equity, diversity and inclusion. This is changing, in large part because of his and his family's stalwart efforts. The Shapiro Family Endowed Chair in Developmental Disability studies in the School of Nursing will continue this legacy. His generosity to the school touched the lives of faculty and students. He touched my heart as well. He was a lovely man and I was fortunate to know him."

LINDA SARNA '69, M.N. '76

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

"Ralph will forever remain in the hearts of all of us at UCLA School of Dentistry. A champion of our students, faculty, research, and our patients – especially those underserved – Ralph was a unique philanthropist who understood the magnitude of the impact he made with his investments in the School and the University. I feel fortunate to have known Ralph in his lifetime and I am deeply inspired by the enduring legacy he and his family have established at UCLA."

PAUL H. KREBSBACH

UCLA alum

“Other than my family, Ralph Shapiro has had the most powerful impact on my professional and business career.”

S J SPOLIN '67, J.D. '70

UCLA alum

“He was brilliant, generous and a friend beyond compare. The world would be a better place if there were more Ralphs in it.”

SANDY KRAUSE AND BILL FITZGERALD

UCLA alum

“Ralph will forever be a UCLA legend. He and Shirley with their family have made an incredibly positive impact through lifetimes of service. I am forever inspired by how they have done everything in their power to support excellence in education, patient care and research. Ralph mentored countless UCLA deans, faculty...

UCLA alum

staff, students and friends. I will forever be grateful for the way he taught me about leadership, dedication, compassion and philanthropy. He also taught me how to put the "fun" in fundraising and had the most wonderful sense of humor. Thank you for everything, Ralph. We all miss you."

MALLORY GOMPERT '07

UCLA alum

“I opened my travel agency in 1980. The agency was next to Ralph’s office and he was one of my first clients. Ralph always had a smile and a kind word. Always appreciative and thankful. He was such a beautiful soul. Rest In Peace, Ralph.”

NAOMI HEYMANN

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“Ralph J. Shapiro’s memory, warm smile and generous heart will live on in the hearts of our musical community at The UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. His philanthropy at UCLA spans nearly six decades and has directly touched the lives of music students. As early as 1985, he helped establish the Jacqueline & Ben Klein Fund Student Award, which supports a student in music education. In 2000, he established the Shirley & Ralph Shapiro Endowed Student Scholarship for students...

UCLA alum

specializing in piano performance. In 2022, Ralph and Shirley honored their friend by helping create the Dr. Ben Ansell Scholarship in Music to fund student tuition scholarships, with a preference for transfer students. During the height of the pandemic in 2020, Ralph and Shirley gave us all a sense of hope and purpose in a world suddenly transformed by creating the Shapiro Family Chair in Piano Performance, with a mission to benefit the piano faculty and students in the music department...

UCLA alum

The chair's endowment has already been used to purchase a rare Bösendorfer piano to enhance the musical journeys of faculty and students alike. Ralph's legacy is one of hope and one of dedication to help talented students pursue their passion. He deeply treasured his beloved wife, Shirley, and they shared an abiding love of Schubert. I will never hear Schubert again without thinking of them both, love they share, and the sense of light and hope they epitomize so beautifully."

EILEEN STREMPEL

UCLA alum

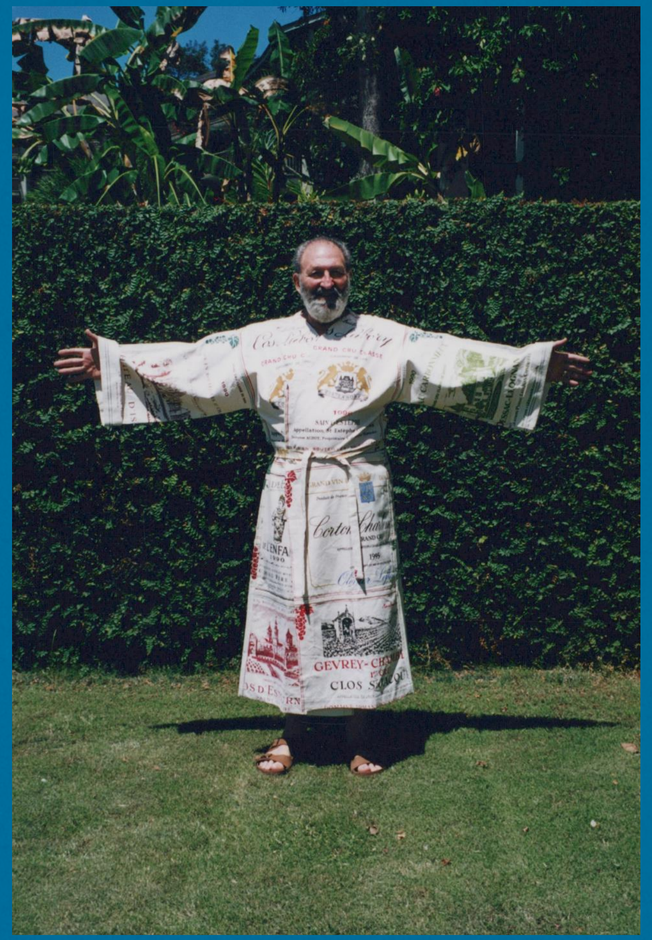
"Ralph changed the world through his hard work, kindness, integrity, convictions and, of course, his generosity. He touched the lives of so many. He seemed to take great pride in supporting tremendous talent and in watching people grow and thrive. I was privileged to know Ralph throughout my decades at UCLA and I can say for certain he was one-in-a-million. He was just great. The greatest. He made me a better fundraiser and a better person with his good advice, guidance, support...

UCLA alum

and teaching. He was a big guy with a heart to match. His presence was stimulating and energizing. I am deeply saddened not to have him a phone call away. I take comfort in the times we had together and think of him every day. I was blessed to know Ralph and his lovely bride, Shirley, whom he was so grateful to have by his side. Ralph's impact will live on through his family, friends and the students and faculty he helped along the way. I love you, Ralph."

LAURA LAVADO PARKER

UCLA alum



A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

"Ralph and I first met in 1951 when we were both attending UCLA. We have remained friends and shared business experiences over the years. Ralph was always there to help and encourage me and many others, and his friendship and guidance were irreplaceable. I will never forget his generosity when I looked to him for advice...

UCLA alum

He will be sorely missed and the world was a better place because of his presence, his many charitable ventures and the help he provided others. Esther and I extend our deepest condolences to Shirley, Peter and Alison. With love from us both."

STANLEY R. FIMBERG '55, LL.B. '60

UCLA alum

"I was told over 58 years ago when I moved to L.A. after law school that I had to meet Ralph Shapiro. I did and quickly learned that his word was his bond and that you could earn his respect and friendship. He had the unique talent of...

UCLA alum

allowing others to bring out the best in themselves. You were drawn to him. His presence radiated his charisma. Ralph was one of the most unique persons I've ever met and had the pleasure of knowing. Thank you Ralph for setting the standard on all that really matters!"

GARY J. FREEDMAN

UCLA alum

“Ralph was an unusual person. Smart, friendly, loyal, charitable, successful and modest.”

MORT GERSON '55

UCLA alum

"Ralph was one in a billion (or trillion). He was warm, witty and wise and a true legend on the UCLA campus. It was an opportunity of a lifetime for me to have the good fortune to cross paths with Ralph and it was an absolute honor to work with him (even when he asked hard questions!). He made me - and anyone he came in contact with - a better person."

AMY CARPENTER

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

"Thank you Ralph for allowing me to get to know you, and for sharing your wisdom and enthusiasm. Thank you for your steadfast support for the School of Dentistry. You will always be a UCLA pillar. My heartfelt condolences to the family."

RON MITO, D.D.S. '76, CERT. '77

UCLA alum

"Dear Shirley and the whole Shapiro family, I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to meet Ralph and serve alongside him on the Emmett Institute Advisory Board. His kindness, generosity, warmth and wisdom touched me deeply. I join you in celebrating such a wonderful and remarkable husband, father, colleague and friend."

KASSIE SIEGEL

UCLA alum

“Ralph's endless generosity to UCLA and our community inspired me and countless others. He was a compassionate man I was privileged to know and will forever remember. I regret that I must be out of town on the 5th and will miss his memorial. My thoughts are with Ralph's family.”

NANCY ABELL, J.D. '79

UCLA alum

“Dearest Shirley...From San Francisco...In great sorrow. Bless you.”

DALLAS PRICE-VAN BREDA

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

"Ralph Shapiro and his family created the cornerstone for the foundation of the Momentum organization which has grown and evolved over the last 80 years through advocacy, collaboration and innovation. Ralph aligned Momentum with UCLA in multiple ways to create a tapestry of collaborations ensuring children with developmental disabilities would benefit from the newest ...

UCLA alum

research for early interventions and advances in medical care. Because of his generosity and the notion that everyone can "do a little more," Ralph left a legacy of leadership that will endure for many years giving children, adults and their families a lifespan of resources to maximize their independence and access their communities."

LORI ANDERSON, PRESIDENT AND CEO, MOMENTUM AND MOMENTUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

UCLA alum

“I've known Ralph through my close friendship with his son, Peter, since the mid-'70s. Ralph was always larger than life from my viewpoint. I recall going to The Apple Pan for a burger and apple pie before heading to the Lakers game. His seats were near the Lakers bench and I remember when Kareem Abdul-Jabbar would come off the court and holler out "Hey Ralph." I was awestruck, but also saw that he was valued by so many because of how he carried himself and how he exuded warmth and kindness...

UCLA alum

He was always warm, caring and enjoyed good humor. (There have been many great jokes that he has texted me over the years!) When I introduced him to my wife, he immediately welcomed her into the home and family, always showing her how much he cared about her. I could not have asked for a greater role model. His son inherited his warm heart and love of laughter. It has been a joy to keep that friendship and memories going as we grow older as well."

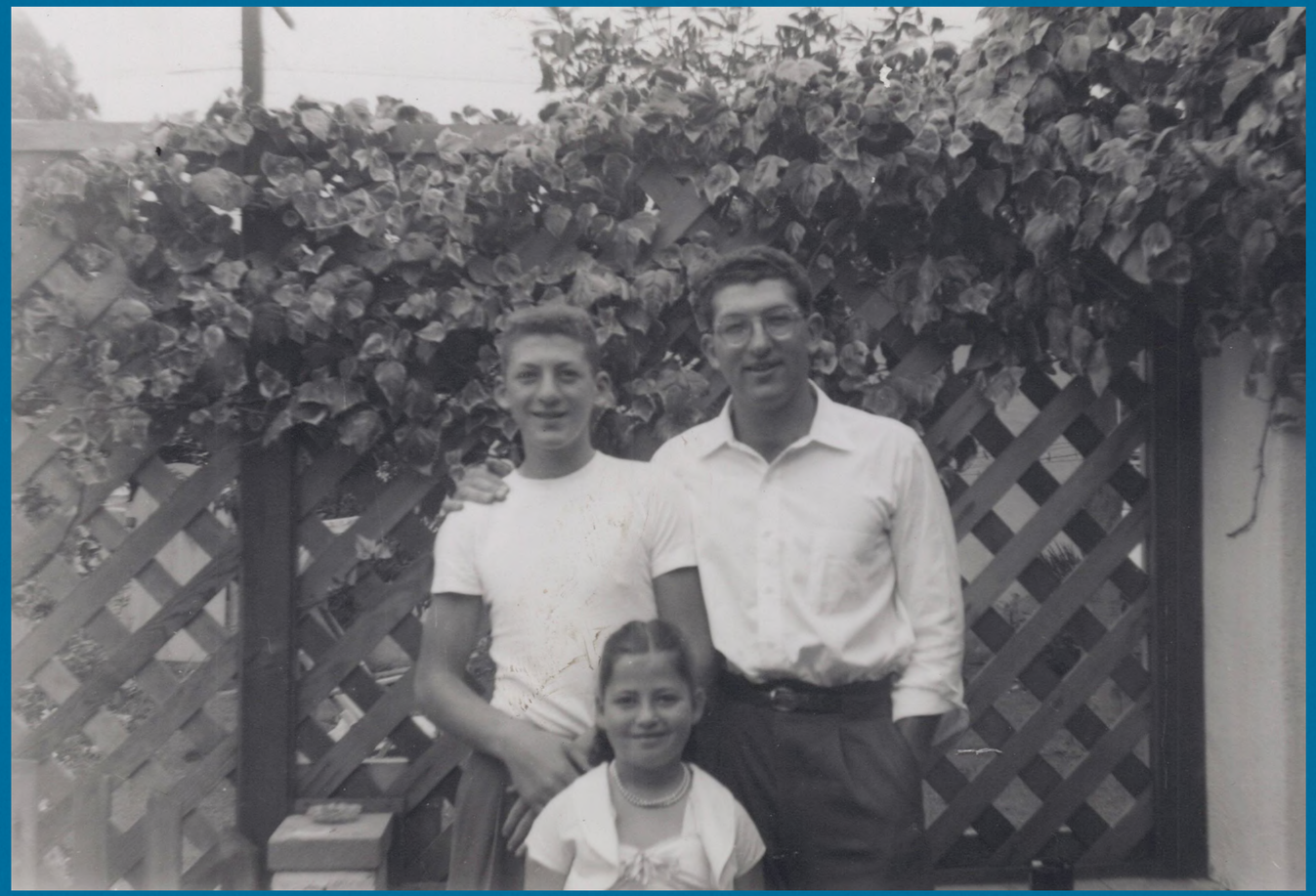
PETE ANGELIS, CERT. '09

UCLA alum

“As one of my father’s closest friends for almost 80 years, I’ve heard my father speak of Ralph only in the most glowing and admirable of terms. Ralph will be remembered for many great accomplishments and deeds, but I will remember him for his genuineness, generosity, warmth and his big bear-hug handshakes. May he rest in peace.”

ERIC SACKLER

UCLA alum



A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“We are so grateful for having had the honour of knowing Ralph. He was a beacon of generosity, kindness, intelligence and philanthropy. He will be greatly missed and never forgotten.”

NILOUFAR MOBINI AND DANIEL KLEIN

UCLA alum

“A true definition of a mensch. Always there to help out any individual who needs assistance.”

DR. STANLEY JACK ZUSMAN

UCLA alum

“Shapiro" was one of the first names I learned upon joining UCLA - across every corner of campus, it is synonymous with overwhelming generosity. I will always remember Ralph's warm smile, jovial voice and unparalleled devotion to the University. His light continues to be reflected through all the lives he and the Shapiro family have made better with their leadership and philanthropy. With fondness,”

LAURA PESCATORE

UCLA alum

"Thank you so much for your remarkable generosity and dedication to helping those in greatest need. Your compassion and commitment have made a lasting difference in the lives of many individuals and the disability community."

REEVA MINCER, KELLY VITZTHUM, STEPH TUAZON AND ERIC SUNG

UCLA alum

“My name is Philip F. Lanzafame. I was a Law School classmate of Ralph Shapiro. While we were not close friends of long duration; we were good "classmate" friends. After graduation in 1958, we, as many of our classmates did, went our separate ways. I reconnected with Ralph at our class reunions, many of which he and I attended. Particularly, our 50th reunion, in 2008, we had a chance to have a more than brief conversation, catching up over many years...

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A specific memory: shortly after the start of our senior year in Law School, an election was held for class president. Ralph was one candidate; I was the other. Ralph, very deservedly, won; I lost by a landslide. He was the best winner of almost any election I can think of. I offer my sincere condolences, and those of my wife, Johanna, to Shirley Shapiro and Ralph's and Shirley's family."

PHILIP F. LANZAFAME, J.D. '58

UCLA alum

“Ralph was one of the nicest people I was lucky enough to have as a cherished friend for more than 40 years. Words cannot express how much he is missed. We will never forget you, dear friend.”

MIKE AND MILKA MILLER

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“Ralph was like a big teddy bear and hug all at the same time. My late mother, Trula, and my father, Detroit, along with my sister, Dana, and I have had many wonderful memories from sports and Westlake School for Girls events at Ralph and Shirley’s home to the holiday parties at my parents’ home. My sister and I ran into Ralph at the Brentwood Mart one day when I was visiting from Virginia and and we hugged and chatted like the good old days...

UCLA alum

The bond with the Shapiros and Flanagans, McBeths and Taylors is a family bond of love, admiration and respect. I'm here to honor Ralph and to give in-person hugs to our dear friends as we celebrate the legendary, personable and impactful Ralph Shapiro."

CHERICE FLANAGAN TAYLOR '88

UCLA alum

“I knew Ralph my whole life, and I have no idea how to sum him up in a few words. Let's just say he was one of the kindest and most generous people I have ever met, and I am so happy he was in my parents' lives and my life for so long. I am a better person for having known him.”

NANCY FISCHER MINICOZZI '80, M.A. '91

UCLA alum

“With love and such an honor to be included in this celebration.”

GREGORY AND JENIFER SACKLER

UCLA alum

“Ralph was one of UCLA’s greatest champions. Behind his astounding generosity and service to the university was a deep and personal belief in the power of public education; he credited UCLA with setting him and so many others on the path towards a more fulfilling and rewarding life...

UCLA alum

He had a great vision for what UCLA could be and dedicated himself to helping the university realize its highest aspirations. His influence — and that of the entire Shapiro family — will be etched on UCLA for generations."

GENE AND CAROL BLOCK

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“Ralph Shapiro led a truly extraordinary life. Through his passion, hard work and talent, he scaled great heights and through it all he kept UCLA near and dear — never missing an opportunity to make our university a better place to learn, to teach, to work, or to carry out research. Across the span of a life dedicated to higher education and service, Ralph Shapiro never forgot his alma mater, and the Bruin family will never forget him.”

DARNELL HUNT, M.A. '91, PH.D. '94

UCLA alum

“Thank you for your incredible contributions and impact at UCLA and especially the Disability Studies community within the Division of Undergraduate Education. Your legacy will live on through your philanthropy for years to come!”

KASSIE ORTIZ ON BEHALF OF THE DIVISION OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

UCLA alum

“Please accept our deepest condolences on Ralph's passing. The students, faculty and administrative staff of UCLA Disability Studies are grateful to him and the Shapiro family for caring so much about issues of disability and helping us to expand disability studies across the disciplines. We treasure the legacy of Ralph through the students who receive the Shapiro Family Scholarship and in the work we do everyday to make this world a better place for all of us.”

LEIGH HARRIS

UCLA alum

"Dearest Shirley and family, I vividly remember the first time I met Ralph when Dan Neumann brought him to the Fowler Museum to see a small Indian music concert. He stood across the room, easily seen above the crowd, beaming at me with a big warm smile. That began my 20-year friendship with Ralph, who was also a trusted advisor, peerless advocate and generous patron. In my long UCLA personal history little compares with the surprise of learning from Shirley that she and Ralph...

UCLA alum

wanted to endow my position: Shirley & Ralph Shapiro Director of the Fowler Museum, a title I still hold with great honor as Director Emerita. Theirs was the most moving and affectionate of endorsements. Ralph liked to say that he knew nothing about the arts—Shirley's domain—but he fully understood their importance and relevance to our lives and times. One of my fondest memories was the delightful time we had at Ralph's 80th birthday party held on the Fowler Terrace...

UCLA alum

We poked fun at his big feet a la jazz great Fats Waller and I tried my best to stand in Ralph's shoes! So much to remember with such joy. My husband Andy and I already miss him and our evenings together. He taught us many things, including the difference between sushi and SUSHI. We celebrate Ralph as a man of warmth, wisdom, honesty, grace, generosity, humor and true kindness. With love and gratitude."

MARLA C. BERNS '73, M.A. '76, PH.D. '86

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

"Mr. Ralph Shapiro was one of the first donors I had the pleasure to interact with over the phone while working for Carol Buge. I am grateful to him for teaching us all the meaning of true stewardship and admire how committed he was to helping UCLA reach its full potential. Mr. Shapiro treated everyone with the same level of respect regardless of their title at the University. I still recall him telling me one...

UCLA alum

...year during the holiday closure, God bless your heart for holding down the fort. He kept us on our toes and was truly one-of-a-kind. I will always appreciate his candor, warmth and immense generosity."

SHARONA PARTIYELI, CERT. '05

UCLA alum

“I had the honor of interviewing Ralph for U magazine last year. He wanted to talk about a gift he'd made to encourage others to give. He said those in a position to help, should. Ralph and his family have embodied that example and leave a legacy that will continue benefitting and inspiring us all.”

MAGGIE FLYNN

UCLA alum

“Ralph was a patient of mine for almost 20 years. He was very compliant with the recommended medical regimen. He was always very respectful, appreciative, kind and generous.”

HOWARD N. ALLEN, M.D.

UCLA alum

“Ralph was such a great man with a kind heart. He will never be forgotten. We are all lucky to have had him in our lives.”

BLAKE AND SANDY FISCHER

UCLA alum

A Tribute to Ralph Shapiro

UCLA alum

“Ralph was a big man, in every good way. He was big in ambition and energy, making so much from a modest beginning. He was a big romantic: there was never a doubt that he adored Shirley. He was big in mind – always curious, always eager to know more, to attend classes and to think about the big issues in the world. He was big in his reach and hospitality…

UCLA alum

He was big in expressions of appreciation; none of his friends ever wondered whether he enjoyed outings, meals, wine, trips, and so many more pursuits. And he was so very big in impact: UCLA is a different university because Ralph Shapiro attended and stayed involved; his friends are all the better for having known him; and the world is better for the things he did here. His impact and spirit go on, and for that we are grateful!"

ERIC ZOLT AND KATHY SMALLEY

UCLA alum

"Ralph was always a larger-than-life figure at UCLA. He was part of a generation that took advantage of the excellent educational opportunities the campus offered to achieve great success. He appreciated his time at UCLA (which enabled him to meet Shirley, his marvelous partner in all that he did).

UCLA alum

Ralph did not take any of his good fortune for granted, and he made generous and thoughtful contributions so that future generations could enjoy the same enriching and enlightening experiences that he had as a young man. Thank you, Ralph, for the many wonderful memories you have made for so many!"

RACHEL F. MORAN, DEAN EMERITA, UCLA SCHOOL OF LAW

UCLA alum