In Loving Memory

James Gregory Dees

October 16, 1950 – December 20, 2013

An Unselfish Soul

You Harvard business boys are so smart.
Why don’t you roll up your sleeves and
Get in the trenches of Appalachia
Where the work is anthracite hard.
No mushy theory or bending student minds
Or get rich quick schemes here.
Who would slip out of their pin stripes and
Slide from the plush leather couches of
Harvard’s inner sanctum for such service?
Greg Dees. I will tell you who!
Gently carrying his ethical message
Of a fair and flourishing world
On his rolled up sleeves,
Up and down Kentucky hollers,
Echoing through hallowed University halls
In closed Davos meetings where
Only money speaks to power.
He moved the mighty to take up
His speech that good must be done
As part of our business in the world.
His generosity with friends, and family and students
And colleagues and strangers inspired each
Of us he touched to seek our better selves.
Commit this day to take up his torch
In this world where money is God,
Service to each other is our hope and
Righteous calling and we shall not
Mourn the loss of this better angel, but
Rejoice that he was here in this needy world,
In humble service to us all.

by Don Harker, December 20, 2013

Memorial contributions may be made to the “Greg Dees Memorial Fund” at the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship at Duke (www.caseatduke.org/deesmemorial) or to the Mountain Association for Economic Development (MACED) in Berea, KY (www.maced.org/gregdees).

Please share your stories and memories of Greg and enjoy those of others at posthope.org/greg-dees.
J. Gregory Dees, an academic pioneer in the field of social entrepreneurship, died at Duke Hospital on December 20, 2013. He was 63.

Greg was born to Geneva and the late James Harold Dees, October 16, 1950, in Cincinnati, OH. He graduated from the University of Cincinnati with High Honors in Philosophy and subsequently received a Masters in Public and Private Management from the Yale School of Management and a PhD in Philosophy from Johns Hopkins University. Before embarking on a career in academia, he worked at McKinsey & Company in New York and served as a computer programmer and analyst for insurance companies in Baltimore and Connecticut.

Greg started his academic career at the Yale School of Management, where he taught a highly regarded course on “New Ventures” that was singled out for praise in Business Week’s review of business schools. He subsequently joined the faculty at Harvard Business School, where he helped launch the Initiative on Social Enterprise and created a path-breaking course on “Entrepreneurship in the Social Sector,” receiving Harvard’s Appar Award for Innovation in Teaching. After an eighteen month leave in which he worked on entrepreneurial development in central Appalachia with the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED), Greg returned to academia as the Miriam and Peter Haas Centennial Professor in Public Service at Stanford, where he also served as the founding Co-Director of the Center for Social Innovation at the Graduate School of Business and guided the business school and the university into the areas of social entrepreneurship, nonprofit management, and philanthropy through new courses for MBAs, undergraduates, law students, and philanthropists. Greg left Stanford for Duke’s Fuqua School of Business in 2001, where he co-founded the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE) and built it into one of the premier academic centers in the emerging field of social entrepreneurship. More recently, he was named the first Rubenstein Senior Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship by Duke’s Innovation & Entrepreneurship (I&E) Initiative and was playing a critical role in incorporating social entrepreneurship into broader university efforts through leadership roles with both the I&E Initiative and the Social Entrepreneurship Accelerator at Duke (SEAD).

Widely regarded as the “father of social entrepreneurship as an academic field,” Greg received the Aspen Institute and Ashoka’s inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award in Social Entrepreneurship. He produced over 60 cases, articles, chapters, and concept notes related to this topic—including his seminal piece on “The Meaning of Social Entrepreneurship”—and co-edited two well-regarded books that, in his signature style, bridged the gap between business and the social sector and between theory and practice. Greg also served on numerous boards and advisory councils, including chairing the World Economic Forum’s Global Agenda Council for Social Innovation. Known for the twinkle in his eye, his fierce analytical mind coupled with his humble and gentle demeanor, and his remarkable responsiveness to the countless students, educators, business and philanthropic leaders, and social entrepreneurs from around the world who sought his guidance, Greg was a true visionary and pioneer who left an indelible mark on the many institutions and individuals he touched.

Order of Service

Lighting of Candles

Silent Meditation and Reflection

Reflective Reading
The Second Book of the Tao, Compiled by Stephen Mitchell, #22 and #32
Matt Nash

Welcome
Greg Jones

Anthem
Amazing Grace
Natalie, Margo, and Charlie Russell

Please rise and join in singing together as indicated in the program insert

Reflections on Greg’s Life and Legacy
Ed Skloot
Greg Jones on behalf of Duke President Dick Brodhead
Beth Anderson

Choral Music
Do Not Stand At My Grave And Weep – I Am Not There – I Do Not Weep
Harry Pickens

Closing
Greg Jones

Closing Song
Hallelujah
Mark Wells

Please rise and join in singing together

Recessional Music
Mark Wells