



# Gerald F. Fidler

JUL 10, 1965 - AUG 30, 2020



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# Table of Contents

<b>Obituary</b> .....	Page 3
<b>Tribute Wall</b> .....	Page 5



## **Gerald F. Fidler**

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**G**erald Fidler, a long-time union organizer and resident of Chantilly, VA, died unexpectedly at home on August 29, 2020 at the age of 55.

Gerry is survived by his father Glenn of Cortland, NY, his beloved wife Melissa (Melzer) and his sons Aaron and Gabriel who were the lights of his life. Additionally, Gerry is survived by his siblings, Yolanda Bishop, Chris Martin, and Joseph Fidler.

A life-long New York Yankees fan, Gerry was born and raised in Cortland, NY where he graduated from Cortland Jr./Sr. High School in 1983. He also attended Siena College in Loudonville, NY. Gerry completed Harvard University's Senior Executive Program at the JFK School of Government in 2011.

Gerry started his career in the labor movement as a legislative intern with New York's Civil Service Employee's Association (CSEA). He was hired by CSEA as a Political Action Coordinator in January of 1989. He spent eleven years with CSEA, first in New York City and then moving to Central New York as an Upstate Political Coordinator.

Gerry's knowledge of and passion for politics greatly enhanced the political prowess of CSEA in the upstate region. In February 2000, Gerry moved his family to Washington, DC to join the national union staff at the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) as the Associate Director of their department of Political Action.

During his 20 years with the national union he traveled the country working to mobilize union members to vote for and volunteer on the campaigns of hundreds of candidates running for offices ranging from school board to president. Win or lose, Gerry's enthusiasm on those campaigns was contagious and along the way he touched lives of countless people who remember him fondly as someone who helped them realize how they could use their voices and their votes to make the world a better place.



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Gerry's advocacy for the rights of working people came from the heart and he lived his life by the principles that he espoused on the campaign trail, respecting his union family and the people that he met on the trail without regard for station or title. In addition to his dedication to the labor movement and his family, Gerry had a special place in his heart for our nation's veterans and for volunteerism.

Among the many volunteer roles that Gerry played in his life are his annual sojourns to participate in cleaning the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, his participation in the AFL-CIO's Veterans' Committee on behalf of AFSCME and his fearless trip into the aftermath of Katrina to provide aid and comfort to people displaced by the storm. Most recently, Gerry volunteered for the Loudoun Medical Reserve Corp to assist with COVID-19 response in his community.

Gerry's passion was to train and educate union leaders. Many thousands of AFSCME members and others who had the opportunity to join one of his classes would all say that he had a way of bringing the attention of his students to the matter at hand in a way that was genuine, heartfelt and entertaining.

The labor movement will miss him sorely as we try to carry on in his life's mission with his light diminished but still guiding us forward.



## Tribute Wall

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WS

**Will Streeter** posted:

I wish to send my sincere condolences to Gerry's family. I worked with Gerry during his time at CSEA in Syracuse. I also share being from Cortland. He had an immense commitment to working people and worked hard to elect people who shared that commitment. He will be missed. Will Streeter, Retired CSEA Labor Relations Specialist

September 14 at 6:02 AM



**Anonymous** sent a Ghirardelli Galore to the Fidler family.



September 7 at 9:19 AM

KK

**Kerry Korpi** posted:

Gerry was a smart, kind, funny guy. He could make the long, grueling hours working on political campaigns kind of fun, which is saying something. No words can express your families' loss but I hope it helps to know how much he meant to people in his too short life

September 5 at 7:17 AM

CB

**Carla Braden** posted:

Gerry had a kindness that radiated from his soul. A way to put you at ease a calmness in his voice, a quirky sense of humor that made me smile. He even made an impact on my children. He was known to them as "the man with the treasure chest in his office." He kept little toys in it and let them pick from it whenever they came to work with me. May his family find comfort in the way so many people loved him. I will never forget him.

September 5 at 5:52 AM

LR

**Lisa Rice** lit a candle in honor of Gerald.

Gerry was generous with his time even with those he didn't know. I'll never forget his generosity in visiting my Dad in the nursing home while on one of his political assignments to Ohio. He sat and chatted with my Dad for an afternoon, and even though my Dad had dementia and didn't know who he was, Gerry said he enjoyed talking with him nonetheless. He seemed to really have a soft spot for our senior citizens. RIP Gerry and love and prayers to Melissa, Aaron and Gabriel.



September 5 at 5:13 AM



# Tribute Wall

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**Richard Toth** posted:

Gerry was one of the first people I met when I hired by CSEA. We immediately had a chemistry between each other and remember his son when he was a baby. I miss my friend and wish his family God's mercy and our family is so sorry for your loss

September 4 at 4:01 PM



**Belinda C Saverino** lit a candle in honor of Gerald.

May Gerry's family find great comfort in knowing that Gerry had so many friends and coworkers who loved him. Anyone who met him knew that he was just a genuinely nice guy. He loved his AFSCME family but nothing compared to his love for his family. May he Rest In Peace. Gerry will be missed. ❤️



September 4 at 3:10 PM



**Susan Harris** posted:

I will always be thankful to Gerry for teaching me and showing me things I could do in life with the time I have left. I worked with him for a week's time at AFSCME conventions. Got to meet his family and sending them prayers at this time. The world lost a great man. Will see you again Gerry.

September 4 at 9:59 AM



**Raela Baird** posted:

So many memories, what a warrior for workers rights. Gerry's passion for workers was apparent in every aspect of his soul. His friendly, humorous approach was a magnet. Thank you for sharing this beautiful soul,. So much dedication for the fight. My condolences to his family, my heart go out to you.

September 4 at 9:27 AM



**Paula Baranowski** posted:

We will always be thankful to Gerry for being with Mary Kathryn Fidler the day she left this world to be with her Lord and Savior. He was holding her hand when she left this world.

September 4 at 8:39 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Gerald by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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