



## Dr, John Joseph Hirschbuhl

September 20, 2017

Dr. John J. Hirschbuhl, a pioneer in educational technology, passed from this life on Wednesday, September 20, after a full life filled with success—personally and professionally. John was born on March 17th, 1934 in Philadelphia to John Charles Hirschbuhl and Gertrude Smith Hirschbuhl. He was a tremendous athlete, and played football and baseball for Olney High School. However, his passion was baseball. He was awarded the Herb Pennock Award twice—recognizing him as the best high school baseball player in Philadelphia. At 18, he signed with the New York Giants. His professional baseball life was put on hold when he was drafted. He served in the U.S Army and led their baseball program overseas. Rather than return to baseball after serving his country, John decided to go to college. The GI Bill gave him the gift of Education—and it changed his life. At Temple University, he met and married his true love, Kathy Kalafus. Kathy had also served in the U.S. Army and was Miss Armed Forces. Together, they built a life immersed in education and innovation. John received his Bachelor's Degree and Masters Degree in Education from Temple University. He was a gifted mathematician and, after teaching honors level math courses, serving as Math Chair, and coaching both football and baseball at Hamilton High School in New Jersey, he knew he could do more. He returned to school and obtained his Ph.D from Penn State. His field of study was mathematics and technology—a new and unexplored field at the time. He firmly believed that technology could have a tremendous impact on education—and he dedicated his life's work to that

belief. Upon receiving his doctorate, John went to work at the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio. At the time, Akron was the tire capital of the world, and Goodyear and Firestone wanted the university to integrate technology into the curriculum. John was one of the few people who wanted and knew how to do just that. He founded the Computer Based Education Center—which became a model Ed Tech site for IBM in the 70's and 80's. As an IBM scholar, John traveled the globe and met world leaders—he danced with the King of Thailand's daughter at her wedding, and he had the honor of spending an hour with Nelson Mandela. He spent time with Bill Gates in the now famous "garage" and jokingly sparred with Steve Jobs. He predicted that we would hold computers in the palm of our hands—and his iPhone proved him right. For over 30 years he was widely published in his field, including serving as the editor and a contributor to "Computers in Education" for McGraw Hill for more than decade; he graduated a record number of more than 30 doctoral candidates during his tenure in Akron, and John and Kathy started their own company, Computer Knowledge International—CKI, in 1980. CKI was the true definition of an Ed Tech start-up and was a successful venture for 20 years. Despite their full schedules, John and Kathy were wonderful parents and believed firmly in the importance of family. Their daughter, Jackie, was raised in a home full of music, love, laughter and world scholars. John and Kathy's love for each other was obvious to all, and they were true partners in every way. John retired from university life in after 35 years in 2007. After Kathy passed in 2012, John returned to his birthplace and resided in Philadelphia at Atria Senior Living in Center City. He took pleasure in being close to his family and remained a proud Penn State fan throughout his life. John was a true intellectual and visionary who helped build the foundation for Educational Technology. He always said "It is your responsibility to leave the world a better place than you found it." He did. A Mass of Christian Burial 10: 30 am Tues. Sept. 26, 2017 at Our Lady of Good Council , 42 W. Main St. Moorestown, NJ. Interment Centre Co. Memorial Park, State College Pa. In Lieu of flowers. Memorial contributions to Penn State Univ.

College of Education , 228 Chambers Building  
University Park, Pa. 16802. Please note: Hirschbuhl-Learning Design and  
Technology.

# Cemetery Details

## Centre County Memorial Park

1032 Benner Pike  
State College, PA 16801

# Previous Events

## Mass of Christian Burial

SEP **26**. 10:30 AM (ET)

Our Lady of Good Counsel  
42 West Main Street  
Moorestown, NJ 08057  
(856) 235-0181  
<http://www.olgcnj.org>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Dr, John Joseph Hirschbuhl*

October 09, 2023 at 03:30 AM



“ *Dr, John Joseph Hirschbuhl*

November 08, 2022 at 08:26 PM



“ *Dr John Hirschbuhl was a good friend and mentor for many of us during the early 1980s while we worked for the DELTAK organization producing computer based training. His patience, kind support and personal interest in each of his team members will be long remembered by me and my family. Sincerely, Dr. Donald Hruby*

**Don Hruby** - October 29, 2017 at 10:18 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr, John Joseph Hirschbuhl.*



September 25, 2017 at 04:35 PM

ST

“ Dr. John was an enormous influence on me both personally and professionally. He hired me from Ernst and Young to work at The University of Akron back in 2001. From that moment on, I became a member of the technology movement in education. I learned a great deal from John and loved to listen to his many stories of the early days. He was delightful, engaging, quickwitted, even silly, but always passionate about the power of education. I was blessed to spend time with John and Kathy in their lovely home on many occasions. It brings great comfort and joy to know that they are together again. I send my deepest condolences to Jackie and her family during this time of grief and sorrow. John was larger than life in so many ways and this world is a little vibrant without him.



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**Suzanne Testerman** - September 24, 2017 at 07:54 PM

DM

“ John Hirschbuhl was my first boss right out of college. I started working for him when he was just starting up the Computer Based Education Department at The University of Akron. He was a true visionary for sure. He taught me so much and was not only my boss and co-worker but a dear friend. He will be missed.

*DeDe Angwin-Meilinger*

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**DeDe Meilinger** - September 24, 2017 at 12:50 PM

SF

“ *Sunday Faseyitan and Family purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Dr, John Joseph Hirschbuhl.*



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**Sunday Faseyitan and Family** - September 23, 2017 at 11:53 AM