



## Albert Michael Katz

Albert Michael Katz, UW-Superior Professor Emeritus of Theatre and Communication; Combat Choreographer; Community Organizer; Community Volunteer, Husband, Father and Grandfather has died at the age of 84. He died at home, of natural causes, surrounded by his family in the early hours of April 28th.

Al was born in 1938 in New York City, the second child of Harry and Esther (née Gottesman) Katz. He was bright, active and loved theater.

He skipped two grades in elementary school and, through city wide testing, was selected for a place at the prestigious Bronx High School of Science. He graduated in 1954 at the age of 16.

He attended Union College in Schenectady, New York, graduating in 1958.

He did his graduate work at the University of Michigan, attaining his Master's degree in 1962 and completing his PhD in 1966.

While there he met Virginia (Ginny) Katz. They married in 1962.

He was an Assistant Professor of Theatre at Alma College in Alma, Michigan from 1962 to 1965. In 1966 he became an Assistant Professor of Theatre at the University of Wisconsin-Superior where he taught acting, directing, and stage combat. He achieved the rank of Full Professor in 1976.

In the 1970's, he was a founding member of both the Wisconsin Theatre Association and the Society of American Fight Directors. He wrote and published the first American textbook on Stage Combat in 1976.

While settled into the role of teacher, Al kept his stage skills tuned up by continuing to act from time to time. This reached its apex in 1978 when he was asked to play Tevye in a UMD Summer Repertory Theatre's sold out production of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

In 1982, with the support of his department, he took a sabbatical and did additional coursework at the University Minnesota Twin Cities to facilitate the transition of his teaching to Communication, which he did until his retirement in 2003.

Other achievements in his tenure at UWS included the establishment of the campus wide assessment program, significant contributions to the electronic portfolio program, and substantial teaching in the extended degree program, which enabled hundreds of non-traditional students to earn their university degrees.

Upon retirement, Al turned his still significant skills to volunteer work in the community, including service for the Women's Health Center, St. Mary's Hospital, and multiple city entities connected to the health of Lake Superior.

One of his proudest achievements was his work on the McQuade Road Public Access Committee, that finally, after years of work, helped facilitate the design and building of the McQuade Road Safe Harbor.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Harry and Esther Katz and his brother Richard. He is survived by his brother, Aron; wife, Virginia Teare Katz, PhD; his daughters Rachel Katz Carey, MFA (Nicholas), and Rebecca Katz Harwood, MFA (Christopher), and his grandchildren Griffin and Graeme Carey and Robert Harwood.

A celebration of life will be held on Monday, June 19th, at the Cremation Society of Minnesota, 4100 Grand Ave, Duluth, MN 55807. Visitation at 2pm, and brief service at 3pm. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Katz Family Scholarship in the Department of Communicating Arts at the University of Wisconsin-

Superior. <https://www.uwsuper.edu/give2uws/forms/donation.cfm> [under Designation, select “other” and then enter the name of the scholarship in the next space.]

He led a compelling life and will be greatly missed. If you'd like to read the full length version of this obituary, more fun to read but too ruinously expensive to publish here, you can find it at:  
<https://cremationsocietyofmn.com/tribute/all-services/index.html#>

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