



AlphaNet Mourns the Loss of Veteran Coordinator Doug Turley

It is with great sadness that we share the news that AlphaNet Coordinator Doug Turley passed away on November 22, 2022. Doug joined AlphaNet in December 2000 and dedicated nearly 22 years to serving the Alpha-1 community. Doug felt strongly about being there for newly diagnosed Alphas and providing them with the education and reassurance he once received from his own AlphaNet Coordinator. In 2014, Doug became the first Coordinator to lead REACH, AlphaNet's health management program for Alphas who do not currently require augmentation therapy, and he is credited with registering REACH's first 120 participants.

"Doug was an extraordinary person and a remarkable AlphaNet Coordinator. I initially met him when he was hired over two decades ago to join the newly minted AlphaNet Disease Management Program and soon became a leading Coordinator because of his compassion and unusually broad understanding of Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency and its treatment. I got to know him on a more personal basis during a trip to Ireland for the Alpha-1 International Patient congress in Dublin when the patients organized a one-week bus tour of the Emerald Isle. Doug was accompanied by his young adult daughter, and it was great to see him in a more social situation and feeling great after his lung transplant. Mostly, I remember that during trainings and weekly conference calls, Doug was the one who asked the pertinent, in-depth questions, never satisfied until he fully understood a topic. Then he would apply that knowledge to help other Coordinators and his subscribers. Doug's passing is a shock and cause of great sadness to the many Alphas and others in the Alpha-1 community who knew and loved him," AlphaNet Vice President and Senior Medical Director Dr. Robert A. Sandhaus said.

Doug was diagnosed with Alpha-1 at the age of 41, years after being diagnosed with emphysema in the early 1990s. While preparing for a hernia surgery, Doug's surgeon reviewed his records and expressed surprise that a man of his age had the kind of lung issues he was experiencing. Doug's surgeon asked him if he could order a blood test, and in 1997 Doug was finally diagnosed with Alpha-1. Shortly after his diagnosis, Doug enrolled in the AlphaNet program as a subscriber. He saw the value of staying informed about Alpha-1 and being able to connect with a fellow Alpha on a regular basis, crediting his own AlphaNet Coordinator Dick Bueker with inspiring him to apply to become a Coordinator himself.

In 2003, Doug's lung disease progressed to the point that he decided to undergo a lung transplant at Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri. Although the success of his transplant meant that he could return to his former career, Doug chose to remain at AlphaNet as a Coordinator because he felt passionate about helping Alphas navigate their health through knowledge and education.

"Doug was my very first AlphaNet Coordinator in 2002. I was scared about starting augmentation therapy, as is the experience of many Alphas. Doug was a wonderful listener and was so knowledgeable. He was able to answer all my questions and calm my fears. He was always available to me to answer any questions I had as I continued in my Alpha-1 journey. I will always remember the first time I got to meet him at the Minneapolis Education Day in 2005. It was an incredible experience of getting to meet my AlphaNet Coordinator for the first time in person. For me, he remained that special human being who helped me during a challenging, stressful time in my life. Doug will be deeply missed by us all," AlphaNet Program Manager Peg Iverson said.

Prior to his time at AlphaNet, Doug managed several businesses including a bakery, grocery store, restaurant, clothing store, and pharmacy. He worked as a professional baker for over 15 years and remained an avid baker long after switching careers.

Doug loved books, movies, music, computers, and spending time with his wife Bonnie, who is a former AlphaNet Board member, and his family. Doug also loved animals and they loved him. Doug and Bonnie first met at the Alpha-1 National Conference in Phoenix, Arizona and they clicked so well that other attendees thought they were already a married couple. From the day they met, they were joined at the hip, even if figuratively for a time as Doug lived in Kansas and Bonnie lived in Boston. He eventually moved to Boston to be with Bonnie.

A memorial service will be held for Doug in Nashville, Tennessee in late February 2023.

In lieu of flowers, if you wish to make a donation in Doug's memory, the family has requested contributions to the Alpha-1 Foundation or the Nashville Humane Association, 213 Osceola Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee 37209.