



Dr. Leonard James Schmidt

JUL 12, 1936 - DEC 13, 2025



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Obituary for Dr. Leonard James Schmidt

Dr. Leonard Schmidt, a longtime physician, educator, and respected member of the University of Utah Department of Psychiatry, passed away on Saturday, December 13th, 2025, at the University of Utah Hospital.

Len was born in Torrington, Connecticut, in 1936 and lived there through high school. One of the most formative influences of his early years was his grandfather, Charles Goodale, a well-known and highly regarded pharmacist in town. Though Len was somewhat indifferent to academics as a child, he thrived in the Boy Scouts, on the swim team, and as a camp counselor at the local Boy Scout summer camp - places where his confidence, leadership, and curiosity began to shine. An accomplished swimmer, Len attended Springfield College in Massachusetts, where he discovered a passion for the sciences and became a devoted student. He graduated in 1958 and went on to earn his medical degree from Tufts University School of Medicine in 1962. After medical school, Len served as a flight surgeon in the United States Navy, including duty aboard the aircraft carrier USS Hancock in the Pacific in 1964 and later at Lemoore Naval Air Station in California.

Following his military service, Len completed his psychiatric residency at the University of Utah and did a rotation with the Kansas University Department of Psychiatry from 1969-1970. He returned to Salt Lake City and joined the University's Department of Psychiatry in 1971. Len was Clinical Director Salt Lake Community Mental Health Center from 1971-1975. In 1975, he was appointed Chief of Psychiatry at the Salt Lake Veterans Administration, a position he held with dedication and integrity until 1988.

Len later joined what was then the Western Institute of Neuropsychiatry - an institution that would become the University Neuropsychiatric Institute (UNI) and is known today as the Huntsman Mental Health Institute. He continued his clinical and academic work there until his retirement in 2016.

Len was preceded in death by his wife, Linda B. Nielson - his best friend, partner, and wife for more than 44 years. He leaves behind his son, Samuel G. Schmidt; his daughter, Sarah A.



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Schmidt; his son-in-law, Ric Anderson; and his two grandchildren, Ricci Anderson (26) and Isabella Anderson (22). Of all his accomplishments, Len was especially proud of his grandchildren and loved watching them grow into the young adults they are today.

Throughout his long career - whether at the VA, the Department of Psychiatry, in private practice, or among his many friends, Len touched countless lives. To those who knew him, his greatest roles were as a father, grandfather, and devoted husband. His passions were his family, sailing, reading and his life's work in mental health care. He will be deeply and forever missed.

The Schmidt/Anderson family extends their heartfelt gratitude to the University of Utah Hospital B50 Unit for the exceptional care they provided in Len's final days. Their kindness, respect, and grace brought great comfort. The family will forever carry a profound sense of loss, but also immense gratitude for the privilege of having shared life with him. He was - and remains - deeply loved.



Tribute Wall

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Jeremy Kendrick posted:

Len was such a force of stability and kindness for me in my early career as a psychiatrist. I remember sitting with him and having him review my materials for promotion. He didn't comment on my list of accolades or recommend additional tasks I might engage in to forward my career.... He instead asked me how I was doing and in a very non directive way suggested I slow down and not over extend myself - not sacrifice what I had in the moment for whatever mirage of success I had laid out in front of me. Wise words from somebody who had walked the path ahead of me and was kind enough to offer some wisdom to a fellow traveler. Thank you Len. You will be missed, but not forgotten!

January 1 at 12:35 AM



Memories only last if you share them

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



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