



David Paul Kramer

December 12, 1941 - March 6, 2018

East Bay Union Leader: A Life of Passion

David P. Kramer, 76, died on March 6, 2018, after battling a long respiratory illness. David, a son of Pittsburg, PA, was a life-long champion and activist for civil rights and an SEIU union leader in Alameda County and proudly bore the distinction of being the longest-serving Oakland Port Commissioner in its history.

David, born on December 12, 1941 was the son of Edna Kramer, who along with his older brother, Richard, raised them as a single mother after their father left them at ages 5 and 11. David attended elementary, junior high and high school in North Braddock, PA, a suburb of Pittsburg. While the boys from his high school took jobs at local steel mills, David attended Carnegie Institute of Technology and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Industrial Design in 1963.

After college, David moved to Detroit and was hired by Ford Motors to help design interiors on the concept car that was later named "Mustang." Because this was a period of social tumult in the U.S., David needed more fulfillment and decided to quit Ford and join the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in Detroit where he picketed, agitated for integration and equal employment. In 1964, he moved to Baton Rouge, LA to become a civil rights worker, testing and enforcing the 1964 Civil Rights Act. In 1965, David moved back to Detroit where he spent the next five years working for various social justice non-

profits. In 1967, David graduated from the University of Michigan with a Masters of Social Work degree in Community Organizing. During this period, he became deeply involved in the anti-Vietnam war movement, participating in demonstrations at the Pentagon and the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago.

In 1969, David moved to the West Coast. After a short time living in Portland, David moved to Oakland and was hired by SEIU Local 535 as a field rep where he organized multiple counties, cities and schools. In 1975, David was elected to the Executive Committee of the Alameda County Central Labor Council. He was hired in 1976 as the Executive Director of SEIU Local 616 but resigned in 1980 "in serious need of therapeutic change." After two years as a self-employed carpenter, David returned to 535 and in 1995, he was named as its Executive Director. In 1994, he was named "Unionist of the Year" by the AFL-CIO Central Labor Council of Alameda County. In 1997, David was elected to the International Executive Board of SEIU, where he continued to voluntarily serve until 2006. David retired from the union in 2005.

In 1991, with the recommendation of Alameda County's Central Labor Council, David was appointed by Mayor Elihu Harris to serve on the Oakland Port Board of Commissioners. He was reappointed by Mayor Harris and subsequently reappointed twice by Mayor Jerry Brown. David was elected by his peer Commissioners as President of the Port Commission, 2000-2001. He enjoyed the unique distinction of being the longest-serving Port of Oakland Commissioner, having been appointed to four terms, ending in 2007, for a total of 17 years.

David is survived by his brother, Richard Kramer and sister-in-law Carolyn of Lancaster, PA and his two nieces, Laurie (Kramer) Wallace, husband Mark and their two daughters of Orlando, FL, and niece Leslie (Kramer) Rickerson of Gulfport, FL. David also leaves two godchildren, Will and Annie McAneny of Oakland.

David's family would like to sincerely thank his many friends for their love and support. All friends are extended an invitation to a "Celebration of Life"

gathering on Friday, April 6, 2018, 2:00 pm, at the ILWU International Longshoremen's Hall, 99 Hegenberger Road, Oakland.