

COMMENTS FOR KARL ACKERMAN REMEMBERANCE EVENT

My sincere regrets for not being able to attend today.

I had the privilege of knowing Karl for many years, and seeing firsthand his amazing energy, commitment to recovery and rights, and endless wisdom. But even more, as a warm, funny and incredibly generous friend. I won't ever forget our long talks on music, especially his abiding love of jazz, quoting lines from *The Big Lebowski* (another shared taste), and anything else under the sun. Karl's interests were contagious, because he spoke of them with such tremendous knowledge and enthusiasm.

Karl gave so much to the development of both the Transformation Center and M-POWER. As a CPS student, I am seeing the fruits of his dream; as an advocate, I see peer-run respites and fundamental rights becoming a public reality. I know that Karl also contributed a HUGE amount to the noble cause of mental health for his fellow veterans. Karl could also be quite opinionated, and being likewise, he and I did some sparring – but it NEVER remained as personal animosity. Terms like, "It ain't rocket science" and "Nuff said" live on in our lexicon!

But what I remember the most fondly is watching Karl facilitate groups at MDDA/DBSA. He was truly in his element – empathetic, listening, smiling and gently giving, with a warm smile and acceptance for everyone. He was a true role model for any facilitator and/or CPS. With every fiber of his being, Karl lived and practiced recovery. He was a giant (both literally and figuratively), and he will never be forgotten.

Jonathan Dosick