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David Tankoos, 67, a Teacher Raised in Darien

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Date : November 26, 2017

David Crowell “Tank” Tankoos, 67, of New Haven, passed away peacefully in his sleep on Wednesday, Nov. 22, 2017.

He was born on Feb. 25, 1950 to the late William Grannis Tankoos and Elizabeth Percival Blanchard Tankoos.

Very proud father to Katherine Tankoos Iannaccone (Paul, Jaden, Jaxen) and Sarah Blanchard Tankoos (Todd). Brother to William G. Tankoos, Jr. (Theo), Lindsay Geelhood (Greg), Caroline Tankoos and Judy Tankoos. Uncle to Ryan Tankoos (Loni), Grant Tankoos and Eric Gidley (Sarah). Dave was the former husband of Elizabeth Collins who has been an enormous support for him and their daughters, and of whom he loved very deeply.

The light of his life and “best medicine” was his grandson, Jaxen, who made him laugh and cry with pride. They spent endless hours together singing with the Beatles, playing puzzles, reading books, matching nuts and bolts and building Legos.

— [an obituary](#) from *North Haven Funeral Home*

Jaxen was his inspiration and motivation during the last years of his life, and he shared stories and videos of him far and wide to his family and friends. He cherished every moment with him, and watching his daughter, Kayte, and his former wife, Liz, teach him new songs, games, and words brought pure joy and warmth to his heart and spirit.

He was an excellent grandfather, Dad, and husband for many years, and created beautiful memories with his family throughout his life.

Raised in Darien, David attended Thomas Moore School in New Hampshire, Thiel College in Greenville, Pa., where he earned his bachelor's degree in English, and a masters degree in special education at Southern Connecticut State University.

He worked in the educational field until his retirement: The Grove School in Madison, Curriculum Associates in North Billerica, Mass., and Woodhouse Academy in Milford.

He was an amazing influence on his students, colleagues and friends throughout the years. He was always someone whom you could count on for deep conversation about life, current events, history, movies, TV shows, literature, and the human experience.

David had a great sense of humor and loved cracking jokes in good spirits with everyone he loved. He always lent a helping hand, a listening ear, and an open heart when his loved ones needed him.

He always accepted and loved people for who they were, holding compassion and understanding with everyone in every situation. Dave left deep footsteps in the hearts of all whom he spent time with.

David was patient, kind, thoughtful, sensitive, and wore his heart on his sleeve every day of his life. He felt life very deeply and expressed his love, admiration, and pride abundantly to those he adored. He enjoyed long heartfelt talks and special moments with his daughters.

He loved movies, Broadway musicals, the Beach Boys, the *Andy Griffith Show*, stand up comedy, friends, and just started watching *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. He loved teaching, telling “Dave” stories, as his students would say, and he encouraged those around him to develop new perspectives, and see through the eyes of

others.

Dave enjoyed swimming in the ocean, being a Dad and a Granddad, nature, gardening, riding bikes, long drives, long walks, videotaping all holidays and birthdays, taking his kids to soccer and swim practice, cooking, and taking care of his family and friends. He made the best French toast, lasagna, and sweet yams with corn flakes. He gave his heart to everyone in every breath, every moment and every conversation.

He had a close circle of friends and a church community that provided a wonderful support system for him and he provided great strength and motivation to them, as well. He cared about his friends deeply and he will be sorely missed. The family would like to thank Dave's friends for all their love and support throughout the years.

He was predeceased by his niece Juliette Gidley, former father and mother in law John and Catherine Collins, and close friends Frank and Sheila Tchitcherine.

Funeral services will be conducted at 10 a.m., Tuesday, Nov. 28 in the Mount Carmel Congregational Church at 3284 Whitney Ave, Hamden. Interment will follow in the North Haven Center Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to [Angelman Syndrome Foundation](#), 75 Executive Drive, Suite 327, Aurora, IL 60504.