

Memorial Resolution

Mitchell S. Novit

December 28, 1931–May 28, 2019

Mitchell (“Mitch”) S. Novit was a professor in the Department of Management & Entrepreneurship at the Kelley School of Business from 1966 until his retirement in 1995. Professor Novit was born in South Carolina where he spent his early years. He attended the University of North Carolina, earning his B.A. degree in English. He then served three years in the Air Force. Following his military service, he continued his education at the University of Michigan, earning his M.B.A. and Ph.D.

Mitch began his career at Indiana University in 1966 teaching courses in organizational behavior and human resource (HR) management. He was comfortable in academic and applied contexts, and he could connect with almost any audience, whether students or practicing executives. As a labor relations expert, he felt it was important to educate others about the “human side” of business. Mitch published articles addressing various HR issues, including the impact of legislation on employment issues. He was an exemplary organizational citizen, versatile enough to take on almost any service needs of the department. As evidence of this, he supported the school’s student chapter of the American Society for Public Administration and the Human Resources Student Association.

Although sometimes hidden by his calm and understated demeanor, his sense of humor was always present. The current dean of the school recalls fondly one of Mitch’s perfectly timed jokes when, on the first day of classes following his retirement, he sent her a teasing email that read simply, “*nah nah nah.*” The irony, of course, was that even after teasing others about having to work after he retired, Mitch volunteered for the next 13 years to serve our university and its students in the Student Advocates Office. In this role, he assisted students facing challenging academic or personal matters, and he often said this work was among his most important and rewarding.

Colleagues in the Department of Management & Entrepreneurship (originally known as Department of Personnel and Organizational Behavior) created a memory book on the occasion of Mitch’s retirement. Every entry reflected Mitch’s humor and sound judgment. One colleague wrote: “*Mitch has gone out of his way many, many times to express appreciation or offer encouragement, or to share a funny story or insight. He has brightened many a hectic, stressful day. I know that whenever I think of the really good people I’ve known, Mitch will be right there on the short list.*” Another faculty member noted: “*Mitch has always been a constant reminder that universities are entrusted with the shaping and molding of the young... Every day and every way his very presence made it clear that ours was a trust not to be neglected...*” Still another colleague stated the following: “*Faithful to complete his tasks, unselfish with his time, committed to his job, benevolent, and kind are the terms and phrases that quickly come to mind when asked to describe this man, a role model for mankind.*” The department’s current chairperson noted: “*...When I first arrived at Kelley my office was fortuitously right next to Mitch. I quickly learned that he was a thoughtful scholar and a wonderful teacher – but an even better person.*”

Throughout my career he, and his lovely wife Judy, always looked out for me and showed a genuine interest in my work, life and family."

Mitch was a talented magician, a passion he shared with colleague Tim Baldwin. He was a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians and the treasurer of the Bloomington Magic Club for many years. But, he did more than entertain his children and grandchildren with his magic; he also delighted audiences in Bloomington's retirement communities. An avid bicyclist, Mitch biked throughout Monroe county and the surrounding areas. He was also a valued member and a former president of the Beth Shalom Jewish Center. Indeed, his human resource skills were put into practice early on in the evolution of Beth Shalom by successfully mediating tense discussions that eventually led to a building for the Bloomington Jewish community.

Mitch was married to Judy, and at the time of his passing, they were just a few days shy of their 60th wedding anniversary. They were the proud parents of two children. Although preceded in death by his parents, a sister and granddaughter, Mitch is survived by his children, four grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

Current and former colleagues in the Kelley School and the Student Advocates Office, former students, and members of the Bloomington community send our heartfelt condolences to Mitch's family. And, we request that this memorial tribute to Mitchell S. Novit be presented to the members of the Bloomington Faculty Council, and that it be preserved in its minutes and archive, and that after its presentation a copy be sent to his wife, Judy.

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