

## **THE EXEMPLARY VOLUNTEER**

### **John J. Kollar (FCAS 1975)**

**1947-2017**

Former CAS President John J. Kollar, a quintessential CAS volunteer whose involvement encompassed education, strategic planning, actuarial methods development, diversity, governance, and university outreach, died on March 29, 2017.

A resident of Garden City, New York, and Ludlow, Vermont, John was born in Queens, New York. He earned a bachelor's degree in math from Fordham University in 1968 and served stateside in the military during the Vietnam War. He married Helen Paul in 1970 and together they raised three children: John, Carolynne and Steven.

His path to the highest level in CAS leadership was paved with many volunteer activities, starting right after becoming a Fellow as a member of the Education and Examination Committee. Throughout the '80s and early '90s, he volunteered with Syllabus, Principles of Ratemaking, Risk Classification and the Review of Papers Committees as well as Partitioned Examination and Appointed Actuary Task Forces. He then embarked on more advanced leadership roles, with election to the CAS Board in 1999, appointments to vice president-admissions in 1993 and vice president-ERM in 2005, and his election to president in 2008. John's contributions to CAS literature include "Ratemaking for the Personal Automobile Physical Damage Coverages" in 1980 and "Catastrophe Risk Securitization: Insurer and Investor Perspectives," co-written with Glenn G. Meyers in 1999.

In the aftermath of the 2008 world economic meltdown, what John described as "a failed ERM process," he would champion enterprise risk management during his presidency, signing the Global Enterprise Risk Management Designation Treaty in 2009, which came

together after several years of his efforts on the CAS's commitment to advancing the actuarial profession.

John's presidency was during a time when the CAS was focused on setting goals for its centennial in 2014, and his presidency marked steady progress on attaining them. John's term also saw the development of basic education materials for the CAS Syllabus in ratemaking and reserving. With nation-specific material removed, these texts became more applicable globally and enhanced the value of the CAS designations. He also put in many hours traveling around the world meeting his counterparts in actuarial organizations in Australia, Europe and North America.

He was a devoted family man, who often brought his wife and children to CAS events.

John's son, John E. Kollar, FCAS, fondly recalled a special meeting in 2009. "As far as we can tell, it was the first time the sitting CAS President gave the Fellowship to their child," said the younger Kollar. Another memory of CAS meetings was of childhood mischief: "I think my brother Steven is why kids aren't invited to the cocktail hour anymore. It was in Florida . . . [Steven] had gotten a rubber snake at a theme park. At the cocktail party he hid under one of the tables (tablecloth) and would put the snake around women's ankles when they stopped to get something off that table."

During John's career at the Insurance Services Office (ISO), he held many positions of increasing responsibility and authority, beginning as an actuarial assistant in 1968 and retiring in 2013 as vice president-personal lines/increased limits/rating plans for ISO Insurance Programs and Analytic Services.

His volunteer efforts with other actuarial organizations included the American Academy of Actuaries, Joint Risk Management Section and the Joint CAS/SOA Committee for the

Enterprise Risk Management Symposium. John also earned a Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter designation.

Community and church were also very important to him. He enjoyed dancing with his wife — doing so whenever he could — and he loved Alpine skiing.

When asked why he wanted to be CAS president, John credited his opportunity to his predecessors, writing that it was his “responsibility to do the same for my successors.” In his presidential address, he spoke about volunteerism, diplomacy, teamwork, governance and power, and reminded those in attendance of a key tenet of actuarial work: “It’s all about people.” But it is perhaps his concluding topic on humility that demonstrates John’s own brand of humor and his unassuming nature. He said:

A dose of reality, or more appropriately, humility, is also needed to recognize that we may have perfected our skills through studying for actuarial exams but we did nothing to create ourselves or our abilities. Depending on our beliefs, we need to acknowledge that these gifts were God-given, attributable to our parents, our diets, something in the water, Mozart, intergalactic visitors, randomness or some combination of the above.

In addition to his wife and children, John is survived by six grandchildren and his brothers Joseph and Robert.