Chopyak-Scheider Funeral Home, Inc.

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Paul D. Hayes

April 17, 1968 – April 3, 2021



Paul David Hayes, beloved son of James Michael and Mary Ann (Price) Hayes, passed away unexpectedly at his home on Saturday, April 3, 2021. Paul was born on April 17, 1968 in Dallas, Texas. He is survived by his parents, his sister, Elizabeth R. Hayes Derventzis and her husband, Dimitris Derventzis, his brother, Kevin M. Hayes and his wife, Tammy, his nephews, Joseph Hayes, Matthew Hayes, and Alexander Derventzis Hayes, his aunt, Patricia Schoeller and many cousins.

Paul had a smile, a laugh and a resounding "Hi!" for all he met. He made you feel good, even when you were down. Paul had more friends than anyone we ever met. He had much pain in his life, but never complained.

Paul and his family moved to Vestal shortly after his birth. As he grew, it became apparent that Paul had developmental delays. However, before he was three, he began to attend a preschool program operated by Broome-Tioga ARC in the old St. Patrick's School on Oak Street in Binghamton. There he met and became lifetime friends with Bill Nuss, Fred Galati and David Kumiega. Subsequently, in 1973, Paul and his friends attended school in the new building constructed by Broome-Tioga ARC on Cutler Pond Road. There was then no public school for Paul and his friends to attend. In 1975 Broome-Tioga BOCES opened and Paul went there until his graduation in 1989. He had wonderful teachers at BOCES, learned sign language, became a Boy Scout in a troop started by one of his teachers, Claire Luke, and made many more friends.

After his graduation, Paul enrolled in a work program operated by Broome-Tioga ARC, now called ACHIEVE and continued to participate there for the rest of his life. The staff at ACHIEVE were wonderful and caring for all these years and Paul loved every one of them.

Despite his disabilities, Paul had an active and exciting life. He was a participant in the Special Olympics for many years, specifically the 50-yard dash and softball throw. He attended Circle of Friends at the Methodist Church in Vestal, where he made more friends. He attended the summer camp at Chenango Forks High School, where his brother and sister were volunteer counselors. He loved fishing and enjoyed trips to Oteyokwa Lake in Pennsylvania, where our dear friends, Gene and Judy Peckham, have a cottage.

Paul loved to travel, riding in airplanes and staying in hotels. He visited New Orleans, his mother's hometown, for Mardi Gras several times and loved to catch beads and doubloons at the parades. He traveled to California several times to visit his cousins where he was able to go to Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, Sea World and the San Diego Zoo. He loved to visit his grandparents, Bill and Alice Price at their waterfront home in Rockport, Texas, where he could fish, go on boat rides and visit Mexico on day trips. Paul made several visits to Walt Disney World and especially loved the Magic Kingdom rides and Mickey Mouse. He visited Arizona and the Grand Canyon.

Paul attended special religious education classes at St. James in Johnson City and made his First Holy Communion and Confirmation there with Monsignor Owens. His brother, Kevin, volunteered as teacher in the program.

Paul looked forward to attending his dad's bowling league on Wednesdays at the Binghamton Club, where he could watch the bowling, eat popcorn and drink Coke, his absolute favorite beverage. We would eat dinner after bowling and all the bowlers became his good friends. We also want to thank Frank Nicosia, who was Paul's barber almost his entire life. Frank gave Paul a chocolate bar and a comb after every haircut.

In 2003, Paul left his parent's home to live with some of his friends in the group home on Riverside Drive. He loved every one of his housemates and all of the staff who looked after him over the next seventeen years. His family wants to express the deep gratitude we feel for the care and affection they gave Paul. It was during this time that Paul received an iPad to help him communicate. Thanks to Karen Howard and John Adams, who together programmed the iPad so Paul could talk to everyone.