



## Leslie D. Biederman

October 15, 1942 - July 26, 2025

Leslie Dale Biederman was born on October 15, 1942, in Detroit to the late Benjamin Biederman and Elsie (Lutz) Biederman. His family moved to their home in Oak Park, Michigan, in 1953-this was the early years of the city's development. Leslie remembered playing in forested areas of Oak Park, catching frogs in the swamps and marshes. Leslie graduated from Oak Park High School in 1960. He loved being part of one of the first graduating classes of Oak Park High School. (Later in his life, when he was a father, he proudly served on the Oak Park School Board of Education from July 1991-June 1995. He held three positions during that time, Secretary, Treasurer, and President.)

Leslie grew up in Oak Park as the oldest son to Ben and Elsie. He was three years older than his beloved brother Marc and six years older than his precious little sister, Marilyn. He often shared wonderful stories of taking care of his siblings. (He took that responsibility seriously and continued that role with his sister for the rest of his life. He showed her he would be always there to love and support her.) He developed a great love and firm foundation of the importance of family and taking care of those that he loved. He had a deep appreciation and respect for his Jewish Heritage and the traditions that his family raised him in.

Leslie pursued a degree in education and became a proud graduate of Wayne

State University. He earned his undergraduate and Master's Degree in Education. He started teaching in Detroit Public Schools in 1963. In 1967 he transitioned to being a College Professor at Oakland Community College. Leslie loved his career. He counted it as one of his greatest blessings, that not only provided for his family, but gave him fulfillment watching students learn. He was a fierce advocate that all students could succeed. So many students were grateful to have him as a teacher and would take more than one class with him because of his teaching style and love for his students. Alisa, his daughter, had the honor of taking his class and Dad counted it as an honor to teach her. Leslie taught for 47 years at Oakland Community College. Thousands of people learned Sociology, Criminology, Marriage and the Family, and other specialty courses from him. As he became Tenured he rose in advocacy for Hiring Women and People of Color into a field that was white male dominant. Although he faced opposition, he helped yield the votes for incredible candidates who would not have had the opportunity to earn tenure if he had not stood up for equal rights.

Leslie met the love of his life, Donna Raye Nicholas, fighting for Civil Rights in the 1970's. Leslie and Donna welcomed their daughter, Alisa Lynne Biederman in Detroit, Michigan on February 25, 1981. They got married on March 12, 1981, in Birmingham, Michigan. They gave each other a picture of their two week premature daughter at their wedding. Within two years, they were absolutely overjoyed to be expecting a bouncing baby boy, Joseph Oscar Biederman. Joseph was born on March 29, 1983. Their family of four was now complete. They bought a home, within walking distance of Leslie's parents and of his childhood home. They loved their two children and invited all of their friends to be part of the family. Many today still term each other brother and sisters because of the love that Leslie and Donna fostered between them all.

Leslie was a devoted fan of Detroit sports teams, the University of Michigan,

Michigan State University, and the WNBA. He loved all sports and became fascinated with learning about new sports. He was an avid note taker and statistician. Leslie was a true lover of nature and the outdoors, he enjoyed Donna's gardening, traveling with his family, camping, and was a longtime member of the Metro Detroit Garden Club. He adored animals-especially dogs-and was happiest surrounded by flowers, trees, and a good slice of watermelon or a bag of Better Made potato chips. Bagels and lox on Sunday Mornings were a family tradition.

Beloved Husband of Donna Biederman. Loving Father of Alisa Biederman (Christopher Ford) and Joseph Biederman (Akilah Hankins). Proud Grandpa of Christian, Eshe and Amina. Dear Brother of Marilyn Stawis and the late Marc Biederman. Uncle of Marick Stawis, Adam Biederman, and Ryan Biederman. Les will be sorely missed by His Beloved Wife Donna, and many cherished family, friends, neighbors, and former students. His Legacy will live remarkably strong and it will grow with each passing day. Rest peacefully. We all love you and will see you again.

Leslie's favorite color was yellow, and he loved all things colorful. In honor of his bright and beautiful life, to always remember the ray of sunshine he was, guests are encouraged to wear yellow to his service celebration.

Visitation and funeral services will be held on Wednesday, July 30, 2025 at 9:00am, at Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Home, 705 W. 11 Mile Rd. (4 blocks east of Woodward), Royal Oak. Interment will follow at Roseland Park Cemetery (29001 Woodward Ave, Berkley). The service will be livestreamed. After the interment, Repast will be held at the Oak Park Community Center to further celebrate his life, share memories, and eat together (one of Leslie's absolute favorite times spending with Family).

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL 30. 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak  
705 W. Eleven Mile Road  
Royal Oak, MI 48067

## Funeral Service

JUL 30. 9:30 AM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak  
705 W. Eleven Mile Road  
Royal Oak, MI 48067

## Burial

JUL 30. 11:00 AM (ET)

Roseland Park Cemetery  
29001 Woodward Avenue  
Berkley, MI 48072

# Tribute Wall



“ *Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Directors created a Webcast in memory of Leslie D. Biederman*



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**Wm. Sullivan & Son Funeral Directors** - July 30, 2025 at 08:26 AM



“ *Leslie was part of our Class of 60 Oak Park High School reunion committee. He will be remembered fondly as a member who was always ready to help. Always quiet and very kind. Our condolences to Donna and the entire family*

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**Penny Brode** - August 12, 2025 at 11:44 PM

ES

“ *I went to Oak Park High School with Leslie up to through the first semester of the 9th grade! He was always a nice guy! I believe everybody liked him! I'm sorry that he passed away!!*  
*Elliott Simkins*

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**Elliott Simkins** - August 03, 2025 at 02:41 PM

PM

“ Les was an active member of the group Detroit People Against Racism, which was founded in 1965. That is where I met Les and admired his ease in sharing his ideas and his commitment with other people. I didn't need to see him teaching his college students to know that he was made for that role. His life was a gift to the world. I send my condolences to Donna and the children. I hope that your memories and the warmth of your family and friends will support you in this difficult time.

*Pat Murphy*

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**Patricia A Murphy** - August 02, 2025 at 05:08 PM

PC

“ Les and I shared a long activist history, along with his wife Donna. He was deeply committed to social justice, peace, education, and the common good. I distinctly remember protesting against the Viet Nam war with him and about 3000 others in 1971 in front of the justice department. Les and I, among others were severely beaten by the DC police as we sat on the street and had to be flown home with broken bones and stitches. An example of his fearless dedication to justice. His family and mine also camped together at the Pinery and raised our kids to care about all people and the natural world. His life was full of significant acts of kindness and integrity. As an educator he influenced many in their pursuits toward making the world a better place. May his family continue to honor his memory and a life well-lived.

*Peggy Case*

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**Peggy Case** - July 29, 2025 at 04:29 PM

JB

“ JJ & Laurie Berry purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Leslie D. Biederman.



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**JJ & Laurie Berry** - July 29, 2025 at 11:06 AM

JB

“ JJ & Laurie Berry planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Leslie D. Biederman.

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**JJ & Laurie Berry** - July 29, 2025 at 11:06 AM