

Francis Gerald DeLaurier, Ed.D., peacefully slipped the bonds of earth on October 6, 2026. The dynamic man we knew as Dr. Frank G. DeLaurier leaves behind a legacy as a loving father, a doting grandfather, a caring brother, a dedicated community supporter, and a loyal friend known for his heart of gold.

Frank brought his New England roots from his home state of Massachusetts to Florida. His warm, small-town approach to life was reflected in his journey through the many decades he spent in Miami. From working nights at Southeast Bank to earning his Doctorate in Education from the University of Miami, Frank knew the city's main roads and back roads as well as the waterways of Miami-Dade County. An expert seaman, Captain Frank found serenity on the ocean, while his ownership of Harley-Davidson motorcycles and Corvettes and Mustangs reflected his desire for other thrilling ways to travel.

At a time when few men taught elementary school, Frank did. He went on to become principal of Key Biscayne Elementary School before being selected to open Devon Aire Elementary School (now Devon Aire K–8 Center) in 1979. He eventually transitioned to the nonprofit world, becoming Executive Director of the American Welding Society, where he served until 2002.

Timing is everything. His first brief retirement led him to a position as Executive Director of The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment, where he served for the next 13 years. Frank often preferred to work behind the scenes, allowing his colleagues to take the spotlight. He supported his causes with determination and financial generosity.

Under his leadership, The Melissa Institute conducted numerous conferences on violence prevention research for professionals and schoolchildren, addressing the many challenges associated with bullying prevention. He hosted members of the Board of Directors and Scientific Board at meetings and events. His many years of service to the Miami-Dade County School District brought new contacts and opportunities to share the science of violence prevention with those closest to students.

In a full-circle moment, Frank reconnected with former students who became donors to a fundraising event. He also recruited qualified board members and inspired longtime friends to become loyal volunteers for The Melissa Institute.

Following a second, brief retirement in 2016, Frank found that he couldn't sit still or stay far from the water. He became a volunteer and later an employee of Shake-A-Leg Miami, a nonprofit adaptive watersports center in Coconut Grove that serves individuals with physical or developmental challenges.

Frank leaves behind a legacy spanning 83 years, marked by love, dedication, redemption, and resilience. He is survived by his five adult children—two sons and three daughters—and eight beloved grandchildren—one granddaughter and seven grandsons. He served this world and his family as a loving, perfectly imperfect man.

May his memory be a blessing to us all.