

Jacquelyn Rae Zelinka

Jackie was born in Aurora, Illinois on August 28th 1948. The second of four children, she grew up in Aurora, graduated from East Aurora High School, then graduated from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. She then volunteered with VISTA (Volunteer in Service to America) in Kansas City for two years, and subsequently studied for her Master's Degree at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. After receiving her degree, Jackie became the city planner for Miamisburg, Ohio for several years, then began studying for her PhD at Rutgers University.

Hired in 1984, and during her twenty-eight years at Rutgers, Jackie became the Assistant Director of the Center for Government Services. She partnered with the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association, New Jersey Association of Planning and Zoning Administrators, and the Affordable Housing Professionals of New Jersey. She also worked with the Department of Community Affairs on COAH and Mandatory Board Member Training, functioning as editor for the agency's Legislative District Data book.

At Rutgers, Jackie was the in-house expert for the student registration system, and successfully identified new programs related to affordable housing, working closely with outside professional advocacy and professional organizations, as well as working on course development.

In 2010, Jackie was honored at the NJPO Achievement in Planning Awards Banquet for her contributions to planning education and NJAPZA. As a representative and liaison to the Center for Government Services at the Rutgers Division of Continuing Studies, Jackie co-chaired the Education Committee of the NJAPZA. This resource provides valuable education to the membership of land use administrators, board secretaries and zoning officers. In addition to courses and seminars, Jackie was instrumental in planning the annual June session, which presents timely, useful and innovative topics. This annual session draws land use professionals from across the State and has become a very successful joint venture with Rutgers, due in large part to Jackie's diligence with curricula development. Additionally, she advised and assisted the membership with the certification process and continuing education credits...this in addition to her diversified responsibilities with numerous organizations related to land use and zoning, while maintaining close relationships with these partnering agencies.

Jackie retired from Rutgers in June 2012 and began pursuing a degree in veterinary science at Camden County College. In March of 2013, Jackie had to withdraw from her studies, but continued to work with Rutgers on their Zoning Administration and Enforcement in New Jersey Manual while undergoing surgery and subsequent treatment for ovarian cancer at Overlook Hospital in Morristown. She also worked tirelessly on a bill requiring certification for Zoning Officers, Land Use Administrators, and Board Secretaries.

Always an animal lover, particularly happy moments for Jackie were when Humphrey, a Golden Retriever service dog, would come in to visit her at the Hospital. In October of 2013, she felt compelled to write to the Inpatient Oncology Manager at Overlook, highly commending the staff. She had gotten to know and admire many of the Overlook staff who were so kind and attentive to her.

Jackie was a wonderful and loving friend, beloved sister and great aunt to seven nieces and nephews, and a champion/rescuer and caretaker of a number of fortunate cats and dogs.

A 6-year survivor of ovarian cancer, Jackie ultimately lost her battle in 2019. A remembrance service was held on October 14th 2019 at the Rutgers University Inn & Conference Center in New Brunswick and was attended by many land use professional colleagues, friends, and loving family members. We all miss her.

In memory of her dedication towards planning and zoning throughout her career and to honor her work towards education and professional development, the NJAPZA has created the Jackie Zelinka Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded annually to a new student enrolled in either the Introduction to Planning and Zoning Administration or Introduction to Zoning Administration and Enforcement courses, both offered by Rutgers. Included with the award, is a one-year membership to NJAPZA. More information on the qualifications are available on the NJAPZA's website.

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If you would like to donate to the Jackie Zelinka Memorial Scholarship, please make check payable to "NJAPZA - Jackie Zelinka Scholarship" - then mail to:

**Attn: Christina Schwartz, Executive Director**  
**New Jersey Association of Planning & Zoning Administrators (NJAPZA)**  
**PO Box 217**  
**Long Branch, NJ 07740**

