



John O'Brien

March 6, 1969 - March 31, 2017

John O'Brien, age 48, died suddenly March 31, 2017, at Cedars-Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles.

John was born in Davenport, Iowa, March 6, 1969, to David and Marilyn (McGee) O'Brien. He grew up in Indianola, Iowa and was involved in track and cross-country and played in a rock band. He graduated from Indianola High School in 1987 as valedictorian of his class.

John attended Iowa State University and received his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering in 1991.

In the Fall of 1991, John began his studies at California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, California and earned a Masters and Ph.D in Applied Physics.

In 1997, John began his academic career in the College of Engineering at the University of Southern California. He was a Professor and his research focused on nanophotonic and photonic crystal devices. Over the past ten years, John served as Senior Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs and then Executive Vice Dean in the College of Engineering.

John is survived by his mother, Marilyn O'Brien, and his sister, Marcy O'Brien. He is preceded in death by his father, David O'Brien; his maternal grandparents, William and Kay McGee, and his paternal grandparents, Philip

and Margaret O'Brien.

John was loved by many and will be deeply missed.

A funeral Mass will be held at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, April 8, 2017 at Christ the King Church; visitation will begin at 9:00 a.m. in the CTK Parish Hall.

Memorial contributions may be made to an Order close to John's heart, Western Dominican Province (Dominican Friars) at www.opwest.org/donate or 5877 Birch Ct., Oakland, CA 94618.

On-Line condolences may be made: DyiamondMemorial.com

Floral deliveries may be made directly to Christ the King Parish.

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 8. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Christ the King Parish
5711 SW 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50315

Mass of Christian Burial

APR 8. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Christ the King Parish
5711 SW 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50315

Burial

APR 8. 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (CT)

Mt. Calvary
Melrose, IA

Tribute Wall

BG

“ I was startled to learn of John's passing, from a colleague of his late father and me with the Iowa Department of Workforce Development. My son, Tim, was in John's class at IHS and spoke about him to me today. We both were pleased to have known John. My condolences to Marilyn.

Bruce Graham

Bruce Graham - May 08, 2017 at 12:51 PM

PH

“ Dearest Marilyn,

Pete & I are heartbroken to hear about John. I remember all the fun times we had in Sioux City with John and Marcy and our two oldest boys. Will always remember that bright and energetic little boy. You should be so proud of such a wonderful man and son.

You and Marcy are in our prayers and pray the Lord will comfort you.

Much love, Pete & Rainy

Peter Heles - April 08, 2017 at 02:36 PM

DR

*Marilyn,
We were shocked to learn of John's death. He was a very successful young man and highly regarded by many. I remember him as a great guy, an excellent student, and successful athlete. We will keep you in our prayers.*

Dick & Sharon Richman

Dick Richman - April 17, 2017 at 08:16 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of John O'Brien.



April 07, 2017 at 05:38 PM



“ *Steve, Grace, and Millie Peck* purchased the *Full Of Love Bouquet* for the family of John O'Brien.



Steve, Grace, and Millie Peck - April 07, 2017 at 05:24 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet* was purchased for the family of John O'Brien.



April 07, 2017 at 05:01 PM



“ *John was a year ahead of my in high school, but I knew him from track. Although I didn't know him well, he made a lasting impression on me. Despite his amazing academic and athletic abilities, he was one of the most modest, grounded, and kind people I can remember from school. He never treated anybody as less than. I'm very sad to hear of his passing, and pass along my prayers to his family.*

Steve Peck - April 07, 2017 at 04:14 PM

JA

*Marilyn and family...my very deepest sympathy and prayers to you 🙏
Jane (Ryan) Mason*

janemason@ruhlhomes.com - April 08, 2017 at 07:05 AM

JA

“ *Jennifer Alvarado lit a candle in memory of
John O'Brien*



Jennifer Alvarado - April 07, 2017 at 12:54 PM

JA

“ *Marilyn and Marcy, I had the honor of working with John over the past 11 years. In that time I was able to get to know him on a more personal level and we bonded over classic rock music and sports. It was always smiles with John. We would tease him about his eating habits and one time for his birthday we put a basket together of junk food complete with candy, a McDonald's gift card and bottles of Coke. He loved it. He was kind and thoughtful, we chatted about our families. I know he enjoyed when you were able to come visit. Probably one of the funniest stories is when he was already at the office and realized he had on one black shoe and one brown one. We laughed for days. I know he also enjoyed sports and we would always chat about the latest sports highlights and headlines. I was able to attend Dodgers Opening Day this year and thought of John and how much he loved baseball. I could go on and on. So many fond memories that I will treasure, he will be missed immensely. With heartfelt condolences, Jennifer Alvarado*

Jennifer Alvarado - April 07, 2017 at 12:53 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of John O'Brien.



April 07, 2017 at 10:02 AM



“ *Love, Paul and Stacey Perrilles* purchased the *Garden of Serenity Bouquet* for the family of John O'Brien.



Love, Paul and Stacey Perrilles - April 06, 2017 at 10:29 PM