



Joseph Richard Lacher

LPN, AAS, RN, BSN, MSN, NE-BC, CLEM

1942-2017

Joe Lacher was a great man. He was an exceptional nurse. He was a pioneer here in the Rio Grande Valley having worked tirelessly in the private sector for many years in various roles as human resources manager, chief nurse executive, supervisor, and staff nurse before going into academia.

The University of Texas/Texas Southmost College (UTB/TSC) was his pride and joy. Those were hardworking years. Those were happy years. Those were successful years. Those were loving years.

Joe was an Associate Professor and the Program Director of the Associate Degree in Nursing Program for several years. He earned the respect of his colleagues locally and statewide for the many successful years he enjoyed with the graduates successfully passing the board examinations for licensure with scores of 90 plus percent passing rate. The scores often equaled, or were greater than, Bachelor of Science Degree nursing programs in the state of Texas.

Students were Joe's priority. He would spend hours mentoring them, encouraging them, reassuring them ... He always had time for each one of his students.

Joe was a traditionalist. He vigorously planned the pinning ceremony for the students each year. Recalling some of these ceremonies, as students stepped up to the stage, the first one to greet them was Joe. Many of the students were in tears as they greeted him. He was truly loved by all.

As he welcomed each of the students and their loved ones, he would deliver an eloquent speech about the value of the nursing profession. He would end his speech by saying to the students, "You will never be poor again." Joe knew how each struggled to pursue higher education, while working and caring for their families. Joe cared.

Joe was a devout Catholic and genuinely spiritual. His was compassionate and giving. One of his special projects was his commitment to assuring fiscal support to the students through scholarships. He was a founder of the Lower Rio Grande Scholarship Fund. If a student in need came to him, he labored until he found some help for that student.

Joe's footprints envelope the Rio Grande Valley and beyond through the many professional nurses that safeguard the health of our communities.