Will Solimene Awards for Excellence in Medical Communication

The New England Chapter established these writing awards in 1990 and named them to honor the memory of a member who placed great value on AMWA as a professional organization and who believed that biomedical and health communicators must strive continually to improve their writing, whether in print or in audiovisual media, for lay audiences or for professionals.

Will Solimene joined AMWA in 1978 and was soon appointed to the New England Chapter's Executive Council. Only two years later he was elected chapter president and served as our delegate to the AMWA Board of Directors. One of the chapter's most devoted members, he gave generously of his time and talent to virtually every president who succeeded him and to any member who sought his counsel, as many did. Over the years, with unflagging enthusiasm and unfailing good humor, he planned some of the chapter's most interesting programs.

With a degree in public relations and, later, a master's in science journalism, he served as public relations director for various hospitals in the Boston area before becoming a freelance communications consultant in 1986. For several years he wrote a regular health column for suburban newspapers.

He was an accredited member of the Public Relations Society of America, a president of the Publicity Club of Boston, and an officer or board member of many community and health-related associations.

Will died of brain cancer in 1989 at the age of 59.

We remember him with affection and respect, and we honor him as a role model.

Neil Duane Award for Distinction in Medical Communication

The Award for Distinction was renamed in 2004 to honor the memory of Neil Duane, who died that year of complications of polycystic kidney disease. He was 63.

Neil joined AMWA in 1976, when the New England Chapter was chartered, and became one of a handful of members who guided the chapter through its formative years. He was our first program director, serving for two years, and was president in 1978-79.

In 1990, he volunteered to develop and direct a writing competition, which would honor the late Will Solimene. Neil ran this program for years and brought wit, charm, and flair to the awards presentation ceremonies in his role as Master of Ceremonies.

An unusually versatile writer, Neil held a bachelor's in marketing communication and a master's in science communication.


In a longtime association with Northeastern University, he was an academic coordinator for professional development programs, and he taught or guided many courses.

Neil always opened the awards presentation ceremonies by noting their purpose: “to honor our colleagues for their pursuit of excellence in medical communication and to honor the memory of our friend, Will Solimene.” Now, we honor another lost friend, whose own lifelong pursuit of excellence was unmatched.
Welcome
Jill Shuman, Master of Ceremonies

Honors Award
Presenter: Helen Osborne
Kevin Pho
“Connect and Be Heard: A Physician’s Social Media Journey”

Will Solimene Awards for Excellence
Presenters: Marisa Greenfield & Laurie LaRusso
Shari S. Bassuk & JoAnn E. Manson:

John Curtis: “Tissue from the Lab Mends a Broken Heart,” Yale Medicine, April 2012
GlobalPost Special Reports Team: Step by Step: The Path to Ending Child Mortality, GlobalPost, 2013
Nancy Knoblock Hunton: “Understanding a Pitcher’s Pain: Studying the Shoulder in Motion,” Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Orthopaedic Connections, Winter 2014
Katherine L. Kraines: “One Wish...Two Horses and a Hospital,” Gaylord Specialty Healthcare, Contributions, Winter 2013
Lynne Lederman & Kevin P. Flynn: The Business of Oncology, Informa Training Partners, 2014
Robert Levy: “Evolution and Cancer,” Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Paths of Progress, Fall/Winter 2012
Alicia Muck: iKnow™ How to Read Oncology Reprints, Custom Learning Designs 2012

Neil Duane Award for Distinction
Presenter: Jill Shuman