

Sad News

Jack D. Mezirow, Professor Emeritus at Teachers College, Columbia University, passed in New York, New York on September 24, 2014. His wife, Edee Mezirow, predeceased him on July 20. They are survived by Andrew Mezirow—Professional Captain, Maritime Studies Instructor, and Fisheries Policy Advisor residing in Seward, Alaska. No further details are available at this time.

Professor Mezirow was born in 1923. He earned a B.A. and M.A. in Social Sciences and Education from the University of Minnesota, and an Ed.D. in Adult Education from the University of California at Los Angeles. He worked in many countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America as a consultant in adult literacy and community development for UNDP, UNESCO, USAID, the Asia Foundation and World Education. He was in charge of extension programs at the University of California before joining Teachers College as a professor of adult and continuing education.

At Teachers College, Columbia University, Professor Mezirow established and directed a pioneering alternative format doctoral program, AEGIS, which continues today. Committed to understanding adult learning from the learner's experience, he is best known for having created a stream of scholarship on what he called "transformative learning"—involving the critical examination of assumptions that influence an adult's meaning-making and interpretation of experience, thus influencing decisions and action. His interest in transformative learning was influenced by Edee's own re-entry into college and her experiences as she gained confidence in her academic abilities, took on new roles, and re-examined her assumptions about her capabilities and identity.

Along with two graduate students—Coleen Wiessner (deceased) and Nancy Pfahl, Mezirow initiated and hosted the first Transformative Learning Conference at Teachers College in 1998. The conference has since been hosted at other colleges and universities in the United States, Canada, Bermuda and Europe. The 11th International Transformative Learning Conference will be held October 23-26, 2014 at Teachers College—continuing as a community of interest and vehicle for growing theory, research and practice in this area of adult learning and development. A Jack Mezirow Living Theory of Transformative Learning Award is being established for an outstanding contribution advancing the field's research, theory and practice; it will be awarded for the first time at the 2014 Conference.

Jack Mezirow published many articles, books and research reports. His most recent books, published by Jossey-Bass are *Transformative learning in practice* (with Edward W. Taylor) in 2009 and *Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress* (with Associates) in 2000, both published by Jossey-Bass. Several of his books have been translated into other languages. *Fostering critical reflection in adulthood*, published by Jossey-Bass (with Associates) in 1990 received the Frandson Award for Outstanding Publication in Continuing Education. *Last gamble on education*, written with Gary Darkenwald and Alan Knox, and published

by the Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., received the Oakes Award for Outstanding Research in Adult Education.

Jack Mezirow will be remembered for many things, most especially, his legacy of transformative learning scholarship, and his passionate commitment to social justice and social action. He and colleagues founded the International League for Social Commitment in Adult Education to center the field's attention on these important issues. His scholarship, mentoring of students and others, driving sense of social justice and humanity, and overall joie de vivre will be sorely missed.