

Richard Benedick Obituary



Richard Elliot Benedick passed away on March 16, 2024, at the age of 88 after battling advanced dementia. Ambassador Benedick retired from the U.S. Department of State after serving 35 years primarily as a Foreign Service Officer with diplomatic postings in Iran, Pakistan, France, Germany and Greece. He played a pivotal role in global environmental affairs as chief U.S. negotiator and a principal architect of the historic 1987 Montreal Protocol on protection of the ozone layer, and he also served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Environment, Health and Natural Resources and Coordinator of Population Affairs. He joined the International Cooperation Administration (ICA), Washington, DC, in 1958 and served as the Greece/Turkey/Iran Desk Officer in Tehran, Iran 1959-1961, Program Economist,

USAID/Karachi, Pakistan 1962-1964, and Program Economist, USAID, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris 1965-1967 (detailed from USAID).

He was Special Advisor to the Secretaries General of the 1992 UN Earth Summit (UNCED) and the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, served on Battelle's International Advisory Board before becoming Deputy Director in the Environmental and Health Sciences Division and then Senior Advisor to the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory-University of Maryland Joint Global Climate Change Research Institute, and was named President of the Committee for the National Institute for the Environment.

Over his illustrious career, Ambassador Benedick also was a Senior Fellow at World Wildlife Fund, Honorary Fellow of the Population Reference Bureau, Visiting Fellow at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, and Stimson Fellow in International Relations at Yale University. He received the highest presidential career public service honors: the Distinguished (1988) and the Meritorious (1983, 1990) Service Awards. He also received the State Department's John Jacob Rogers medal (1993) and was elected to the World Academy of Art and Science (1992) and American Academy of Diplomacy (2002) and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and the Toennissteiner Kreis (Germany).

Ambassador Benedick is the author of several publications, most notably his book *Ozone Diplomacy: New Directions in Safeguarding the Planet* (Harvard University Press) which was selected for an anthology of twentieth-century environmental classics and has frequently been cited as the definitive work on the Montreal Protocol.

Dr. Benedick holds an A.B. summa cum laude from Columbia University, an M.A. in economics from Yale University, a doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration and was Evans Fellow at Oxford University in metaphysical poetry.

Born and raised in New York City, Richard would say "you can take the boy out of the Bronx but you can't take the Bronx out of the boy". He was an intrepid explorer, had an insatiable quest for knowledge, and loved nature and animals. He enjoyed yoga and lap swimming, music from The Beatles and Barry White to Offenbach and J.S. Bach, poetry by Rumi and Billy Collins, and was known to eat chocolate ice cream daily.

Richard Elliot Benedick is survived by his son Andreas Peter Anselm Benedick, his daughter Julianna Valeska Benedick, and his granddaughter Vanessa Oria Benedick Guerrero and two great-grandchildren Xander and Serina. He was predeceased by his long-time lady friend, Irene Federwisch. His surviving family will honor Richard privately.

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