



## Richard Aaronson

May 10, 1945 - February 24, 2026

Richard David Aaronson, 80, of Chicago and a former longtime resident of Toronto, Ontario, died peacefully surrounded by his family on February 24th at home after a long illness. Hallmarks of Rick's life were his deep devotion to family, athletic successes, service to others, thoughtfulness, integrity, kindness, and a lifelong love of music.

He was born on May 10th , 1945, the eldest of three sons to Lester and Shirley (nee Ledewitz) Aaronson in New Haven, CT, and was married for 53 years to his beloved spouse Linda Loving whom he met while attending law school.

Rick grew up surrounded by family in a house on Prospect Street in New Haven with many aunts, uncles and cousins. High school was defined by family, and his love of music, which continued through college at Wesleyan where he graduated with a BA degree in English, and a legacy for his beautiful tenor voice in the choir.

Rick earned a Juris Doctor degree from New York University School of Law. Prior to law school, he worked at a talent agency that led to later career success with musicians. His love of music ranged from attending the historic Woodstock Music Festival in 1969 to performing in the DePaul Community Chorus in Lincoln Park before the pandemic.

After passing the New York bar, Rick worked at the NY Department of Investigation for nine years. In 1977, he emigrated to Canada planning on a two-year assignment and stayed an additional 30 years. He spent six years at CBS Records as the head of business affairs negotiating Canadian recording contracts with many artists. Rick loved the buzz of the rock and roll industry. In 1983, he and two colleagues left CBS to form Rockbill Ltd., a marketing company that achieved significant success developing campaigns with household brands featuring musicians. The most iconic project was the Solid Gold Collection with the best artists of the 60s, 70s and 80s on cassette tapes sold as a \$1 promotion at gas stations across Canada and the United States.

Rick had a second career as a mediator that began at the Province of Ontario's mediation programs and continued after he and Linda moved to Chicago in 2010 to be closer to their children and grandchildren. Known for his calm presence and principled approach, he became a trusted lead negotiator during the subprime mortgage crisis, advocating for clients in complex, high-stakes cases involving major financial institutions.

Rick was always an involved father with their three children: Matthew, Josh and Emily and later as Pappa to nine grandchildren. He was devoted to any activity they engaged in, and showed up, be it on the shores of Matt's regattas, the stands of Josh's hockey games, or at any of Emily's many endeavors, with curiosity, interest and support.

The family has always enjoyed hiking and many wonderful trips together, including skiing in many places in the U.S. and Canada and adventures as far flung as the Galapagos Islands, India and China. He and Linda continued to travel the world, and in recent years added in meaningful time spent visiting their children and grandchildren.

Among his proudest achievements were triathlons, which were a father-son affair. He loved having his son Matt as his coach, and Rick ultimately competed in the USA Triathlon National Championships in 2014 and qualified for the World Championships in his age group in 2015. He remained an avid cyclist until just a year ago.

After retirement, Rick devoted himself deeply to service, becoming a committed volunteer and leader at the Center for Conflict Resolution (CCR), Chicago's community mediation center. Over more than 15 years, he mediated more than 450 cases, bringing steadiness, wisdom, and compassion to every role he held. He served for nine years on CCR's Board of Directors, helping guide the organization through a period of significant growth, and played a key role in establishing CCR's first Volunteer Council to strengthen volunteer leadership and engagement. Throughout his service, Rick was a generous mentor and trusted coach to staff and fellow mediators alike.

Rick also volunteered for 15 years at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, helping patients understand and complete advance health care directives. His legal insight and leadership were equally evident during his decade of service on the homeowners' association board of his Lincoln Park condominium, where he served as Board President from 2020 to 2025 and spearheaded major renovations to the building's façade and lobby.

Rick was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his spouse, Linda Loving; his children: Matthew (Kate Sanderson) of Salt Lake City; Josh (Lesley Brousseau) of Atlanta; and Dr. Emily (Selom Azuma) of Cambridge; and by his nine grandchildren: Alex, Caroline, Sarah, Will, Evelyn, Shirley, Eli, Fritz, and Ike.

He also leaves his two brothers, Stuart and Robert (nee Margaret Haddad) Aaronson and two brothers in law, Raymond and Bill Loving, and seven nieces and nephews: James, Rachel, Jonah, Susanna, William, Allison and Sophia.

There will be a private celebration of life in Chicago. There will not be a burial, as he is donating his body to medical education, in keeping with a lifelong love of science and medicine.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorials be made in Rick's memory to the Center for Conflict Resolution online at <https://www.ccrchicago.org/one-time-donation-form>, or by check to 11 E Adams, Suite 500, Chicago IL 60603, Attn: Whitney Trumble, or the charity of your choice.

Arrangements by Inclusive Funeral Care, 773-318-1305 or [www.InclusiveFuneralCare.com](http://www.InclusiveFuneralCare.com).

# Tribute Wall

TB

“ *Mr smiley face. Always good-hearted and fun to be with. I miss him already.*

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**Tony Baker** - March 08 at 12:26 PM

RZ

“ *I knew Rick through CCR. We served together on the design team that created the Volunteer Council and encountered each other often as trainee coaches and in other activities. He was a lovely man, a great colleague and I so enjoyed his sense of humor. He gave much to our shared volunteer passion and he will be missed.*

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**Rebecca Zuber** - February 28 at 11:08 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Richard Aaronson.*



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February 27 at 04:43 PM