



A message from Chancellor Howard Gillman

I am saddened to inform you of the passing of Suzanne Peltason, a founding member of our UCI community. A beloved longtime resident of University Hills, she died peacefully in her sleep at the age of 95, with her family around her.

Suzanne Toll Peltason was born in Santa Barbara, California, and raised in the Midwest. In 1944, while a student at the University of Missouri, she met Jack W. Peltason, who was on his way to Princeton University as a graduate student in political science. They married in 1946, commencing a loving and loyal partnership that lasted until Jack's death in 2015. After Princeton, they went to Smith College, and after that to the University of Illinois. In 1964 Jack and Suzie, as she was known to everyone, came to UCI when Jack served as the first dean of the planned College of Arts, Letters, and Science, then, scant months later, as vice chancellor for academic affairs. In 1967, they returned to the University of Illinois when Jack became the first chancellor of the Urbana-Champaign campus, and then went to Washington, D.C. where Jack served as president of the American Council on Education. In 1984 they returned for good to California when Jack was appointed as UCI's second chancellor, and, in 1992, as president of the University of California. In 1995 they retired to University Hills.

In the words of their son, Tim, Suzie was Jack's "full partner in each of those jobs, defining academic first ladyhood in her own special manner, a manner marked by warm hospitality, by a total lack of pretension, and by kindness and consideration for all. She was beloved in each of those communities and always a special favorite not just of fellow administrators and spouses, but of support staff, assistants, tradespeople and cleaning crews, anyone who had a chance to be the object of her particular appreciation and attention."

Modest and unassuming, she never took credit for herself. Those who knew her recognized how intelligent and thoughtful she was. In 1993, she received the university's highest honor, the UCI Medal, alongside Jack, and in 2000 they both received the Extraordinarius Award from the UCI Alumni Association. Typically, she was reluctant to speak at the event and had to be pressured into it; also typically, she delivered warm and humorous remarks that were greatly enjoyed.

Suzanne Toll Peltason is survived by three children, Nancy Elliott, of Bakersfield, California, and Evanston, Illinois; Tim Peltason, of Wellesley, Massachusetts; and Jill Redding, of Lorton, Virginia; seven grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.

Chancellor Howard Gillman

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