



NACA Mourns Passing of Frank Harris, An Early Association Leader & Founding Father

The National Association for Campus Activities is saddened by the loss of an early Association leader, Frank H. Harris, who passed away on July 26, 2021. Harris served as a member of the original Block Booking Conference's board of directors and, when the organization changed its name to the National Entertainment Conference, he became its first chair of the board, a post he held from 1968 until 1970. He advised student leaders for decades at the University of Kentucky serving as the director of the University of Kentucky Student Center and associate dean of students until his retirement in 1997.

As John Herbst, former board member and longtime friend, reflected on Harris' early involvement in the Association, "I was fortunate to visit with many of the original founders of the Association and they recalled, that as the Block Booking Conference was evolving into the National Entertainment Conference and incorporating; everyone realized they needed a respected and articulate person of highest integrity to represent the group to university presidents *and* some of the most influential and powerful agents/managers in the entertainment industry. All eyes in the room turned to Frank Harris, and he graciously said, 'Yes, I will'. With much personal attention from Frank at his personal expense, NACA evolved into that dream envisioned in the 1960's. I was honored to work for him, learn from him and call him my dearest friend."

"Calling Frank for advice was a routine part of leadership and making decisions," recalled Tom Matthews, who chaired the board from 1975 to 1977. "He was a great mentor and friend who listened and always offered helpful advice."

In 1975, Harris was awarded the Association's highest honor, the Founders Award, for his significant contributions to the Association. Throughout his 31-year professional career, he advised student government associations and upon his retirement, he was given the Lifetime Membership Award for his unselfish and tireless contributions to NACA. In 1999, the Association created the Frank Harris Outstanding Student Government Advisor Award in his honor to recognize individuals who have the commitment to challenge and advise student government.

"Frank was one of the earliest leaders of what is now known as NACA. Through his professional and volunteer work, he left a lasting impact on our Association and the field of campus activities," shared Joshua Brandfon, Ed.D., current chair of the Board of Directors. "His trailblazing leadership helped form the foundation upon which we've continued to thrive. Our thoughts are with his family and friends."

Executive Director Amber Shaverdi Huston, CAE said, "Frank's vision for an association that could serve the needs of varied audiences is a unique trait. A selfless leadership that can yield thousands of members and foster community is rare and even more distinct. I am hopeful that our work embodies his vision. Our actions and forward progress will continue his legacy."

The Association extends its deepest sympathy to the family, friends, and colleagues of Harris. More information about his life and career is available [here](#).