

In Memoriam: Robert Sandeski

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Posted by **Faculty of Medicine** on January 21, 2025 in [In Memoriam](#)

The Faculty of Medicine is saddened to announce the passing of Robert Sandeski, manager of the Human Body Donation Program, on Jan. 15, 2025, at the age of 52.

Rob, who was born and raised in Saskatchewan, came to the east coast after graduating high school to continue his education in funeral services. In 2002, after 30 years of experience as a funeral director and embalmer, he started as a technician with the Dalhousie Human Body Donation Program, where he would eventually become director. Rob dedicated his life to ensuring that both current and future healthcare providers had the best possible training, leaving an extraordinary impact on medical education at Dalhousie University. He was instrumental in introducing the Halifax Clinical Cadaver Preparation (Halifax Prep)—the first of its kind in Canada and only the second in North America to use this specialized technique.

Inspired by innovative embalming methods observed in Baltimore, Rob traveled there to refine his expertise, bringing back knowledge that would transform procedural learning at Dalhousie. His efforts enabled cadavers to be used for up to eight weeks, significantly expanding opportunities for hands-on medical training. This breakthrough was a catalyst for the formal establishment of Dalhousie's Clinical Cadaver Program, a resource that has since trained thousands of learners, from medical students and residents to paramedics and specialized healthcare professionals. The program, and Rob's work, have provided the opportunity to practice complex procedures before performing them on living patients, directly enhancing patient safety and leading to improved medical outcomes.

One of Rob's many lasting impacts was his role in establishing a dedicated clinical cadaver lab in the Tupper Building, expanding access for students, faculty, and healthcare professionals. He took immense pride in knowing that the work done in this space was saving lives, offering surgeons and physicians a place to refine their skills before entering the operating room.

Beyond his work with learners, Rob was deeply committed to supporting the families who entrusted their loved ones to the Human Body Donation Program. He took great care in guiding families through this process, ensuring they felt their choice was meaningful. Whether answering inquiries, coordinating memorial services, or simply listening to the stories behind each donation, he approached every interaction with empathy and respect. For Rob, it wasn't just about managing a program; it was about honouring the lives and legacies of those who made the selfless choice to contribute to medical education.

Rob was passionate about helping others, and outside of Dalhousie, this was reflected in his work as a volunteer firefighter at Station 16 in Eastern Passage. Over 15 years he climbed the ranks, eventually retiring as station chief. He was an avid wood worker, gardner, and motorcycle rider, and cherished his family above all else.

At Dalhousie, Rob's unwavering dedication, skill, and compassion shaped the training of thousands of healthcare professionals. His legacy will live on in every learner who had the privilege of working with the program he helped build. He will be deeply missed.

Read the full obituary [here](#).

Campus flags will be lowered until January 27, 2025.