

# Michael Zimmerman

Michael Zimmerman, whose life spanned from birth in a small Indiana town to Peace Corps service in the Philippines to a life of culture and social action in San Francisco, died at home at the end of July, 2020. He was 78.

Mike was a proud gay man, but equally a proud father and grandfather.

He was deeply imbued with Jewish tradition. He was a longtime member and officer of the LGBTQ focused Congregation Sha'ar Zahav. He wrote a play about gay sons of Jewish mothers, and he was thrilled when grandson Jared had his bar mitzvah.

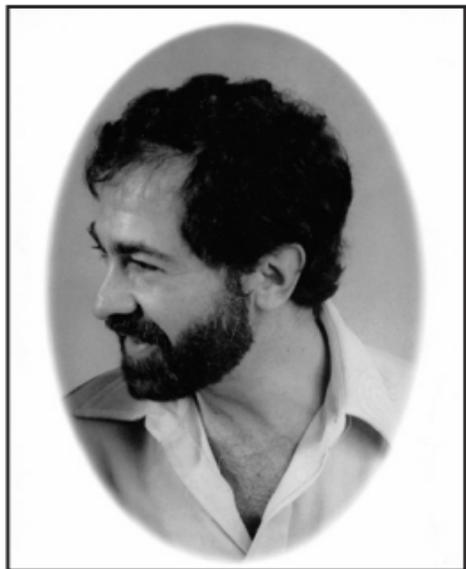
Although trained as a lawyer, he spent most of his professional life as a development director, grant writer, fundraiser, legal consultant and administrator for numerous cultural, human rights, and environmental protection organizations including Volunteers in Parole, Friends of the Urban Forest, the Homeless Action Coalition, the Community Music Center and Lamplighters.

He was also a passionate patron of the arts and was a long-time subscriber to many cultural institutions including the San Francisco Opera and American Conservatory Theater.

Mike actively supported many progressive causes and political campaigns. He was a passionate supporter of the ACLU – agreeing with their stand on free speech even when it included far right groups like neo-Nazis.

Mike had a long association with Theatre Rhinoceros as a patron, donor, board member and professional collaborator. Theatre Rhino produced his play, entitled "What's A Mother to Do?"

"It was a privilege to be in Michael's circle," recalled longtime friend Nathan Robinson. "One got to have stimulating conversation, eat meals at great restaurants and attend wonderful performances. His home was filled with art, music and hundreds of programs from concerts and



performances.

"He was incredibly generous. He loved serving as a personal and professional resource and mentor - recommending restaurants and reviewing resumes. He provided support that changed lives. He was passionate in his personal life and it was not unusual for boyfriends to evolve into lifelong friends."

Mike was born in Marion, Indiana. He graduated from Marion High School, earned a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy, and went on to get a law degree.

Mike engaged in the Jewish practice of Tikkun Olam – Healing the World including serving with the Peace Corps in the Philippines where he developed a lifelong love of Philippine culture.

He was married to Shirley Buop. Their daughter Shona was the light of his life.

When Mike moved to the Bay Area the two divorced, and he came out. Mike loved being an engaged and connected father to Shona, supporting her however he could, and expressing pride in her accomplishments.

"My dad was brilliant, kind, loving, generous, and hilarious. He was a committed father and played a huge role in my life both personally and professionally. He was the best person I have ever known and his loss is enormous."

Mike was an ever-present counselor to grandson Jared.

Mike was deeply connected to family, and although not an avid traveler, he attended functions and reunions whenever possible.

His extended family in the Bay Area included Hao Zheng and Manny Rosal.

May Michael's memory be for a blessing.