

← continued from
previous page

companies across town,” says Jay Roewe (COM’79), a senior vice president at HBO, a member of the BU Board of Overseers, and one of a group of alums who helped start the LA program. “If somebody wanted to be somewhere, Bill could usually make a phone call and get them in there.”

At HBO, if a job applicant has been through BU’s LA program, Roewe says, that weighs heavily in their favor, because of the high quality of the interns, “and that I think is largely due to Bill.”

Marcia Lewis Smith, a political consultant specializing in media strategies who has been a lecturer on television in the program since the beginning, describes Linsman as “the kindest, gentlest guy you’d ever meet.”

She recalls an international scholarship student who was having a hard time personally and financially during her semester in Los Angeles. She could see in class over several weeks that something was wrong, and when she called Linsman, she found out that he had already reached out to the student, worked with administration to get her scholarship extended, helped arrange counseling, and even slipped her cash from his pocket.

Linsman had been planning to step back from the directorship over the next year or two and had purchased a retirement home in New Mexico, although most who knew him were sure he would never entirely unplug from the role he loved, as students’ guide to the ways of Hollywood.

“A Believer and a Fighter”

Trustee emerita Elaine Kirshenbaum was a skilled medical executive, dedicated Terrier | BY MARA SASSOON

Those who knew trustee emerita and medical executive Elaine Kirshenbaum say she was deeply devoted in all aspects of her life, whether fighting for patients’ rights or caring for her family.

Kirshenbaum (CAS’71, SED’72, SPH’79) died on October 24, 2016. She was 67.

“Elaine was a force of nature—a vibrant and vivacious woman,” says trustee emeritus Robert Knox (CAS’74, Questrom’75), longtime trustee chair, now a Board of Overseers member. “As a trustee, she was opinionated and spoke her mind forthrightly on many of the issues before the board. As I got to know her, I found that she was an accomplished medical executive who was a relentless fighter for patient access to quality medical care. But above all, I admire Elaine for the amazing family she loved and nurtured.”

The former vice president of policy, planning, and member services at the Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS)—the statewide professional association for medical students and



Elaine Kirshenbaum, a former vice president at the Massachusetts Medical Society, advocated for patients’ rights.

physicians and publisher of the *New England Journal of Medicine*—tirelessly advocated for patients’ rights.

A BU trustee from 2000 to 2014, Kirshenbaum served on many committees, including student affairs. Trustee emerita Sharon Ryan, who joined the board at the same time and chaired that committee, says she enjoyed working with Kirshenbaum. “We had several interesting discussions

on how students are changing,” says Ryan (SAR’70). “I admired Elaine’s commitment to Boston University.”

Kirshenbaum earned a bachelor’s and a master’s in counseling, and a master’s in epidemiology at BU. Her daughter, Jennifer Kirshenbaum (LAW’05), and son, Daniel Kirshenbaum (CAS’07, MED’11), are also Terriers.

“BU was always part of the fabric of Elaine’s life,” says Beverly Brown, wife of BU President Robert A. Brown, who recalls that after Kirshenbaum’s husband, Howard, died in 2010, she and Kirshenbaum would often take long walks around the Charles River and the campus “to contemplate the meaning of life without one’s soul mate and ultimately to ponder how to create a life. When we couldn’t get together to walk, we would text each other continually. First and foremost, her family, specifically her kids and her mother, were the absolute focus of her life. She and I could be in the most intense discussion on a walk when Jen or Danny would call, and Elaine was bubbly and bright as she answered, asking if everything is okay and when they were coming over next. She worried far more about her kids’ well-being than she did her own.”

Medicine and public health were also part of the fabric of her family’s life. Howard Kirshenbaum was a renowned cardiologist (in 2011, the School of Medicine

Herbert Warren Mason II, 84, the BU William Goodwin Aurelio Professor of History and Religious Thought, a University Professor emeritus of religion, and a College of Arts & Sciences professor of history and religion, died suddenly on January 1, 2017. Mason was an eminent American scholar, translator, writer, and poet. A memorial service will be held on Saturday, April 22, at 11 a.m. in Bigelow Chapel at Mount Auburn Cemetery, 580 Mount Auburn St., Cambridge, Mass. A full obituary will appear in the summer issue of *Bostonia*.