



— **Someone To Be Remembered** —

July 12, 1950 – May 23, 2007

Our dear, dear friend, Thomas R. Porter, passed away at the age of 56 of a heart attack. Tom's passing was a sudden and devastating blow for NACVA that will be felt for many years to come. His contributions to NACVA were enormous and began immediately after he certified in 1995, when he asked me in a letter if he could join our training team. His letter was so articulate, well thought-out and professional in describing what and how he could help us, I recruited him on the spot. Over the years, Tom willingly and readily took on every course development request we ever made and would within a few weeks have the course ready to teach. He supported other course developers whenever requested, developing portions of their courses, reviewing and editing as needed. Tom never said no to a request for help, and he never missed even one teaching assignment, of which he had many in 11 years.

His instructional abilities were beyond superb, he was masterful in his speech and delivery, and he could be counted on to perform beyond anyone's expectations every time he taught, even with a course being taught for the first time. Tom was the recipient of multiple awards from NACVA, including:

- Circle of Light Award (2000) (Highest honor bestowed upon an instructor)
- Instructor of the Year (1999) (Highest distinction earned by an instructor)
- Instructor of Exceptional Distinction Award (11 years in a row)
- Named Outstanding Member in 2003

Tom participated in multiple capacities at NACVA:

- Member, Training Development Team (11 years)
- Member, Executive Advisory Board (2004–May 2007)
- Chair, Annual Conference Planning Committee (2006/2007)
- Contributing Author: Certified Forensic Financial Analyst curriculum
- Wrote numerous articles for publication in *The Value Examiner*[®]
- NACVA courses taught:
 - Being Effective in Litigation Support and Expert Testimony
 - Commercial Damages: Legal Theory and Case Law
 - Federal Rules of Evidence/Federal Rules of Civil Procedure for the Expert Witness
 - Providing Effective Expert Witness Testimony
 - Providing Effective Litigation Support Services
 - Expert Witness Bootcamp

Most recently, however, he sat on NACVA's Executive Advisory Board, beginning his term in 2004; this is where I came to know him better, both as a friend and true professional. Tom could always be counted on to provide level-headed, well-considered advice or direction on matters that brought balance and clarity to the Board. He was certainly one of the best leaders this organization has ever had. This leadership was clearly demonstrated over the last year, when he volunteered to chair our Annual Conference Planning Committee, orchestrating the activities of the 40-plus committee members and pulling together over 50 presenters and the finest program ever held by NACVA (see Conference Summary later in this issue). All this he did while running one of the most successful financial litigation practices in America, developing two new courses for NACVA, assisting with two others, as well as all his other NACVA commitments.

A few months back, I asked Tom and three of NACVA's other top training developers to work with me in developing a custom financial forensics curriculum for one of the nation's most respected colleges. Tom told me he was extremely honored that I would ask for his participation on such a prestigious project. I was a little surprised at his gratitude but realized Tom was being Tom—a humble man who did not take anyone for granted and who did not see what I and many others saw in him: a giant of a man, a genius no less. And someone whose footprint on this organization will remain for many, many years to come. My response to Tom was, I couldn't imagine undertaking a development project like this without him, and that he was simply the best course developer I knew and most definitely one of the finest instructors on the planet. Humbly, he thanked me.

I will miss Tom sorely, as I am sure many of you will.

In Tom's honor NACVA has created the Thomas R. Porter Lifetime Achievement Award which will be awarded to a deserving NACVA member each year at our Annual Conference for contributions to NACVA and the industry. The recipient will be selected by a soon-to-be-formed independent body of NACVA members (not headquarters [HQ] or any of our existing Boards or Committees) and must be nominated by another member. The Tom Porter Life Achievement Council, as it will be called, will screen nominations, interview selected nominees, interview HQ staff, and perform background research on the nominees, as deemed necessary, to make its final selection. In other words, the Council must do its homework to select the most deserving recipients of what will become the industry's highest honor and most significant award. And one that will consider the entire person—not just the volume of his or her contributions, but the quality of the person and the size of his or her heart.

The Council will initially consist of 15 members, but once it is formed it will define itself, meaning increasing or decreasing its size, determining its own decision-making criteria, nomination requirements, terms individuals will serve, and the process for recruiting/electing/selecting new members to the Council. Someone from NACVA's Executive Advisory Board (EAB) will act as an advisor to the Council and we may select one or two HQ staff members to participate in an advisory capacity as well. The EAB intends to have the Council up and operating in 60 days, and we are asking members who are interested in participating on this prestigious body to e-mail me their interest along with a curriculum vitae by July 31st for EAB consideration. We will select the first Council members and assign each his or her initial term ranging from two to four years to achieve a balanced rotation of new members coming onto the Council. My e-mail address is: parnell1@nacva.com

Thank you.