

Eulogy for Robert Eric Wone
June 1, 1974-August 3, 2006

Thank you all for coming today to remember the life of Robert Eric Wone.

I know the last few days have been hard on everyone gathered here, especially for Kathy and their families.

I am Jason Torchinsky. Robert has been a friend of mine since college, my roommate and one of my groomsmen.

I want to take a few minutes to tell you about Robert and all he had accomplished in his time here.

Robert was born on June 1st of 1974 in New York City to Bill and Aimee Wone. He attended Xaverian Catholic School. In high school, Robert was a member of the national honor society and the salutatorian of his graduating class.

Robert's interest in public policy, politics and political life started early. When Robert was 15 years old, then-Congressman Chuck Schumer knocked on his family's front door, and soon Robert was off knocking on doors with him. This led to Robert spending a summer working for then-Governor Mario Cuomo.

In 1992, Robert left Brooklyn for The College of William and Mary. He was a Monroe Scholar, meaning that he was among the top applicants to the College that year.

Upon arriving on campus, Robert threw himself headfirst into college life and student leadership. He served as a Vice President for the Student Association, on the student government's election committee, and as Chief of Staff to the Student Body President.

Robert spent his college summers engaged as well, working for Governor Cuomo, the United States Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, and the White House.

Robert's love for the College and its students became obvious to everyone during his time on campus. Although not known to many people at the time, Robert was one of the students who helped resurrect The 13 Club at William and Mary. The Club's purpose is to engage in anonymous acts of kindness, help the students of the College and promote the values upon which William and Mary was founded.

Robert also served as a "President's Aide" to the President of William and Mary, which made Robert one of a select group of students who advised him on college life.

While pursuing these extra curricular activities with all of his heart, Robert found the time to major in Public Policy, while maintaining a high grade point average and earning membership in the honor societies Omicron Delta Kappa, Mortar Board, and Golden Key. When he graduated, Robert was awarded one of the College's top honors – the Sullivan

Award – given to a student whose heart, mind and conduct embody a spirit of love for and helpfulness to others.

Robert's civic involvement in high school and college lead him to the University of Pennsylvania Law School and he moved to the City of Brotherly Love in the summer of 1996.

Robert's enthusiasm, love for learning, and commitment to people, did not ebb when he arrived at UPenn, as he immediately became involved with student life. He became an active member of the Asian Pacific American Law Student Association, where he began his career-long quest to see an increase in minority law clerks and judges.

During his third year of law school, Robert was drawn to help poor and disadvantaged Philadelphia residents through UPenn's Civil Practice Legal Clinic. He also served as Senior Editor of the Journal of Labor and Employment Law.

Following law school, Robert accepted a clerkship with The Honorable Raymond Jackson, United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia. Robert became very close with Judge Jackson, who later married Kathy and Robert.

After completing his clerkship, Robert moved to Arlington to join the prestigious Washington law firm of Covington and Burling. At Covington, he practiced in a number of areas, with an emphasis on real estate and employment law.

In addition to the mountains of work Robert produced for paying clients, he of course poured his heart into the Washington community. Through Covington and Burling, Robert volunteered at the Latin American Youth Center. Shortly after that, Robert became a Commissioner on the Virginia Governor's Commission on National and Community Service where he served for the last four years.

Robert also became actively involved with the American Bar Association and the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of DC. He served on their Education Fund's Board of Directors, became treasurer and then, last year, was chosen as President-Elect. His term as President was to start in two weeks.

Last year, Robert became the volunteer General Counsel of both the Organization of Chinese Americans and the Museum of Chinese in the Americas.

Robert decided that he wanted to try to make more of a difference in the world at large than he already had. Just a few short weeks ago, on July Fifth, Robert became General Counsel of Radio Free Asia – a non-profit organization that broadcasts news to listeners who do not have access to free media. He dove head-first into his new position, working overtime to get to know the staff, and even coming in on a weekend with ice cream during the recent heat wave.

Before I conclude, I want to turn for just a few minutes to the huge part of Robert's world that was his personal life.

In January of 2002, at an American Bar Association meeting in Philadelphia, Robert sat on a panel about minority clerkships.

Kathy coordinated that panel.

Robert and Kathy began “officially” dating on Valentine’s Day of 2002. They maintained a hectic weekend travel schedule that year because Kathy lived in Chicago. They both racked up the frequent flyer miles, and by May of that year, Robert was madly in love and had decided that Kathy was the woman he was going to marry.

Just one month after they started dating, Robert took a big step by inviting Kathy to join him and his parents on their October trip to China. Kathy took two days to tell Robert yes, and he stressed for the entire two days.

On the day they returned home from China to Kathy’s townhouse in Chicago, Robert arranged to have roses, chocolate and an engagement ring waiting for them. Despite the jet-lag and total exhaustion, Kathy said yes.

Two weeks later, she moved to DC to be with Robert.

Robert and Kathy had a beautiful wedding on a gorgeous summer day in Chicago on June 7, 2003. They spent the first part of their honeymoon in Maui where they enjoyed luaus and walks along the beach.

They spent the second half of their honeymoon in Williamsburg, where Robert spent a week introducing Kathy to the entire staff of William and Mary.

Robert and Kathy have a warm loving marriage, and there is no doubt that Robert continues to love her today from his place in heaven.

In his application to the University of Pennsylvania Law School, Robert said he wanted to be a lawyer because he wanted to be a trusted member of the community, make a difference in public policies, and see the effects of his efforts improving the situation of people around him.

As those of us here today can all attest, Robert achieved his goals.

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