

Brian A. Iwata passed away peacefully at his home in Gainesville, FL, on October 7, 2023, with family at his side. He was born on August 20, 1948, to Harry M. Iwata and Margaret Nakagawa Iwata in Scotch Plains, NJ. The family moved to Baltimore, MD, in 1953 where he attended grade school, high school and Loyola College. He was a swimmer and lacrosse player during high school and college. He is survived by his beloved wife, Margaret (Peg) and their two daughters, Christina Schneider (Garrett) and Mary Iwata (Matt McHenry). He is also survived by 4 grandchildren, Benjamin and Margaret Schneider and Eva and Cleo McHenry. He leaves behind two sisters, Carol (Valerie Stoehr) and Mary Ellen.

He was a devoted father and loving husband, who enjoyed taking the family on trips. Many trips involved visiting family, others included world travel. He loved his grandchildren dearly and enjoyed visiting them and encouraged them to love life, have fun and be the best you can be. He was an avid tennis player his entire life. He also enjoyed cycling and pinochle.

He obtained a fellowship to study Psychology at Florida State University and received his Ph.D. in 1974. From 1974 to 1978 he was assistant professor of Psychology at Western Michigan University. From 1978 through 1986, he was associate professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. In 1986, he moved to the University of Florida as professor of Psychology. During his career, he published over 250 articles and chapters and received over 36 awards. As a sampling of these awards, he was a recipient of the Puzio Fellows Award from the Institute of Advanced Science and the lifetime achievement award for the Practice of Psychology from the American Psychological Association (APA). His groundbreaking work in behavioral assessment and treatment of developmental disorders resulted in significant changes in federal policies and educational laws and practices not only in the U.S. but worldwide. He is credited with the behavioral assessment approach known as "functional analysis," which, based on thousands of scientific citations, is considered one of the most influential developments in the history of behavioral psychology. The approach focused on discovering why behavior disorders occurred on an individual-by-individual basis, during the assessment stage, in order to gain better information on how those disorders and individuals should be treated. The approach was initially applied to pediatric feeding disorders and severe self-injurious behavior, but over a 40-year span this approach has become the gold standard for assessment of a wide range of behavior disorders in both research and practice. In recognition of these accomplishments and other work, he was a fellow in 4 psychology societies and the president of 5 societies. As a teacher and disseminator of knowledge, he was a widely sought speaker around the U.S. and world and beloved by his students. Dozens of his former doctoral and masters degree students, and hundreds of his undergraduate students continue his work. Half of the recipients of the B. F. Skinner Award (APA Division 25) have been his former students. He received mentoring awards from the University of Florida. In recognition of his achievements, in 2015 he was the first person in the history of the Psychology Department of the University of Florida to be awarded the title Distinguished Professor.

A wake for Brian will take place at his home on Thursday, October 26, 2023, from 6-8 PM EDT. There will be a Funeral Mass on Friday, October 27, 2023, at 11:00 AM, at Holy Faith Catholic Church, 747 NW 43rd St., Gainesville, FL. A reception will follow the Mass. The burial will take place in Baltimore, MD, in the spring of 2024. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his name to either De La Salle Blackfeet School in Browning, MT or Maryknoll Sisters Senior Center in Maryknoll, NY.