

## In Memory of David J. Schoonmaker

David J. Schoonmaker, 78 years old, born on March 16, 1944, passed away on December 15, 2022. He is survived by his wife Eva of Denver; brother Marlin of Seattle; and son Sean, daughter-in-law Lisa, grandson Rowan of Oakland; and son Allen, daughter-in-law Jennifer, grandchildren, Alexander & Alyssa of Hong Kong. He will be missed and remembered forever.

David was an alumnus of Woodstock School in Mussoorie, Uttarakhand, India. He personally established a scholarship endowment for the school in his father's name, the [Joseph H. Schoonmaker Scholarship Endowment](#). His family asks that if you are so moved, you make a donation to this fund in his memory. [Donate Here](#) takes you to the Friends of Woodstock website, donate online icon.



### **Distinguished Alumnus – Woodstock School 2017** **(From the Woodstock School Website)**

David Schoonmaker has an inspiring track record as an entrepreneur and philanthropist. His innovations in the field of medical and waste management have revolutionized the industry, delivering exceptional improvements both environmentally and in terms of public health. David is the eldest son of Dr. Joseph Schoonmaker MD. His father was a medical missionary in Assam, India, after serving as a Chaplain in WWII. David came to Woodstock in 1955 and graduated in 1962. He went on to earn a BSc degree in chemistry and a BA in business administration from the University of California in Berkeley, an MBA at California State University in Los Angeles as well as post-graduate qualifications at Columbia University in New York. During the first 18 years of his career after college, he worked for corporations including Diamond Shamrock, Georgia Pacific and McKesson. During this time he developed technologies for municipal water treatment, recycling of agricultural, industrial and hazardous waste streams, and products used to manufacture cement. All these technologies are still used commercially today. In 1985 he created his own company to develop an alternative technology, the autoclave, for treating biohazard wastes generated by hospitals, dentists, veterinary and doctor's offices in the US. This resulted in a dramatic shift from incineration to steam sterilization, establishing industry standards and practices that dominate today. This new technology reduced air emissions and greenhouse gases by over 99%. More than 5,000 incinerators were closed or converted, leaving fewer than 20 today, and this technology is now used worldwide. As an evolving entrepreneur, he started several companies that served the health care industry along the East Coast of the US, from Maine to Florida, and into the Midwest. He provided waste management services for hospitals and utilizing a dozen treatment facilities, developed recycling uses for recovered surgical instruments, the use of treated medical waste for electric power plants, and training software for health care providers. He chose not to patent his product and process improvements, but rather used them to benefit his customers, competitors and the wider public. This accounted for the rapid growth of these technologies and eventually the high value placed on his companies. David designed training sessions for hospital employees, monitoring compliance and changes in the regulations. He computerized the waste treatment process so that problems in cost, compliance and efficiency could be identified and addressed. In 2011, David's companies were combined and sold, allowing him time to pursue other personal interests.

David has served on the Board of Kodai-Woodstock International, the Friends of Woodstock School Board, and for six years on the Woodstock School Board. His experience as a board member of private and public companies and business founder of several companies and charities, alongside his MBA in finance and BSc in chemistry, proved useful at Woodstock as they upgraded their financial reporting. After David sold his companies in 2011, he fully retired from business, and then travelled the world with his wife Eva Schoonmaker, collected high-performance sports cars, and was active in philanthropic pursuits.