

In Loving Memory



1959 -2012

Eulogy

Delivered at Hamid's Memorial Service

Jan. 21, 2012

Good morning Ladies and gentlemen! On behalf of the Daftarian, Jeihani, Pourshiravi, Bahreinian, and Shahheidari families, I'd like to welcome you all here today. The family truly appreciates being surrounded by so much love at this time of bereavement.

Although the pain of not having Hamid with us in the physical realm seems unbearable at times, we are here today to celebrate his life and honor his precious memory.

A little history on Hamid is that he was born to his wonderful parents, Mr. Javad Daftarian and Mrs. Fatemeh Jeihani, on March 6, 1959, in Isfahan. Three years later, the family moved to Tehran, where Hamid attended elementary and middle school at Andisheyeh-No and Kharazmi high school. His inquisitive nature was alive and well since early childhood as he actively tried his hand at a variety of hobbies and experiments ranging from photography, printing his own pictures in his dark room to a chemistry lab, in which he burned the neighbor's kid's hand and got in trouble for it, and a host of other extracurricular activities. He moved to the states in the summer of 1978 at age 19 where he attended Middle Georgia College, where he met Terri, his sweetheart of over 30 years. The two later got married and became proud parents of three beautiful children, Roya, Parisa, and Reza. Hamid went on to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering from Georgia Tech in 1982 and began his professional career at local firms, including John Portman and Associates, but his entrepreneurial spirit soon led him to go out on his own and launch what we know today as DMD Engineering and Construction from their garage, and later Roya Custom Homes, both of which experienced much success for nearly 20 years. Interestingly, this fulfilled a prediction that his kindergarten teacher had made based on one of Hamid's drawings, that he would someday be a successful civil

engineer! In 1998, Hamid's younger brother, Ali, joined him in the US and Hamid was able to completely fulfill his dream of having the whole family over by 2001, when his mother and father as well as his sisters Lily and Hoory and their families took up residence in Atlanta.

Although Hamid achieved a tremendous amount of success in business, family life, and life long relationships with a multitude of friends, I'd like to talk to you about the most fascinating part of the story of his life which has to do with who he was, how he lived his life, what he stood for, and the legacy he has left behind.

He was indeed so many things to so many people but above all, who he was for me, and undoubtedly many of you, was the best friend anyone could be blessed to have in their lifetime.

I met Hamid almost exactly 33 years ago when we were both incoming freshmen at Middle Georgia College. Since then, I have had the privilege of having shared so many aspects of my life with him and having been deeply involved in so many facets of his.

However, it is apparent to me that it didn't take 30 years of friendship but merely a 30 minute encounter with Hamid to get a clear sense of who he was. I have heard several comments from people who had only met him for a brief moment or even those who only knew of him, that indicate that he indeed accomplished what he was after in this life. As Terri and many other would tell you, he always said that he wanted to be known as someone who helped others. Well, I'm sure we all agree that this is, in fact, the legacy that Hamid has left behind.

If you knew anything about Hamid at all you would know that in his eyes, everybody deserved a chance. In a world that is fixated on dwelling on differences, he somehow managed to find common ground with a wide range of people, no matter how different they appeared to be from him. He managed to see the divine spirit that indwells each of us and he treated us all as such. No wonder his vision for people was usually bigger than their own. He helped some of the employees who worked with him early on launch their own businesses, not just by creating opportunities for them but by getting them to see it was possible. He was always the transition figure that caused lasting transformations in the lives of his family members, employees, business partners, and just about everybody he came in contact with. He simply was not OK with status quo for himself or the people around him and he made it his business to be in action and compel others to do the same.

He was a compassionate soul whose own interests were always secondary to those of the people around him. The way he looked after his parents to make sure they lived comfortable and dignified lives, especially in their later years was the epitome of what every parent wishes for and an example the rest of us strive to follow. The effort he put into bringing all of his immediate family members here and ensuring that their livelihood was not jeopardized was admirable. His willingness to go the extra mile to be there for his friends was second to none. His relentless pursuit of creating value for all employees and business partners through win-win partnerships changed the course of countless people's lives. Although these were all shining examples of his compassion for others,

the content of his character and the strength of his resolve to make a difference was never more evident than in the frequent and unconditional acts of kindness he extended toward perfect strangers. He was a strong father figure, not only to his own children but to countless others, children and adults alike. He consistently went out of his way to be there for others, not only figuratively, but literally. I remember when my wife and I lived in Albany, GA and for the past seven years that we have lived 45 minutes away from most of our friends on the north side of town, Hamid and Terri always went the distance to visit us because to Hamid, the way to a friend's house was never far.

Hamid most certainly lived a full life. Though his years were short, he experienced the kind of breadth and depth that most people fail to enjoy having lived to be in their 80's and 90's. He loved to have fun and had a unique sense of humor. He was famous for his one liners, some of which I believe we will make reference to later on in the service.

He was an avid outdoorsman. Whether he was skiing down the slopes in Colorado, climbing to the top of Mt. Whitney, riding his bike over 100 miles around Lake Tahoe, taking a dip in a river in Costa Rica, going for his Sunday morning hikes in North Georgia with coach Rassoul, or simply taking his beloved casey, the family dog, for a walk by the river, he loved to spend time in nature.

He had a phenomenal capacity to accept the reality of his situation and yet not be satisfied with it. He has a sign in his office that read "This too shall pass!" and that was truly how he lived his life. He was 100% committed to whatever challenge he took on and he was not deterred by all the real or perceived barriers. I remember having to literally force him to set aside his concerns for everyone else and focus for a few minutes on his own and talk to me about his concerns and issues, and he would somehow always manage to keep those conversations short and get right back to what he was trying to do for someone else.

I personally didn't consider Hamid a religious person but he was very spiritual and he loved God. He told me on so many occasions that he prayed and spoke to God everyday and if he were here today he would console us by assuring us that if we put our trust in God's divine power, He can take even a tragedy such as the untimely loss of a wonderful father, husband, brother, and friend and not only heal our wounds but have his presence in the short years he was with us be a blessing that keeps on giving.

No matter what your theological persuasion, I'd ask you to consider that we are not created simply as physical bodies but that each of us is created as a spirit that lives in a body and long after the physical body is dead and gone, our spirit continues to live. I'd like you to further consider that while our physical existence involves worldly pursuits, our spirit thrives on qualities such as compassion, forgiveness, kindness and other noble qualities. Fortunately for us, our experience with Hamid was not only limited to his worldly pursuits, and we all experienced the essence of his spirit in every contact we had with him. This gives me hope that as time heals our wounds and takes away our sorrow, we will soon be left with a vivid view of, and direct access to his spirit, which will live on in the hearts and minds of all the people whose lives he touched.

What you may not know is that Hamid had come very close to losing his life on at least a couple of other occasions. He nearly drowned in lake Lanier, and much earlier in life he was in a coma at 17 after he took a fall while mountain climbing and the doctors had given up on him, but he was given back to his family through a miraculous recovery. None of us want to experience the pain of losing him but truth is that if I had been given a choice to get to know him and enjoy his friendship for 33 years and then endure the pain of losing him vs. having never met him, I would still choose the former, not the latter. I would still choose to be blessed by his wonderful presence in my life for all those years. I'd urge you to focus on how blessed you were to have known him.

Each of us is on this earth to fulfill a very unique purpose. Some of us go through life unaware of such responsibility and the grace that enables us to discover and fulfill that purpose. Some of us pursue that purpose while we are on this earth, and then there are those, who live that purpose. Those are the ones who leave a legacy behind that lives forever. They are transition figures. They plant seeds that will bear fruit for generations to come. Hamid was such a person. Each of us today can think of some ways in which he altered how we live our lives but now, it's all up to us. His work is not done but he has done all he is ever going to do for us in the physical realm. What happens from this point forward is in our hands. We get to determine whether the seeds he sowed will grow and produce his intended harvest or not. He did all he did for us without any expectation to receive anything in return but I submit that we owe it to him to ensure that the seeds he scattered fell on fertile ground. We owe it to him to take full advantage of what he instilled in each of us to enrich our lives and become a living legacy of the mark he made in this world. I'd ask you to ponder what he has left you with and resolve to make it an integral part of who you are. Continue the traditions he started, like giving family members a new year's resolution. Ask yourself, not only at the end of the year, but much more frequently, what resolution would he hand you if he were here in the flesh. Nurture the seeds that he planted, or would have planted, in your spirit and he will live forever in your heart and the manifestation of his ideals will flow through you in the physical world.

I urge you to make 2012 the year when you make a significant shift in an area of your life that is inspired by Hamid. That way, as you enjoy the benefits in the coming years, you will always look back fondly on the impact he made on your life.

Much love and respect,

Amir Ghannad