Norman M. Zalkind, 75, dies; director of SMU Foundation

FALL RIVER, Mass. — Norman M. Zalkind, 75, of 222 Florence St., executive director of the Southeastern Massachusetts University Foundation, died yesterday at Brigham & Women's Hospital, Boston. He was the husband of Pauline (Melanson) Zalkind.

Born in Fall River, he was a son of the late Samuel and Bessie (Dondis) Zalkind.

Mr. Zalkind devoted many years to civic and development efforts for the City of Fall River. He served as a trustee and chairman of the board of trustees for Southeastern Massachusetts University from 1974 to 1981. He was a member of the state Board of Regents of Higher Education from 1981 to 1984.

He assumed the position of executive director of the SMU Foundation in 1984, and had also served as special assistant to SMU President John R. Brazil for two years.

Dr. Brazil said of Mr. Zalkind, "I have never met a more beautiful man. Full of energy, caring, and deeply involved in life. Norman Zalkind was suffused with an infectious enthusiasm for the greater good — which he knew was just around the corner, and which generally was. His passing has dimmed the world of all those who knew him. I shall miss him more than I can say."

Mr. Zalkind's unofficial title of "University Ambassador" was earned through the many handshakes of welcome he gave to visiting dignitaries and to faculty and students as well.

One former student recalled a Christmas Ball when Mr. Zalkind loaned students the keys to his 1939 Rolls Royce so they could take a spin around SMU's Ring Road.

James M. Dorris, chairman of the management department, remembers most "the twinkle of his eye, the twist of his mustache, and mischievous wit that showed a serious love affair with the idea of a university in general and with SMU in particular. I will miss his charm and energy."

Vice president for Student Affairs Celestino D. Macedo, a friend of Mr. Zalkind for over 20 years, said "he gave of himself to all who needed help. His contributions to the City of Fall River, to SMU, and to the state will stand."

Mr. Zalkind was a graduate of Brown University and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from SMU. He served 30 years in the United States Naval Reserve, including active duty in World War II, and retired with the rank of commander.

From 1960 to 1979, he was managing partner of Wolfson, Zalkind & Co. Prior to that he had been involved with real estate management and ownership, and had executive training with the Strand Theater Corporation.

ZALKIND, NORMAN M.

From 1981 to 1984, Mr. Zalkind was executive director of the Fall River Office of Economic Development. He managed the implementation, processing and financial packaging of local economic development projects which totaled more than $16 million.

He also served Fall River as chairman of the Board of Police Commissioners from 1978 to 1982, as a member of the Fall River Line Pier Corp. of the Fall River Port Authority, and a member of the Fall River Arts Lottery Commission.

Mr. Zalkind was also a member of the Massachusetts Commission on Adoption and Foster Care from 1969 to 1970, president of the Massachusetts Arts and Humanities Foundation from 1972 to 1978, a member of the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities from 1971 to 1973, and a member of the Governor's Commission on the Future of Mature Industries.

Last spring, Mr. Zalkind was appointed to the board of directors of the Southern New England School of Law, New Bedford.

Besides his wife he leaves a son, Michael Zalkind of New York; a daughter, Shelley Zalkind of New Haven, Conn., and a brother, Philip Zalkind of Fall River.

The funeral be held tomorrow at 11 a.m. at Temple Beth El, Locust Street. Burial will be in Beth El Cemetery.