

# NEWS RELEASE



Maryland Public Television

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**For immediate release**

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## **Longtime Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission leader dies at age 87**

*Edward H. Kaplan served on MPT's governing body for nearly 30 years*

**OWINGS MILLS, MD** – Edward H. Kaplan, a resident of Potomac, Maryland, and one of Maryland Public Television's biggest benefactors and advocates, died on March 27 at the age of 87. Kaplan is survived by his wife, Irene Kaplan, and many loving family members.

Kaplan served on the Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission, MPT's 11-member governing body, for nearly 30 years. He was first appointed to the commission by Maryland Governor Parris N. Glendening in 1996. Kaplan was later named the chair in 2007 and served in this leadership capacity for 18 years until his retirement in June 2025. That September, commissioners voted unanimously to designate Kaplan "chair emeritus."

"The MPT family mourns the passing of this wonderful man and great friend to our organization. His nearly three decades of service and philanthropy won't soon be equaled," said Steven J. Schupak, MPT president and CEO. "We extend our sincere condolences to his family and friends. We'll truly miss this visionary, remarkable leader."

Together with his wife, Irene, Kaplan created Maryland Public Television's New Initiatives Fund in 2008 with a \$1,000,000 donation to enable the production of Maryland-centric programs and to support other MPT activities. Mr. Kaplan also served as an ex officio trustee of the MPT Foundation, Inc. In 2022, The Irene and Edward H. Kaplan Production Studio at MPT's Owings Mills, Maryland headquarters was dedicated to the Kaplans in recognition of their generosity and service to the statewide public television network.

"Eddie Kaplan was an extraordinary philanthropist who put his heart and soul into MPT and set a wonderful example for us all," said Dick Bodorff, chair of the Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission. "Through the New Initiatives Fund, Eddie made possible numerous MPT programs on the Chesapeake Bay and other subjects. We'll fondly remember Eddie Kaplan each time we enter MPT's main studio, which bears the Kaplan name."

"Eddie was a trusted confidant who treasured MPT and, as its commission chair, always acted in the network's best interests," remarked Larry D. Unger, MPT president and CEO from 2011-2025. "His business advice and insights were timely and meaningful. But I will miss his friendship even more. He was an ally, confidante, and teacher. Best of all, he brought a superb sense of humor to his business and personal dealings. He'll be sorely missed."

Kaplan served as a member of the board of trustees of America's Public Television Stations (APTS), a nonprofit membership organization that promotes the legislative and regulatory interests of noncommercial television stations at the national level through direct advocacy and campaigns designed to garner congressional support for public television. In 2020, he was the recipient of APTS' David J. Brugger Lay Leadership Award, an honor that recognizes significant service and stewardship.

After earning a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, Kaplan began his career in the construction field, which later evolved into real estate development and investments in related businesses.

In 1983, he was a founding stockholder and director of Palmer National Bank in Washington, D.C., and was a director of its successor, George Mason Bankshares, which was later acquired by United Bankshares, Inc. subsidiary United Bank (VA) on whose board he served until a restructuring in 2017.

He was also a founding stockholder and director of Silver Diner Development, Inc. in 1987 and was a director of its successor, Silver Diner, Inc., until a 2016 restructuring.

A leader in local and international philanthropic activities, Kaplan served as president of the United Jewish Endowment Fund, the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, and the Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington. Kaplan was also a longtime board member of the JCC Association of North America, which comprises nearly 150 Jewish Community Centers and Jewish Community Camps in the United States and Canada. He served as the organization's chair from 2002 to 2006.

His support of other organizations and institutions in the region included the National Children's Medical Center, the National Gallery of Art, the Capital Area Food Bank, and the Washington Hospital Center Foundation. He also served for more than two decades on the D.C. regional board of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington.

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### **About Maryland Public Television**

Maryland Public Television is a statewide, public-supported TV network and Public Broadcasting Service member offering entertaining and educational content delivered by traditional broadcasting and streaming on TVs, computers, and mobile devices via its [online video player](#) and the [free PBS app](#). A state agency operating under the auspices of the Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission, MPT also produces local, regional, and national programming and frequently earns regional Emmy® awards for its work. MPT's commitment to educators, parents, caregivers, and learners of all ages is delivered through its [Maryland Center for Media Literacy & Education](#) and [Thinkport.org](#). MPT's year-round community engagement activities connect viewers with resources covering a wide range of topics. More information is available at [mpt.org](#).