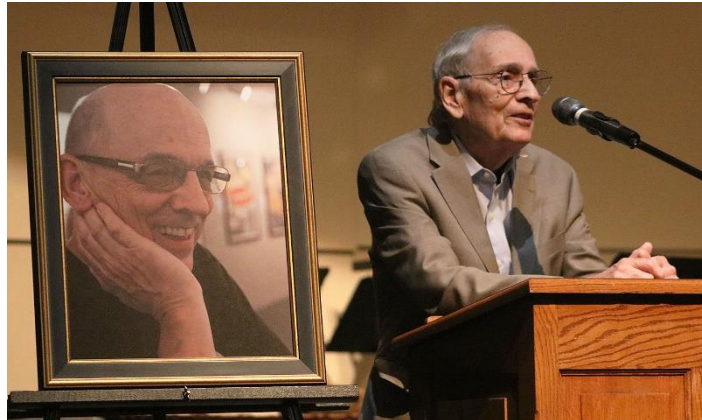


Ted Walch

Back in 2018, Ted Walch told the Sedalia Democrat that being an educator taught him, "It can't be about yourself. It's got to be about the kids. I think the nicest thing a kid ever said to me ... he said, 'you treated me as the person you thought I might become, not as the person I was. And, as a result, I became that person.'"



Walch, a member of the Smith-Cotton High Class of 1959, graduated from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, in 1963, where his interest in becoming a theater director was sparked. He then pursued a graduate degree in drama at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., graduating in 1966. That fall, he began his 55-year career in teaching at the St. Albans School in Washington D.C., where he worked for 13 years. He later would teach at The Branson School in Marin County, Calif., and then Harvard-Westlake School in Studio City, Calif., where he was head of performing arts and taught for more than 30 years.

Walch took a leave from teaching in 1979 to create the Kenyon Festival Theatre at his alma mater, where he served as producing artistic director until 1985. While there, he directed such notable performers as Paul Newman and John Considine.

Walch influenced many stage and screen stars and their children during his tenure at Harvard-Westlake before his passing in September 2022.

In an August 2022 report on the "Today" show about a celebration for Walch at Harvard-Westlake, actor Jason Segal said, "He's the reason I am doing what I am now and why my life is the way it is." Some of Walch's other students include film actors Jake and Maggie Gyllenhaal, and Emmy and Academy Award winner Allison Janney.

From Walch's obituary, Harvard-Westlake President Richard Commons wrote: "Ted had a gift for seeing his students — from theater kids to baseball players, from philosophers to mischief makers — for who they truly were, and it was his life's work and his life's joy to show them that he believed in them, however much they might be doubting themselves."

Inducted in Smith-Cotton Activities Hall of Fame, 2024