CLINICAL EDITORIAL

CRT Community Carries Legacy Forward

Reflections from the 'Tribute to Simon Margolis'

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What began as a tribute to Simon Margolis became a meaningful reflection on a question that extends far beyond remembrance: How do we carry forward the work of someone who dedicated his career to empowering others?

Throughout the tribute, colleagues, friends and longtime leaders shared stories that revealed the many ways Margolis influenced Complex Rehabilitation Technology. They remembered his passion, curiosity, willingness to challenge conventional thinking and, perhaps most importantly, his commitment to ensuring that individuals who rely on CRT had a voice in the decisions that affected their lives.

For Margolis, CRT was never simply about equipment. It was about people. It was about creating opportunities for individuals with disabilities to achieve greater independence, participate more fully in their communities and exercise greater control over their lives. His work was grounded in the belief that end users should be empowered, not simply served, and that the professionals supporting them have a responsibility to listen, advocate, educate and act. That philosophy remains one of the most enduring parts of his legacy.

Mentorship as a Legacy

Mentorship emerged as a central theme throughout the tribute. Margolis understood that lasting change depends on investing in people. He shared his knowledge generously, challenged others to think critically and encouraged colleagues to become active participants in shaping the future of CRT.

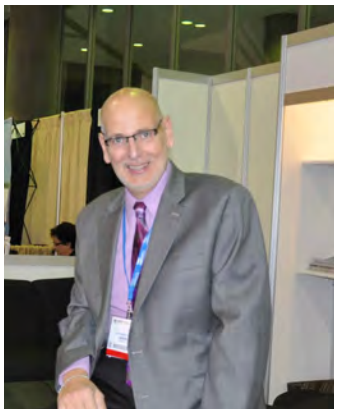
The stories shared during the tribute demonstrated that his mentorship extended far beyond formal teaching or professional instruction. It happened in conversations, at conferences, around meeting tables and through the relationships he cultivated throughout his career. He had a remarkable ability to encourage others to ask better questions, consider different perspectives and recognize their own capacity to make a difference. Those who benefited from Margolis's mentorship now have an opportunity, and a responsibility, to do the same for others.

Carrying his legacy forward means creating opportunities for emerging professionals to learn, lead, question and grow. It means sharing the history of CRT while encouraging the next generation to imagine what is possible. And it means recognizing that mentorship is one of the most powerful ways a professional legacy can endure.

Empowering the End User

The tribute also brought renewed attention to the ultimate purpose behind the work: the individual who uses CRT. Margolis's mission was deeply connected to ensuring that people who depend on CRT were empowered to live the lives they choose. That requires more than providing the right technology. It requires listening to individuals, understanding their goals, respecting their expertise regarding their own lives and advocating for access to solutions that support independence, participation and quality of life.

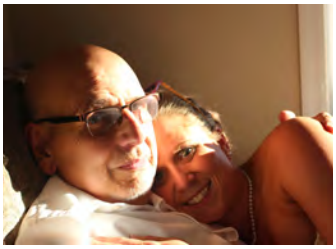
That mission remains just as relevant today. Every CRT professional has an opportunity to carry it forward by putting the end user at the center of decision-making, advocating when access is threatened and helping individuals understand and exercise their own voices.



Simon Margolis at Medtrade.

Simon Margolis at CELA, the Continuing Education and Legislative Action event in Washington, D.C.

Simon Margolis showing off his incredible smile.

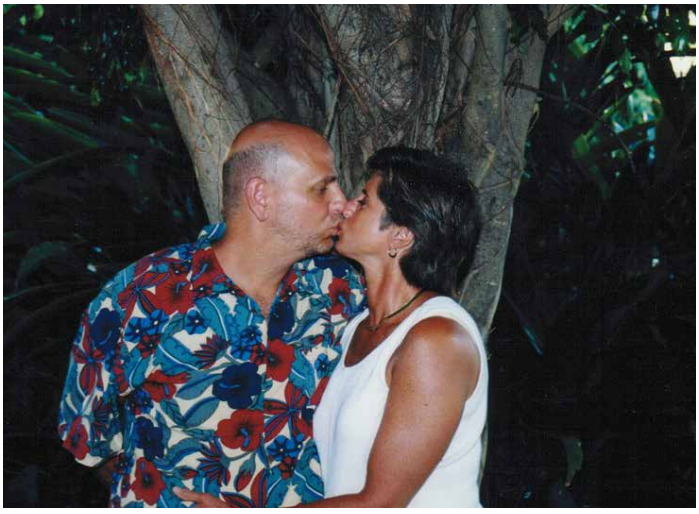


Simon Margolis with his daughter, Erica, at her wedding.

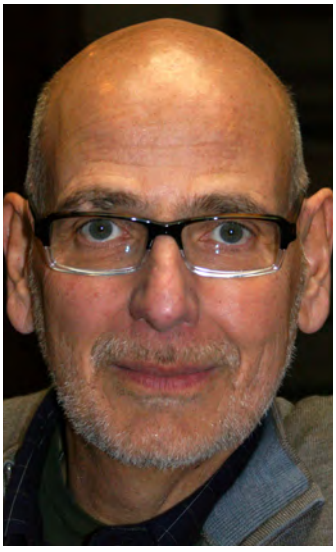
Simon Margolis with his daughter, Erica, at her wedding.

Simon Margolis with son-in-law, Tyler.

Simon Margolis, and his wife, Marcia, at their daughter Erica's wedding.



Simon and Marcia Margolis.



Simon Margolis.

Simon Margolis and his daughter, Erica, enjoying the dolphins while on vacation.

Simon Margolis on vacation.

Purple Day 2025.

Another great image of Simon Margolis.

Simon Margolis in his favorite color, purple.

Legacy in Motion

The photographs in this gallery capture more than moments from a tribute. They capture a community reflecting on where it has been and considering where it must go next. The laughter, conversations and shared memories reflect relationships built over decades. They also represent a bridge between generations of CRT professionals: those who helped establish the foundation, those carrying the work forward today and those who will shape its future.

For those who would like to experience more of the stories and memories shared in Margolis's honor, iNRRTS has created a collection on its website featuring reflections from colleagues, family and friends; the full video of the tribute meeting; and video messages from those whose lives and careers were touched by Margolis. These recordings offer an opportunity to hear Margolis remembered in the voices of those who knew him best and to experience the warmth, humor and passion that characterized his relationships throughout the CRT community.

The tribute may have been a single gathering, but the memories continue. We invite readers to visit the iNRRTS website to explore the collection and spend time with

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Simon Margolis as an orthotist.

Simon Margolis.

the stories, photographs and video tributes that celebrate Margolis's life and lasting influence.

Margolis's legacy does not belong only to those who knew him. It belongs to everyone who believes that CRT can empower people to live with greater independence, participation and choice. The most meaningful way to honor him is not simply to remember what he accomplished but to continue what he started.

Mentor someone. Advocate for someone. Listen to the end user. Empower the next generation.

In doing so, we carry forward Margolis's mission, not as a memory of the past but as a commitment to the future. His work continues through ours.

To view all recordings and shared memories, visit:

https://nrrts.org/simon-margolis/

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Andrea Madsen is the executive director of iNRRTS, the International Registry of Rehabilitation Technology Suppliers. She has over 20 years' experience providing Complex Rehabilitation Technology to adult and pediatric patients in southern Minnesota, western Wisconsin and northern Iowa, and internationally through her work with the Mayo Clinic. She earned a Bachelor of Science in business management and finance, is a credentialed Assistive Technology Professional and has been a Certified Complex Rehabilitation Technology Supplier®. She served for 10 years on the iNRRTS Board of Directors and as committee chair for the Midwest Association of Medical Equipment Services. She has lectured for the University of Minnesota Rochester, the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science, and at the International Seating Symposium and Medtrade.

Simon Margolis expresses his view during a presentation.

Simon Margolis at CELA, the Continuing Education and Legislative Action event in Washington, D.C.

Simon Margolis with Gerry Dickerson and Michele Gunn.

Simon Margolis in Washington, D.C.

Simon Margolis celebrates his birthday in Nashville, Tennessee.

Simon Margolis waves at the photographer.

Simon Margolis' smile.

Simon Margolis with an end user at CELA, the Continuing Education and Legislative Action event in Washington, D.C.

Simon Margolis wearing the purple "Pimp" hat.