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[Home](#) > Marshall Berman dies

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[Glenn Branch](#) [2]

11.09.2015

[Marshall Berman dies](#) [3]



Marshall Berman

The physicist and science education activist Marshall Berman died on October 25, 2015, at the age of 76, according to a November 8, 2015, [obituary](#) [4] from the Coalition for Excellence in Science and Math Education (CESE) in New Mexico. Passionate about the quality of science education, Berman served for four years on the state board of education and was a leader in the state's science education organizations, including the New Mexico Academy of Science, New Mexicans for Science and Reason, and CESE.

Berman became involved in the fight against creationism in 1996, when the state board of education voted to remove references to evolution and the age of the earth from the state's science standards. After lobbying, education, and legislative efforts all failed, Berman won election to the board, and convinced his new colleagues to restore evolution and the age of the earth to the standards. Berman's efforts in New Mexico were recognized by NCSE with a Friend of Darwin award in 1999. Berman was instrumental in rebuffing subsequent efforts to compromise the scientific integrity of the standards and to pass antievolution bills in the state legislature. His motivation was not hard to discern: creationism, in Berman's view, was a threat to "all of science and society," as he [explained](#) [5] in a 2005 column

published in the American Physical Society's newsletter. In 2006, he [told](#) ^[6] *Stanford Medicine Magazine*, "It's hard for me to imagine a bigger threat that all of us face. It's time to take action. Get involved in politics and take a stand for science."

Berman was born on June 16, 1939, in Detroit, Michigan. He earned his B.S. in physics from the University of Michigan and his Ph.D. in nuclear physics from Wayne State University. He spent his professional career at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he worked for thirty-two years on nuclear reactor safety, managing a variety of defense research projects. He also served as the executive director of the U.S. Council of Competitiveness's Innovation Initiative.

[General](#) ^[7]

[2015](#) ^[8]

[+ read](#) ^[3]

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Links

[1] <https://ncse.com/printpdf/18067>

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[3] <https://ncse.com/news/2015/11/marshall-berman-dies-0016732>

[4] <http://www.cese.org/cese-founder-dr-marshall-berman-1939-2015/>

[5] <http://www.aps.org/publications/apsnews/200510/backpage.cfm>

[6] <http://sm.stanford.edu/archive/stanmed/2006summer/evo-main.html>

[7] <https://ncse.com/general>

[8] <https://ncse.com/news/2015>