

My name is Lisa Goddard. I know Robert as the young man who walked beside me and our dear friend Joe Price, down Williamsburg's beautiful DOG Street. Together we chased our dreams.

Robert. Roberto. Bobo.

That's what I called him. Bobo.

I did this for two reasons. First, because it drove Robert crazy. He hated it. Second, because it was so at odds with who he was. From the time I met him, Robert was one of the most mature people at William & Mary.

Not to say he wasn't fun. He had that megawatt smile that still reaches into your heart. He would jump in an impromptu road trip to DC. But "Bobo" he was not.

To get me back for this. Robert called me "boss". And I hated that. It was technically true, but it was ironic.

Because Robert was really in charge. He just never took the credit. He never wanted to be student body president. He wanted to be the one in the back, getting the work done that would truly make things better.

He was the roots of the oak. Quiet, deep, strong.

When some of us in student government somehow got into a colossal ice cream fight -- yes we were dorks -- Robert got dragged in. I can still see him smiling, trying to ignore the chocolate running down his perfectly tucked-in T-shirt.

After it ended -- we of course sent poor Robert to the Dean of Students to apologize for us. We knew his poise and gentle defense would get us out of it.

Somehow he always got the impossible done -- with the Dean of Students or at the Board of Visitors -- they just could not turn him down. He was honest and wanted little fanfare.

He had many causes -- especially fighting for students and against budget cuts. His leadership was profound, and his compassion enormous.

He discovered a well-known former president of the college -- Davis Paschall -- lived nearby and decided to visit. Robert learned that this man who had built the modern William & Mary was aging and had very little of the student contact he loved.

That first visit turned into years of friendship for the two men with bright eyes.

When President Paschall's wife got sick, Robert was helping for days.

President Paschall lovingly referred to Robert in an aged southern accent simply as “WOOOOHN””. ((Did you see the Christmas card “WOOOHN” sent me?))

((Robert performed hundreds of anonymous acts. With not much money to spare, he would buy a newspaper subscription for a homesick New Yorker. Or drop off pizzas to hungry students.))

President Paschall used to tell graduates “the hallmark of your degree is a holy grail quest toward a worthy immortality through service to mankind.”

In just 32 years, Robert achieved that quest and achieved that immortality.

The world misses him. In this room full of amazing people, I know Robert Wone was the best of us.

Lisa Goddard
Reporter, CNN