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CAMPUS MOURNS FACULTY MEMBER RIFT FOURNIER

October 10, 2013

The Lindenwood University community is mourning the loss of communications faculty member Rift Fournier, who died Monday, October 7, after a long illness. The university is holding a memorial service for the award-winning television writer, director, and producer at 1 p.m. on Sunday in the Young Hall Auditorium on campus.

Fournier came to Lindenwood initially as a commencement speaker in 2007 and began a stint in the School of Communications as an artist in residence shortly after. After his residency was over, he joined the faculty, in which he worked until late September of this year, when he went on leave because of illness. He completed a Master of Fine Arts degree at the university last summer



"He made it possible for the Lindenwood community to meet and speak with some of the great actors of all time, including Malcolm McDowell and Stacy Keach, both of whom visited Lindenwood at Rift's request," said James D. Evans, Lindenwood's president. "Our communications students marveled at and adored him."

Born in Wichita, Kan., in 1936, Fournier enjoyed a long career, mostly in television, in which he worked on shows like Baretta, Kojak, NYPD Blue, and several others. He won numerous awards, including the Emmy and the Peabody, and was a pioneer in the use of single-camera mobile videotape for NBC's award-winning children's series, GO! He counted among his friends luminaries like Orson Welles. Because of a bout with polio as a teenager, Fournier spent most of his life bound to a wheelchair.

"I didn't know it was supposed to stop me from doing something," he told the LA Times in a 1986 interview. "You've heard the joke, 'I never knew I was poor...'? Well, I never knew I was handicapped ... Nobody took my dreams away."

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