



## Alan Reinstein Memorial Award

Our family and the Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization volunteers, victims, doctors and political leaders including Dr. Arthur Frank and Member of Parliament, Pat Martin in the audience, are honored to present the Alan Reinstein Memorial Award to Dr. Thawat Suntrajarn, the Director-General of the Department of Disease Control. This conference could not have taken place without the support, commitment and dedication of the Director-General and his wonderful staff who worked on this conference for almost a year.



Alan served as ADAO's President for more than two years. He was an amazing husband, father, grandfather and friend. Coincidentally, we visited Thailand just 15 years ago and the memories I have of that trip are truly precious. Alan is just one of hundreds of thousands of victims who have been disabled or died from asbestos. Although mesothelioma is responsible for about 5% of asbestos related deaths, it was important to Alan that all asbestos caused diseases be recognized as killers and eliminated.

Alan and I ran marathons, climbed mountains and lived each day with zeal. Unlike a marathon, there are no cheering finish lines or medals for asbestos victims – only death and destruction.

Alan was an executive for more than twenty years and never thought his previous jobs and home repairs would kill him. In retrospect, diagnosing mesothelioma should have been simple by Alan's classic symptoms of a persistent dry cough, fatigue, weight loss and pleural effusion. Yet for nine months, his disease was misdiagnosed. Alan was finally diagnosed after a thoracoscopy. We had never heard of mesothelioma and thought asbestos had been banned.

Alan courageously fought his battle against mesothelioma for nearly three years. He chose the radical EPP surgery where his left lung and pericardium were resected and diaphragm was replaced in hopes to extend his life. He spent his last year tethered to oxygen 24 hours a day as mesothelioma tortuously ravaged his body and took his life.

As President of ADAO, Alan stood unwavering as a beacon of hope to victims and their families; and shared his courage and strength with patients around the world. Isolation exacerbates the fears of victims and their families. Alan believed in education, social action, and accountability. He spoke about the dangers of asbestos to the U.S. Senate and internationally to the press.

Alan died on May 22; death stole him away – many years too soon. Our grief is, like that of so many other families, is overwhelming. In his memory and out of respect for all asbestos victims, we pledge to continue expanding asbestos disease awareness, focus on improving medical treatment options and increasing funding for research.



My story is sad. But I don't want to leave you feeling sorry me or our 13 year old daughter. I want you to leave today with feelings of outrage and the burning desire to effect change for the betterment of our future. Hundreds of thousands of families around the world grieve their loss of loved ones. For each life lost, a shattered family is left behind.

As our conference ends, we stand together, united in our mutual goal to achieve a global ban on this killer fiber. I am confident with determination and global solidarity that we can reduce and eventually eliminate asbestos exposure; I pray that one day we will find a cure for all asbestos cancers and pleural diseases. Together, we can win this battle.

I am humbled and proud to present the Alan Reinstein Memorial Award this award today to Dr. Suntrajarn, in recognition of his work being done to protect and educate Thai citizens and members of neighboring countries from deadly asbestos. Thank you.

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**"United for Asbestos Disease Awareness, Education, Advocacy, Prevention, Support and a Cure."**  
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