

It is with sadness that we acknowledge the loss of longtime colleague and friend of PSC, Albert Anderson, on February 9, 2021. He is survived by sons Albert F. “Andy” Anderson III and Paul Anderson and their spouses and children. A pioneer in social science computing, Albert joined the University of Michigan's Population Studies Center (PSC) in 1972, where he served as co-head of the data processing department, focusing on large data sets such as the U.S. Census public use microdata samples (PUMS). Albert retired from the University of Michigan in 1996 and thereafter was Director of Research at PDQ-Explore (<http://publicdataqueries.com/>), co-founded with his son Paul in 1993.

Albert's life took him from small-town Iowa to a career in data analysis at a leading center of population studies. He earned a B.S. in General Engineering, a M.S. in Sociology, and a Ph.D. in Rural Sociology, all from Iowa State University. After teaching sociology at Drake University, he came to the PSC, where he expanded his longtime love of baseball to embrace the University of Michigan team and the Detroit Tigers.

Albert always enjoyed new technology, including hi-fi equipment and radio-controlled model planes. Technology led him to his true career in computer programming and data analysis, first as a computer pioneer at Drake and then at the PSC. In this vein, Anderson contributed substantially to human capital building and research efforts in Nepal. The Andersons [established the Albert and Charlotte Anderson Distance Learning Center \(ACADLC\)](#) at the Institute for Social and Environmental Research – Nepal (ISER-N), where South Asian students can learn from instructors at the University of Michigan. The Anderson Center remains the most technologically advanced space in Nepal, creating a one-of-kind destination to support research and training, while remaining an economical option, because instructors can teach and engage students virtually.

Another Anderson innovation is PDQ-Explore, a data management and analysis system for massive data sets. Initial funding came from a series of small business grants from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the National Institute on Aging (NIA). Al headed PDQ's research efforts on re-sampling, confidentiality and privacy issues in census data, and expert systems based on semantic networks and case-based reasoning to facilitate access to the information.

Albert Anderson was an active member of PAA and frequently participated in discussions about advances in the use of computing technology in demography. He was a wonderful colleague and visionary, and will be greatly missed. If you'd like to give in his honor, donations are welcomed to Doctors Without Borders.

Sarah Burgard
Director, Population Studies Center, and Professor of Sociology
University of Michigan