

DR. J. PHILLIP LONDON

OBITUARY

JANUARY 22, 2021

His signature was “Always my best”—Jack.” It was both a promise and an expectation. His passions were his family, the Navy, and CACI International (NYSE:CACI), the company he led for almost fifty years and grew into a \$5.7 billion information technology juggernaut with 23,000 employees in 155 offices worldwide. A luminary of the government contracting industry, Dr. J. Phillip “Jack” London, CACI’s Executive Chairman and Chairman of the Board, passed away on January 18 at age 83.



An Entrepreneurial Visionary, Dr. London is known as the founder of the modern-era CACI. Joining the company in 1972 as employee number 35, he rose through the ranks to become the President and Chief Executive Officer, positions he held for more than 20 years until he passed the reins to a successor in 2007. An avid trend reader, he was always one step ahead of the market, nimbly growing the company’s capabilities, service offerings, and footprint over decades of expansions and contractions in his market.

Dr. London was an industry giant who drove all of CACI’s major strategic initiatives, including a highly successful mergers and acquisition program, which he initiated in 1992. He oversaw 79 company acquisitions.

As he has said, “Building a company takes more than just good management and leadership skills. It requires a different kind of mindset; one that envisions, motivates, innovates, and supports the company and its employees along the way. Some people are good at making companies more efficient or profitable, but building is different. I like to think of myself as a builder and CACI has been my construction project for almost half a century.”

A nationally recognized authority on organizational ethics, the Ethisphere Institute named him one of the Most Influential People in Business Ethics in 2014. He also received the Distinguished Graduate Award from the U.S. Naval Academy and the Navy Memorial Foundation’s Lone Sailor Award in 2019, was inducted into the Washington Business Hall of Fame in 2010, and was bestowed with the Greater Washington Contractors Awards Hall of Fame in 2012. A leading employer of veterans, CACI’s veterans’ program has received numerous awards, including White House recognition. It has also been named one of the World’s Most Admired Companies by *Fortune* magazine.

He got his start building companies by watching his parents do it. The descendant of colonial pioneers and prairie framers, Dr. London was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on April 30,

1937, to Harry R. and Evalyn P. London. Both his parents owned small businesses, where Dr. London saw firsthand the stress of making payroll and collections, and where he learned the value of customer attention when you are in the business of sales.

His childhood was bookended by war—World War II and Korea. As an elementary school student, he read the news about World War II over his father’s shoulder. In junior high school, the Korean War broke out and the fear of communism fractured the peace of his midwestern town. His family has a legacy of military service in all of America’s wars going back to the Revolutionary War, but it was a friend’s brother who influenced his determination to attend the U.S. Naval Academy. Seeing the U.S. Navy’s Blue Angels flight demonstration team conduct a low flyover across the stadium at an Oklahoma University football game forever sealed his intent to pursue a career in naval aviation.

Graduating from the Naval Academy with the class of 1959, Dr. London became an antisubmarine warfare helicopter pilot, thrilled with the low-level, barnstorming style of flying he was able to perform in a rotary-wing aircraft. He served on active duty for twelve years, participating in the naval blockade during the Cuban Missile Crisis and the recovery team aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Randolph* (CVS-15) for John Glenn’s space flight on Freedom 7.

After earning a master’s degree at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, Dr. London served as aide to Adm. Jack Arnold at the Navy Materiel Command, where he was first exposed to the federal government’s labyrinthine acquisition process. He joined the Navy Reserve in 1971, and retired from the service at the rank of captain. He earned a doctorate in business administration from George Washington University, and was hired in 1972 by a small company in northern Virginia to be one of its IT program managers. It was called CACI.

Dr. London was a prolific author of industry and historical articles and books, including two manuscripts that will be published this year: a memoir, *Ever Vigilant*, and *Profiles in Character: Sixteen Americans and The Traits That Defined Them*.

However, he is best known for his work, *Character: The Ultimate Success Factor*, which he referenced in speeches to more than 10,000 people around the country. In it, he made the case that character is the one trait you can control and the most important contributing attribute to success: “There’s only one way to be the master of your fate or the captain of your soul. It’s owning who you are—it’s owning your character.”

Also an ardent student of history and genealogy, Dr. London was an honorary trustee of the New England Genealogy Society. He traced his family lineage back to Charlemagne (742-814), King Edward III, and Capt. Samuel Nicholson, one of the first captains in the Continental Navy during the American Revolution and the first commanding officer of the USS *Constitution* (“Old Ironsides”). He documented this research in his book *The Royal and Noble Ancestry of Edward III: A London Family Lineage*.

Dr. London held leadership roles in numerous associations, including the Society of the Cincinnati, Sons of the American Revolution, SMOTJ, and was a proud 33° Freemason. He served on the boards of many more organizations, including the United States Navy Memorial

Foundation, the Naval Historical Foundation, and Friends of the National World War II Memorial. He was a founding board member of CAUSE (Comfort for America's Uniformed Services), which provides rehabilitation and recreation programs for wounded warriors, and he has many other affiliations (jphilliplondon.com).

Dr. London established a number of programs and awards for students and Navy aspirants at the organizations he loved. At the U.S. Naval Academy, he hosted the CACI Midshipmen internship program in cyber, national security, and information technology; the Capt. J. Phillip London USN (Ret.) '59 Cyber Security Studies Award; and the Capt. Samuel Nicholson Naval and Marine Corps History and Leadership Award. With the Naval Academy and the Naval Historical Foundation, he sponsored the Superintendent's Annual Leadership and Vision Awards competition: Voices of Maritime History. With the Naval Academy and the Sons of the American Revolution, he backed the American History Award. And, with the U.S. Naval Institute, he underwrote the Essay Contest for the Leadership in the Sea Services: A Junior Officer's Perspective.

He is survived by his loving wife, soul mate, and life partner, Dr. Jennifer London, the former Dr. Jennifer Ellen Burkhardt of Ohio; his adult children, J. Phillip London, Jr. (Jennifer) and Laura London (Jed); his young sons Jackson, Jayson, and Jonathon; six grandchildren (Evan, Andrew, James, Charlotte, Riley, and Jasper); brother Gary London (Liz) of Edmond, Oklahoma; nephews Greg Hale and Hunter London; and niece Lauren London Derrick.

An in-person Masonic funeral will be held at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia, on Saturday, February 13th at 1:00 pm. This service will also be livestreamed. For details about in-person attendance and viewing the livestream, please visit jphilliplondon.com. Future Christian services will be held at the Naval Academy Chapel in Annapolis, Maryland, and the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. Dr. London will be laid to rest with full honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

Gifts in his memory can be made to [CAUSE USA](#), the [United States Navy Memorial](#), and the [Washington National Cathedral](#).