



Donna L. Decker

January 7, 2013

Passed peacefully January 7, 2013. Age 45 years. Donna is survived by her partner, CJ Hribal; her children, Samuel and Mirabella Schuster; her children's father, Matt Schuster; her parents, Nelda (Mort) Blatt, and Dane (Linda) Decker; her grandmother, Virginia Ryta; and her siblings, Carey (Heath) Fear. Lee Ann (Heath) McKerrow, Laura (Derek) Nicholls and Erin Decker. Further survived by nieces, nephews, other relatives, colleagues, students and many friends. Donna was vivacious, brilliant, beautiful, strong, funny, kind, generous, spirited, happy, discerning and courageous. She was a cancer warrior, great friend, inspiring educator, loving mother, wonderful daughter and loyal sister. Donna amazingly obtained her PhD in British Literature in the midst of her original cancer diagnosis. She taught at Marquette University and University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. Donna was a ferocious lover of life and we will miss her immensely. Service & Reception InfoPlease join Donna's family as they celebrate her life at Northshore Funeral Services Chapel on Friday, January 11 after 4:00 PM with a Time of Sharing at 7:00 PM. If desired, memorials appreciated to Samuel and Mirabella Schuster Education fund or Froedert Hospital - Sarcoma Program, 9200 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53226.

Tribute Wall

AW

“ *Love and miss you Dr. Donna. Thinking of you always and feeling your vivacious spirit!!! XO, Abby*

Abby Walker - February 11, 2013 at 12:00 AM

MI

“ My first encounter with Donna was as a second year graduate student. Following two semesters of TA assignments, I found myself sitting in her office applying to fill a two-semester lab instructor vacancy for her media writing class. I listened as she passionately described her pedagogy and outlined expectations of lab instructors. I expressed my concerns about being an effective teacher: one who could relay the fundamentals but also provide anecdotal, real-world examples in a manner that might more effectively engage students. She pressed me for additional information about my professional experience, possibly because I was an atypical grad student, more than ten years her senior. After divulging credentials, I related the tale of my first employment as a writer - one that resulted in termination following my snarky review of an entertainment venue. Her response was to laugh that Donna laugh and tell me that this was the type of anecdote that, when related to media writing directives, would interest students. I then realized that this spirited professional was a potential mentor, and also a kindred spirit Donna was a mentor, to me and many other graduate students fortunate enough to fill her lab instructor ranks. Her weekly lectures were challenging, energetic and entertaining discourses with 75-plus students. There was always the occasional rejoinder to the lab instructors, huddled in the front-right corner, to substantiate or refute an arcane or generation-specific reference. Donna consistently inspired a genuine desire in all of us to substantiate and exemplify the week's lecture directives in the writing labs that followed. I occasionally sought her advice in instances when a student presented a unique challenge. Emails would be promptly returned containing the advice of a learned professional with considerable knowledge of the media profession and its academic underpinnings. There was also a distinct, humanitarian aspect to her counsel. Her modus operandi was to temper thoughtful advice with the encouragement to follow one's own instinct and evaluations, without admonition. For me, this was the essence of Donna Decker.

mark irving - January 11, 2013 at 12:00 AM

KK

“ Donna was my favorite teacher, she made me WANT to get out of bed at 8 AM just to hear what she had to say. She always put a smile on my face and was always so inspiring. I remember thinking, "someday I want to be just like her." The things she taught me I will remember for the rest of my life. I have no doubt in my mind that she is an angel now.

Kelly Kotora - January 10, 2013 at 12:00 AM