Wanda Mayberry

The following memorial comments have been received by the College of Applied Human Sciences and Department of Occupational Therapy at Colorado State University about our beloved Wanda Mayberry.

“I first became a fan of hers when she was on a faculty panel and she mentioned how much she appreciated adult learners/NTS in her classroom because they made her a better teacher! She then volunteered at Cinco Cinco race and then served on our committee for a several years. Smart, Sweet, Straight ahead. That was our Wanda!

Barbara Musslewhite

"As I reflect upon Wanda and everyone’s memories of her, one thing I have not heard yet is her fiery determination, she was a person who got things done and nothing stood in her way. She would find a way around it whether the challenge was her goal of earning a PhD at University of Denver when she was older than her advisor and caring for her mother who was in poor health, working in the Peace Corps in the Philippines, or coordinating the Master’s Program at CSU’s Occupational Therapy Department. Wanda was a strong advocate for what she believed in and she found a way to get things done. Wanda had an uncanny knack to weave into her life a love of occupational therapy, traveling and good will for all."

Patricia Stutz-Tanenbaum, a coworker in the CSU Occupational Therapy Department.

"I always remember Wanda celebrating her OTR (the day she became a registered occupational therapist) birthday every year. She would even bring a cake to share with everyone. I really believe her OTR birthday was more important to her than her actual one. I also always admired Wanda’s dedication to students – she was a wonderful grad mentor. It mattered not if she was studying and researching in the topic area in which a student had an interest. She would take it on – and would use the student’s interest to teach them about the research process. Whenever I think of Wanda, I will recall her determination to live life to its fullest. As Wanda wished, her body was donated to science, and no memorial service was held.

David Green, OT colleague."
"Wanda Mayberry always facilitated opportunities for occupational therapy students to develop professional characteristics. Just several months ago, I passed Wanda in the hall in the occupational therapy building and she said she was bringing a donation to help cover the cost for students to attend the Occupational Therapy Association of Colorado annual conference. Wanda valued the profession of occupational therapy and one of her legacies is that she has helped develop that value in many, many students that have graduated from the occupational therapy department at Colorado State University."

Patti Davies, OT professor.

"Wanda had a love of life and big heart for everyone—a kind, gentle and generous soul who truly lived in gratitude and loved and supported CSU-OT and her profession with a passion. There is absolutely no replacing her nor denying the sadness of her passing. May her beautiful spirit continue to inspire us, as I have every faith it will."

Wendy Wood, OT department chair.

“She was a great teacher and good listener. I enjoyed her laughter and chuckle. She was an inspiration.”

David Nunnally.

“Wanda was a wonderful person. She helped me as I worked on my Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy. She was always supportive and positive and helped me through tough times such as, a sick child in the hospital and an almost full-term pregnancy at the time of my oral exam. Her bright and cheery demeanor was always a boost. She remained my friend and I have so admired her intelligence, honor, generosity, and kindness. She has always been the role model for any OT….we should all try to be more like her. God Bless you forever Wanda, you will be missed.”

Love and admiration, LaDonna Cohen MS, OTR/L.

“I am a former student of Wanda's from both undergraduate and graduate studies in Occupational Therapy. I kept in touch with Wanda because we saw each other around town, as I live not far from her in Ft. Collins and I saw Wanda volunteering at the Peace Corps booths at many functions at CSU. Wanda always represented life in such a joyous manner, she had a smile on her face when I last saw her last summer and said she was feeling great; she was on her way to a volunteer activity. She put her heart into her teaching and always worked at making the lessons meaningful. I appreciated her as a teacher, mentor and friend and will always remember her in those ways.”

Chris Pieper Gaebler, MS, OTR.

“Wanda was the first person I met and was over the admissions process when I attended CSU. She was a very generous soul and took an interest in my success; not only my school work but with my family. My wife and I adopted a child while we were in graduate school and she couldn’t wait to see our boy and always asked about him. She truly was an iconic figure for the OT department at CSU.”

Steven Duke.
“I remember her with fondness and greatly appreciate her significant contributions to the profession. No doubt, her legacy will live on for many years to come.”
Shaun Conway.

“Wanda enabled me to finish my occupational therapy training by being flexible and accommodating to me- an older student (30 years old when I entered the OT program at CSU), mother of 2-4 kids while attending the OT program at CSU, and commuter from Denver to Fort Collins. I attend the program from 1982 and graduated in 1989. I also gave birth to number 2, 3 and the 4th of my 6 kids while in the program. Wanda made accommodations so that I could return home to Denver on weekends to be with my family. I stayed in Ft Collins from Monday through Thursday PM, in a rented room with one baby each semester, I was in the program. Sometimes the baby was a guest in a class to demonstrate normal baby development (thank G-d). I nursed my babies between classes and managed to find babysitters near campus. Wanda would allow me to tape Fri AM classes and take exams on Thursday so I could go home for weekends. This accommodation made life so much easier for my entire family. I love being an OT and have had an exciting and innovative career. I thank Wanda for her part in enabling me to achieve such a wonderful part of my life. Her love of OT also inspired me very much. She will be missed but not forgotten for the legacy she provided as a mentor way beyond the job description that she was hired to do… Thanks Wanda and may you continue to inspire others with the memories we share about you.”
Shoshana Shamberg OTR/L, MS, FAOTA.

“I was fortunate to have Wanda 1995-1997, she had high standards and encouraged responsibility for the big picture but also the little things. Thank you Wanda for your dedication. I have never forgotten her and her involvement in my career.”
Debbie Doyle, OTR/L Alumni 1997.

“I was fortunate enough to be chosen as a recipient of the Wanda Mayberry Scholarship my second year in CSU’s OT program. I later had lunch with Wanda at the Scholarship Luncheon. I had heard about her huge, vibrant personality and she definitely lived up to my expectations. I remember her asking what area I planned to practice in, and when I told her I hoped to work in schools she responded with sincere enthusiasm and words of encouragement. I have now graduated and am working in a school. Thank you, Wanda, for helping me along the way, as you most certainly have for countless others.”
Brett Turner
“Thank you, Wanda for being the best advisor a new OT student could have .....You have inspired me to become the OT I am today, advocating for our clients and community integration in everything we do!”
*God Bless, Kim Eberhardt Muir (95)*

“We were saddened to hear of Wanda's passing. Wanda was the "nicest/kindest" OT professor. She will be missed.”
*Ted and Jocelyn Ohta, OTRs (class of 1992/1993)*

“What a loss for all of us who knew and loved Wanda. Her generous spirit, joyous energy and love of all good things was always there for anyone who entered her circle of compassion. How I will miss her precious Christmas cards.”
*Mary Ann M. Kleuser.*

“I was shocked to hear that Wanda had passed away. It had been a long time since I saw her. Through her graceful Christmas messages every year, I knew that she was doing fantastic work and having a great joy in doing it. I always thought that someday I would visit her and have a good talk to catch up. This day would never happen now because of my ignorance of time. I thought of her so often. Wanda was my advisor when I came to US from Taiwan for my graduate work in 1976. She gave me so much support during the two years of my study. I don’t think I would be what I am without her influence and support. She was so kind in putting up with my lack of skills in communication and cultural understanding. I learned not only the advanced Occupational Therapy knowledge but the most professional ways of working with the clients. When I got married in Fort Collins, Wanda gave me away because both of my parents could not make to the wedding. I was so lucky to have her as a teacher and mentor in life. From her, I learned humanity, the most important lesson of life.”
*Judy Su 1976-1978 OT Master Program.*

“I'm writing to share a brief remembrance of Wanda. I've included a photo I found of our OT class in the Basic Master's program. There is Wanda, right in the middle, smiling along with all of us. I was privileged to have Wanda on my thesis committee and appreciated her guidance and mentoring. But beyond teacher and mentor, I remember Wanda as always being a steady and positive presence for us as we grappled with new concepts and struggled with mastering a large amount of content in our way to becoming practicing occupational therapists.”
*Mary Anne Moisan, Class of 1991(MS in OT)*
“Wanda was my advisor when I was at CSU working on my Master’s degree in OT in the mid 1970s. As I read of her death on the OT CSU website and of her life since I knew her, she is today even more of an inspiration. Her passion, determination and human connection continued to keep her engaged in her chosen occupation. As an example of how to remain productive in old age, Wanda again was in the forefront. CSU and OT can be proud of her.”

Linda Nicholson-Brown Victoria, British Columbia