



Darcy Mullen PhD

October 25, 2020

It is with extreme sadness that we share with you the passing of Darcy Mullen as of Sunday, October 25, 2020.

Darcy was a creative soul. She surrounded herself with plants, and let nothing go to waste.

She painted with coffee grounds and rosewater, made castles out of cardboard, and wrote and read voraciously.

Most of all she loved her dog Caleb, the famous #soughound.

She was a generous soul and expressed her love through wacky little gifts to everyone. A little bottle of vinegar to a friend, bottles of hand sanitizer left in her mailbox for her postal carrier, dried gardenia petals sent through the mail that exploded with fragrance when the envelope was opened. She wrote thank you notes to everyone since she was a little girl and loved getting mail especially if there were stickers on the envelope.

She was an extraordinary teacher committed to social justice, and a scholar passionate about food studies.

Recently for a class module posted for her students, she dyed her hair pumpkin spice.

Darcy was a talented artist and musician and always surprised the world with her creations.

Throughout her adult life, she suffered from the physical and mental anguish of endometriosis. She used her voice, her writings, her art, and her communication skills as an advocate for all those that suffered from this horrible disease.

Darcy was preceded in death by her father Brian Mullen.

She is survived by her mother MaryLou Watson and stepfather Kurt Watson, all her family including JoAnn Faucett and family, Biffy Fletcher, Tom and Denise Porter and family, Peter Porter, Stephen Porter, Colton Porter, Bill Porter and family, all the Benosky Family, her fairy godmother Ellen Rupert and family, all her professional colleagues, students, and good friends near and far.

We will all miss you, most especially the #soughound.

The family would like to express their great gratitude to all her friends at Georgia Tech, most especially Leah and Dori for all their help.

Darcy was the color and laughter and goodness in all of our lives. Rest in peace sweet Darcy.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Atlanta Food Bank.

Comments



“ Dear Darcy, Thank you for your service to Georgia Tech and your dedication to your students and your craft. Clearly, the world has lost one of its more colorful, brightest souls and will be just a little bit dimmer for the absence of your light. May you find peace and happiness wherever you go, and may you be surrounded by kindred spirits who will appreciate the light that you bring. With regards from a colleague who never got to meet you but really wishes he had. - Nathan W. Moon

Nathan Moon - November 17, 2020 at 02:22 PM



“ I'm just now hearing of Darcy's passing. My heart is broken. I first met Darcy through her father Brian. He was a big fan of mine (I'm a singer-songwriter in Syracuse). Brian loved his daughter- and I got to know her first through his eyes (he was a great writer- thus a great storyteller and we shared something in common/both raising a daughter). She and I got together for lunch after his passing. We kept in touch over the years. I loved her strength and confidence- she was a brilliant woman, a talented writer herself. I am very saddened to know I'll never see her again. Love and light to her friends and family that she's left behind.

ashley cox - November 06, 2020 at 08:41 PM



“ Darcy was a deeply empathetic and highly gifted professor, and her students at Georgia Tech really felt how deeply she cared about them as human beings, as well as her skill as an instructor. I had the privilege of working with Darcy on an assessment project through Serve-Learn-Sustain at Georgia Tech, and I was consistently impressed by her commitment to food justice, equity, and community engagement learning opportunities for her students. When Georgia Tech had to "pivot" to virtual instruction in March, Darcy was consistently attentive to the challenges and needs of her students, always working to ensure they were supported in coping with stresses associated with the pandemic as well as the challenges of online learning. She will be deeply missed by students, staff, and faculty at Georgia Tech.

Rebecca Watts Hull - November 02, 2020 at 11:38 AM



“ Darcy was one of the first people to welcome me to the Writing and Communication Program. I've only been here a few months, but she had already gone out of her way multiple times to see if I needed anything, to share dog stories and, once she found out I'm impressed by craft projects, to tell me about her marvelous creative work. I'll remember her as a compassionate, community minded soul and her example will stay with me throughout my years at Tech.

Melissa lanetta

Melissa lanetta - October 29, 2020 at 03:08 PM



“ As these wonderful memories attest, Darcy was so very beloved. She was a treasured collaborator and colleague of our team at Georgia Tech's Center for Serve-Learn-Sustain, where we were so lucky to work with her, her students, and her community partners. We will miss her so much, and we extend our condolences, love, and prayers to her mother, her family, and her big family of friends. We have posted a tribute to Darcy and to her teaching here: <https://serve-learn-sustain.gatech.edu/remembrance-darcy-mullen>

Ruth Yow - October 29, 2020 at 12:31 PM



“ Darcy was an authentic and caring person. Although our paths would not have typically crossed a whole lot, we has worked together on a project and were friends on FB. When I posted about my struggles with fibromyalgia, she reached out to comfort and encourage me. She had herself been diagnosed with fibromyalgia (in addition to her endometriosis) a few months before my post.

I had originally been reluctant to share a lot about my illness. However, Darcy’s was one of those messages that encouraged me to be more open about it, and eventually become an advocate - there are still many who think it’s a “fake disease.”

Darcy wrote to me “I also respect your openness in sharing that on social media. As you know there’s such pressure regarding how we talk about our bodies, especially in public spaces. I appreciate you, and hope we can get our paths to cross again soon!”

We bonded over our shared battles with pain and the pursuit of social justice. Her positive attitude inspired me to appreciate my life and focus less on the burdens.

I also attended one of her classes on food literacy. She was an inspiring teacher. Her students were deeply engaged and enthusiastic. I learned a lot that day in her class.

Thank you for bringing so much light and joy in this world, Darcy. Rest In Peace

Usha Nair-Reichert - October 29, 2020 at 10:56 AM



“ 38 files added to the album LifeTributes



Davis-Struempf Funeral Home & Crematory - October 29, 2020 at 09:30 AM



“ Darcy was a generous person who brought so much joy through her dedication to her students, her fierce loyalty to friends, her passion for food justice, and, of course, her love for her souphound. She was also amazingly open about her struggles with endometriosis and chronic pain and she transformed her experience into art, storytelling, and advocacy.



Andee Krafft - October 28, 2020 at 10:06 PM



“ 13 files added to the album Dr. Darcy Mullen



Rebecca Burnett - October 28, 2020 at 09:26 PM



“ I had the good fortune to first meet Darcy in 2006 at U of R and to later reconnect at Tech when she first arrived as a Brittain Fellow. I have fond memories of her explaining how she learned how to crochet from her dad, her expressions while she told a story about attending a science-fi con, the little stories she made up about former inhabitants while we toured rental houses for her to move into, and one of her attempts to try mushrooms. She was also frequently thoughtful, dropping off little gifts she thought might suit based on quick observations or helping rush the pet of a virtual stranger to the emergency vet even though she was exhausted. She'll be missed by many—my sympathies to you all.

Rebekah Greene - October 28, 2020 at 09:03 PM



“ I have never met a person who truly put all of herself into everything in the way Darcy did. This was as true for her work as it was for her friendships.

As people share stories of her I know that there will be a lot of - This one time I randomly received a package and in it was... a postcard from my advisor who died, a book, a picture, a toy to cheer me up...and with it a note that simply said 'This needed to be with you.'

When I was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease she created for me a gift box. It was chronic disease starter kit, but not just any "I'm sorry your sick here's some things to cheer you up." It was an epic kit with every item identified for how exactly it was going to help me, and most personalized to match my favorite colors, and tastes. When she gave it to me she made sure that I saw the large tumbler in there as gift #1. For those of you who don't remember the reason I got diagnosed was because I became dangerously dehydrated, because I hate drinking anything (a side effect of the Crohn's - who knew) and ended up hospitalized. She told me that I needed to have a favorite cup, because even if I don't like to drink anything maybe liking my cup will make me remember.

Darcy and I loved to take apart books with each other coming from completely different perspectives in academia, but the same in world outlook. We might enjoy, but also make fun of flowery descriptors like - my heart broke into a million pieces, or I heard someone keening and it wasn't until later I realized that the sound was coming from me - but like with many things that felt far-fetched before this year (I see you plague dystopian future stories) I owe writers an apology.

My heart is broken into a million pieces, and the world will never be the same again. I can't possibly explain to you what we have lost with Darcy gone from the world. She was a unique blend of genius and willingness to admit her wrongs and grow from her mistakes. She had compassion, and put her money where mouth is and actively worked in her community to try to make things better.

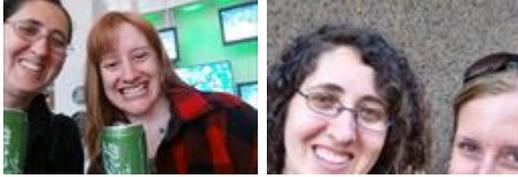
As some of you know she suffered from debilitating endometriosis. She was in constant pain, and was put through numerous surgeries that only ever helped for a few months or weeks. But she used her pain, her constant fight with the medical community to see her as a human being and not a (absent) uterus to educate others. To help those with endometriosis find support and treatment, and those without endometriosis find compassion and empathy. If there is a villain in her story it is the medical community that failed her.

Darcy would be the first one to tell me that I better damn well use this as a teachable moment for women's rights and the failure of medicine to care for women and especially women of color (even though being White woman granted her some privileges in this fight). How many people are strong enough, and compassionate enough to use their own pain to fight for others?

That kit box Darcy made for me? She gave it to me on her first day out after one of her major surgeries. She could barely move, but took time in her recovery to put

together my box so that I would know that I wasn't alone. She also educated herself about Crohn's disease, so she wouldn't make mistakes in talking to me about my experiences and unintentionally hurt my feelings or make me feel less.

And that was Darcy Mullen. She put the entirety of herself into everything she did, and especially into the people that she loved. I will be forever grateful that I was a person she loved and that I was given the gift and honor of loving her in return.



Tirza Leader - October 28, 2020 at 05:50 PM



“ My deepest condolences to you at this time, Tirza. Dr. Mullen was my professor this semester and though I did not know her for long, this memory you've shared of her is certainly the same considerate and compassionate woman I've come to know over these past weeks. She would make these weekly module videos for her students to watch and I always admired her effort to make our remote class as engaging as possible during these hard times with her bubbly and candid personality. I will miss her dearly.

Ashley - October 28, 2020 at 06:29 PM



“ Alok Amatya lit a candle in memory of Darcy Mullen PhD



Alok Amatya - October 28, 2020 at 05:00 PM



“ Darcy was a wonderful colleague and an admirable human being. She had a truly unique way of connecting with students. She was way ahead of the curve in terms of hybrid and remote teaching as well as teaching with compassion for students. She made herself accessible to students in a way that many of us only aspire to. Her observations from holding digital office hours before the start of the Fall 2020 semester were shared by the school chair with the email listserv. I had several conversations with her about remote/hybrid teaching in Fall 2018 and learnt from her unique ability of anticipating student needs. Besides being a wonderful college professor, Darcy was unflinchingly brave when it came to raising awareness about her medical conditions. Her passing away is a huge loss to her friends and colleagues alone. I offer my condolences to her mother and her entire family.

Alok Amatya - October 28, 2020 at 04:59 PM



“ Darcy was good at lots of things: teacher, writer, artist, political observer and organizer, activist, friend. Teaching well was at the top of her list; she was on the leading edge of Writing and Communication Program faculty who are committed to outreach to the metro-Atlanta community and to hybrid teaching (blending face-to-face and remote teaching). I'd like to celebrate two (of many) highlights of Darcy's teaching: She developed a student podcast series, hosted on Aglanta.com (in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Resilience). She was part of the team nominated for a Civic Impact Award in Government Innovation in the City of Atlanta and was honored at a glitzy black tie gala this past year. Darcy's death is a loss for us all.

Rebecca Burnett, Former Director of Georgia Tech's Writing and Communication Program and Professor Emerita, School of Literature, Media, and Communication

Rebecca Burnett - October 28, 2020 at 04:34 PM



“ 38 files added to the album Dr. Darcy Mullen



Kyle Struempf - October 28, 2020 at 02:38 PM



“ Darcy and I helped each other through some difficult times. She never let me help her without helping me back in some way. I think this was probably something she did with everyone. She was my favorite person to geek out about dirt and plants and food with. She gave the best books and made the kindest gestures. I have not yet been able to find the right words. I still can't. I will miss her so much.

Julie Hawk - October 28, 2020 at 01:09 PM



“ Darcy was an extraordinary person -- brimming with creative generosity and quirky humor and beautiful energy. In a publishing workshop this semester, she offered to give handmade room screens for videoconferencing to anyone who needed one, and customized journals made of recycled purses. I'm so grateful I had the chance to learn more about her book project, "Found Materials," a beautiful mixed media graphic memoir about her experience of endometriosis. I remember when she posted on social media about wearing her fancy dresses while staying at home, rather than saving them for some future occasion, which was such a beautiful gesture. She will be so missed.

Katie Schaag - October 28, 2020 at 12:37 PM



“ It was an honor to work with Darcy for over three years at Georgia Tech. I was always astonished at her passion for teaching and her care for her students. She affected the lives of hundreds of students in wonderful ways, and she will be sorely missed.

Andy Frazee - October 28, 2020 at 12:34 PM



“ Darcy was among the postdoctoral faculty who contacted me every now and then to share her thoughts and views on various matters. She was always respectful, honest, and authentic, always went to bat for her students, and had little patience for anyone with a tendency to bully others. I will greatly miss her kindness and collegiality. Most of all, I will miss her solidarity and encouragement.

Richard Utz, Chair, School of Literature, Media, and Communication, Georgia Tech

Richard Utz - October 28, 2020 at 11:53 AM



“ I met Darcy shortly after she came to Georgia Tech, and kept in contact virtually. Darcy taught me a lot from how she combined teaching and community engagement, how she highlighted the rhetoric of food, and how she created multimodal art out of her struggles and interests. She and I also chatted about creatures who nest on porches and giving funny names to mushrooms. In those small moments of engagement, Darcy showed great intelligence, wit, and heart.

James Howard - October 28, 2020 at 11:06 AM



“ Even before we had met in person, Darcy reached out to me in 2017 when I was struggling with chronic illness and periodically checked up on me when we were just virtual acquaintances. And that's just one of the many examples of her kindness and generosity. I always admired her openness and vulnerability with her own struggles and it encouraged me to be more open and less guarded with colleagues and students. I loved her stories, her selfies, and her art. She will never fail to inspire me and she will always be missed.

Amanda Madden - October 28, 2020 at 10:44 AM



“ I remember Darcy's incredible generosity as a colleague and writer. We were in a small proposal-writing study group during our first year, and she gave me some of the most insightful and helpful feedback on my writing I have ever had. In her last weeks she was enthusiastic about her work with expanding an NSF grant proposal we were both working on to be more thoughtful about intersectionality and low-income low-access communities. She was such a warm, brilliant, and authentic human being.

Dori Coblentz - October 28, 2020 at 10:34 AM