

REMEMBRANCE OF MEREDITH SULLIVAN

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Meredith and I clicked immediately. Deeply clicked. That doesn't happen much anymore, at least not to me. So I knew right away that I HAD to pull her into the web of classes I teach at UD so she could sprinkle some of her phosphorescent creativity on my students, and on me, too, if I was lucky.

And I *was* lucky. Over the past five or so years, Meredith met EVERY invitation I floated her way with grace, kindness and her unquenchable zest to tackle challenges. We eventually dreamed up a totally new way to teach digital communication courses. We couldn't find any stand-alone, strategic social media management classes to model our new course on anywhere in American. So ... we invented one! Meredith was the nuts-and-bolts carpenter to my kite-flying "imager." Somehow it worked. And better still . . . it was a BLAST. Collaborating with Meredith jolted me with energy EVERY time we got together, either on my porch one sticky August evening as we polished our course plan or as we strolled from Gore Hall to the parking lot behind Pearson Hall passionately gesticulating and "debriefing," carving out an even *better* way to "do it next time."

Week after week, with her usual shimmering ball of eloquent energy, she dazzled the room . . . including me. She had a mind that would bend steel. I loved that about her. Plus, she was willing to be zany or compassionate or even *wrong* in front of her students. I deeply admired that in her. So did her students.

Meredith was the bravest teacher I've ever worked with. She TRIED things. She INVENTED things. She MADE THINGS HAPPEN. But it didn't really matter that I saw that. What mattered was that her *students* saw that. And see it they did, that's the one component you can't fake in a classroom... connection. Students instinctively know if their professor cares if they attend, if they learn, if they try. Meredith slathered so much care onto her students that they usually stretched to meet her high standards and learned oodles in the process.

I came home each week after our evening social media classes feeling electrified because teaching with her was FUN, FUN, FUN. It was the most fun I've *ever* had standing in front of a classroom. In fact, we joked that we tried to "break the internet" each week. We came pretty close a few times, too. And all of that sprang from her gutsy choice to jump off the cliff with me each week, to innovate in the moment, and to "let go of the edge of the pool."

Meredith drank *deeply* from the cup of life. But, as I think of it, most people with a zest for life do that. Meredith, unlike other whirling dervishes, did something rare,

something that beautiful, charming, “top of her class” people usually forget to do as they cartwheel through life grabbing for the brass ring. She reached her hand out to those around her and brought them along, whether with a wink or a nudge, she remembered other people. Meredith *truly* mentored students, she patiently explained content curation or metric strategy, posed practice questions to prep protégés before their “dream job” interviews, shared her deep network to “open doors” . . . all things she didn’t NEED to do, things people didn’t EXPECT her to do, things she likely didn’t have TIME to do.

But she did them because that’s who she was – a decent, vivacious, creative soul who has left a gaping hole in the lives of all who knew her. We who loved her.
#missyou