



Ruth Ann Christensen

April 4, 1948 - May 24, 2021

Ruth Ann Christensen (Pino) (1948-2021)

On May 24, 2021, Ruth Ann Christensen (Pino) died peacefully in her sleep in Salt Lake City, UT. She lived gracefully with metastatic breast cancer for 10 years, travelling with her siblings and spending time with her children and grandchildren. She also kept up with her cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

Ruth's passing is a profound loss to her family, her many dear friends, and her countless professional colleagues and students over her many years of devoted educational service. Her bright smile, her enduring positive outlook, and her "can-do" spirit will be sorely missed.

Ruth Ann was born in Provo, Utah on April 4, 1948 to LaVonda (Hansen) and Horace Jones Christensen. She graduated from Olympus High School in 1966, and from the University of Utah earning a B.A. in English and Theater, and a Master's degree in Secondary Education. After 20 years of working in education, Ruth earned a PhD in Educational Leadership and Organizational Change from the University of New Mexico.

Ruth began her illustrious career studying English and Theater at the University of Utah. By the third grade she already knew she wanted the honor of being called "teacher." She especially loved teaching Junior High, finding the students a never-ending delight. Ruth understood that feelings are to be handled with care and honored each child for who they were while supporting the development of their unique gifts. Ruth remained in contact with many of her students over her decades in education. They often reached out as adults to let her know what a great influence she was and how she changed their lives.

Ruth taught as "Mrs. Pino" in Utah, Hawaii and New Mexico. She began teaching in Salt Lake City and then at the University of Hawaii at Hilo. She also served as the Multi-Cultural Studies Coordinator at Kohala High School in Hawaii. After taking some time to care for her young children, the early '80s found her serving as an assistant professor of

Speech Communication at New Mexico's College of Santa Fe. Yearning to work more directly with students, Ruth subsequently accepted a position as an English and Drama instructor in the Santa Fe Public Schools. For eight years she thrived at Alameda Jr. High as a beloved teacher and talented creative director of school plays and musicals.

Always interested in new challenges, Ruth accepted a position in educational leadership at the state level in the mid '90s and served for six years as an educational consultant for the New Mexico State Department of Education. This assignment allowed her to share her experience in classroom management and instructional strategies as well as curriculum design and effective evaluation techniques. In addition to this demanding position, Ruth completed her PhD in Educational Leadership and Organizational Learning from the University of New Mexico in 1999.

She finished her career as "Dr. Ruth Christensen", school administrator in Los Alamos, NM and Chicago, IL. From 2000 to 2007 she worked with Los Alamos High School's School (LAHS) of Choice students before teaching Freshman Seminar classes designed to assist in-coming freshmen with their adjustment to a rigorous high school curriculum. Ruth then served as associate principal, joining the Topper Administrative Team.

After a brief retirement from public education, she accepted a six-year commitment to serve as associate principal at Resurrection College-Prep High School in Chicago. At Resurrection High, Ruth implemented a leadership training program to better foster tomorrow's leaders. This training gave rise to an Advisement Program where the teaching staff was trained to serve as college-prep advisors in addition to executing their instructional areas of expertise. Ruth worked diligently to enhance Resurrection's Fine Arts program with a focus on stage and theater production. To say the least, Resurrection High School flourished under Ruth's commitment to detail and excellence.

Her final project was as a patient researcher at the University of Utah. She co-led the BRIDGES project, winning a grant from the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute. The project was a qualitative inquiry aimed at increasing physical activity in seniors.

Bright, progressive, and committed to collegiality, Ruth will forever be remembered as a most effective educator, capable of integrating her ideas with those of her colleagues to achieve optimal results for student success. Her colleagues refer to her as brilliant, an honor to know, work and spend time with.

Relatives call her amazing, kind, and generous with her time – helping to edit many

papers and books. She was a joy to be around, a great listener, always interesting and entertaining. She had a great sense of humor, easily bringing laughter to others. Everyone cherished her smile, great laugh, and joie de vivre. She was kind, supportive, and a bright light to all who knew her. Among her many talents was interior design and athletic skills. She was a superior racquetball player and in Hawaii she sat on a winning six women outboard canoe team. Ruth was preceded in death by her parents, and a sister, Linda Miller.

Ruth is survived by her children, Karah Pino, David Pino, and Krista Pino; and two grandchildren, Alvin and Francisco all of whom she was very proud. She is also survived by her siblings, Carol Jean Cordy (John), Paul (Kris) Christensen, and Barbara Christensen.

Ruth and her family thank the Doctors, Nurses and others who helped care for her in her final few months. Staying home was important to Ruth and she was able to do so because of the caring Home Health and Hospice staff.

Ruth was a special grandmother, mother, daughter, sister, cousin, aunt, and friend. As per Ruth's wishes, no memorial services will be held.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to:

Ruth Ann Christensen (Pino) Memorial Fund for improving engagement and enjoyment of physical activity in seniors at the University of Utah College of Health.

Checks can be made out to: University of Utah with the memo line stating it's for the Ruth Ann Christensen (Pino) Memorial Fund

Sent to: University of Utah / Advancement Office / Attn: Courtney Garay / P.O. Box 58006 / Salt Lake City, UT 84158

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Karah Pino - June 11 at 01:29 PM