



Photo contributed by IUPUI Department of Sociology

Remembering

Suzanne Steinmetz

by Jessica McCauley
Sagamore Staff

Suzanne Steinmetz: a professor of sociology, a mother, a grandmother, a wife, a friend and a colleague. She was also an advisor and a mentor. But most importantly, Suzanne Steinmetz was a giver.

"She was always trying to help people. It's what we all realized when we came together," Linda Haas, a colleague and friend said. "She did all this helpfulness behind the scenes. She didn't do it for attention; she did it to be nice."

On March 9, friends, family, students and colleagues all came together for the calling of the passing of Steinmetz. On March 5, she had suffered a massive heart attack and passed away quickly.

Haas said she could not remember a time in 30 years when a faculty member died so suddenly. She had shown no signs of having any illness or major health problems.

Christy Torrence, a graduate student and teaching assistant for Steinmetz, was so shocked by the news that she did not even process it right away. She was told and replied with a chipper, "ok thanks." When she finally realized what she had been told, she broke down.

Torrence had spent two hours in Steinmetz's office the day before talking about her graduate thesis, her upcoming wedding, Steinmetz's retirement plans and their everyday topic, which was food.

Other IUPUI students, faculty and alumni that have passed away this year:

<i>Adair, Zeola</i>	<i>Keller, Deane</i>
<i>Agness, Rex</i>	<i>Kemp, Gregory</i>
<i>Alexander, Jennie</i>	<i>Kreffel, Michael</i>
<i>Baker, Charles</i>	<i>Myers, Jay</i>
<i>Baldwin, Susan</i>	<i>Nelson, Mary</i>
<i>Beaven, Carol</i>	<i>Pais, Kishor</i>
<i>Bresick, Robert</i>	<i>Parker, George</i>
<i>Cheek, Daniel</i>	<i>Pokorny, Paul</i>
<i>Christy, Phyllis</i>	<i>Raibley, Jerry</i>
<i>Coburn, Ruth</i>	<i>Reno, Jim</i>
<i>Darling, Danny</i>	<i>Riggs, Jack</i>
<i>Dewester, Gerald</i>	<i>Rochford, Lenore</i>
<i>Divine, William</i>	<i>Ross, Diana Kay</i>
<i>Dolan, Patricia</i>	<i>Schroeder, Daniel</i>
<i>Elston, Sandra</i>	<i>Sexton, Richard</i>
<i>Farrar, Stephen</i>	<i>Smith, Dottie</i>
<i>Fletcher, Laura E.</i>	<i>Snell, Cecelia</i>
<i>Foy, William</i>	<i>Soni, Navender</i>
<i>Gfell, Kevin</i>	<i>Steinmetz, Suzanne</i>
<i>Goodwin, Elaine</i>	<i>Stewart, Julie</i>
<i>Grable, Jacqueline</i>	<i>Tindell, James</i>
<i>Groher, David</i>	<i>Truitt, Joan Connors</i>
<i>Hale, Hester</i>	<i>Williams, Stephen</i>
<i>Hill, Lee</i>	<i>Williamson, David</i>
<i>Hoagland, Stephen</i>	<i>Woodworth, June</i>

Join others in honoring those we've lost during our Day of Remembrance on May 4 in Room 305 in the Campus Center from 12:30-1:30 p.m.

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"Every time I met with her in person, she was eating. The only thing she ever wanted to eat was Chick-fil-A chicken nuggets. She smothered them in this red sauce, and she always said, 'I don't know what this sauce is, but I love it.'" Torrence said with a smile.

In addition to laughing about chicken nuggets, Torrence received a lot of help from Steinmetz during those office visits. Steinmetz was the head of the thesis committee for Torrence.

"She explained what I needed to do and got me started," Torrence said. "Within the first week she made a huge impact; she went above and beyond everything for my situation. She really honestly cared about your well-being and what made you happy."

Being the selfless person she was, Steinmetz did not just help a select few.

"She took the time to help my family [when] my house burned down. Dr. Steinmetz was the first person to personally email me, and she had a new set of books ready for me free of charge," Jacqui Blessing, a former student of Steinmetz said.

Sociology department chair Robert Aponte also found her generosity to be one of her best qualities.

"She will always be the most generous person I know," Aponte said. "More important is all the time she and Tom, her dedicated husband, gave to causes like refurbishing old computers for children. I could go on all day, the list of her many instances of giving is endless."

Steinmetz and her husband were in the process of selling their home so they could move out to California to be with their family. They were just waiting for Steinmetz to retire and to sell their Indiana home so they could be near their three children and eight grandchildren in California.

"She was reluctant about retiring. She liked teaching. She liked her students and she liked all four seasons," Haas said.

Steinmetz made a career out of academia and was a lifelong learner. She loved teaching and began her career in 1971.

"She earned her B.S. in education from the University of Delaware in 1969. She received a Ph.D. in Sociology from Case Western Reserve University in 1975. She taught at the University of Delaware from 1971-1989, where she helped establish the doctoral

program in Individual and Family Studies," Haas reads the Memorial Resolution. "She joined the IUPUI Department of Sociology in 1989. Professor Steinmetz regularly taught courses in sociological theory and family sociology, supervised several graduate students and recently expanded curricular offerings by launching a course on aging. She returned to school in her 50s to earn a Master's degree in Social Work from Indiana University."

Steinmetz was known to outside universities as an expert in domestic violence. She published 17 books and 60 research articles and chapters on domestic violence. She brought attention to the issue by giving testimony to the U.S. Congress four times and delivering keynote speeches on the issue internationally.

"If she knew someone was in trouble, she helped personally or she got them help," Torrence said. "She always advocated for everyone to get them what they needed."

Steinmetz has contributed to the Indianapolis community by being a consultant for the Superior Court, Child Protective Services and Community Corrections. She counseled for organizations involved with family violence and was a board member of Compassion4kids, which is a non-profit group that provides support to children and families in need.

Throughout her life and career, Steinmetz gave inspiration to her students and colleagues. But most of all, she gave time and compassion to everyone she came in contact with.

"She was generous with her time to help sick or ailing friends or to help counsel a student in crisis," Bob White, a colleague said. "She was the kind of person who would go out of her way to be helpful, and if she had something that someone needed, she was quite willing to part with it."