

Four Memorials Set Up for Ellen O'Hara

There are now four memorials in Salt Lake City, Utah for Ellen O'Hara, who lost her life in a vehicle accident July 1, 2016. Ellen was a teacher at the Jean Massieu School of the Deaf (JMS) under the Utah Schools for the Deaf (USD) for the past 6 years. She had just been promoted to Vice-Principal and ASL Specialist May 2016 and had just returned from a Conference for ASL Specialists in June. She was brimming over with ideas of how to better teach ASL to the children at JMS when the untimely accident took her out of our midst. She had also been extremely active in the Utah Association of the Deaf, serving as officer, UAD Biennial Convention chair (twice), and Vlogging the UAD Bulletin news on the Internet.



Ellen O'Hara

At JMS, the new renovated auditorium has been named the Ellen O'Hara Auditorium. The grey and lime green color scheme has been carried over from the newest campus building in order to create continuity among campus. The auditorium's lighting and video equipment is the newest and finest. Pictures of



Utah nature scenes grace the walls. The room generates energy and excitement, much like Ellen herself. She was passionate about JMS, teaching, and children. Her enthusiasm will continue to permeate the school. Under her picture there will be a video machine designed to play and replay the 'naming' ceremony that was held on May 24, 2017.

We thank Superintendent Joel Coleman and Associate Superintendent Michelle Tanner for honoring Ellen in this way.

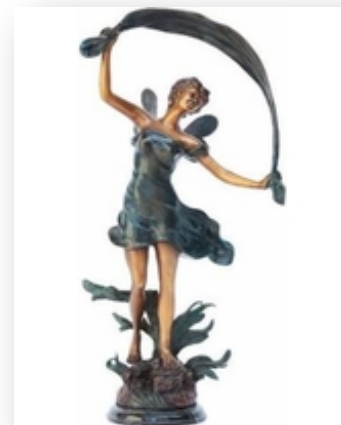
At JMS there is a bench with Ellen's name on it that was donated by fellow-JMS teacher, Jasmine Taylor, and her parents, Sharon and Neil Taylor. It is made from eucalyptus wood, tough enough to withstand the outside weather of Utah. The bench is placed near the playground.



A mimosa tree has been planted near the JMS playground. This was donated by Ellen's uncle and aunt, Jeff and Patty Usinger. The mimosa was chosen by Ellen's mother, Bronwyn, as a symbol of Ellen's love of the unusual and unique. Ellen loved explosions of color. The mimosa's pink fluffy flowers look like flower explosions and smell like a mixture of peach and coconut, a very feminine 'perfume'.



In the larger Sanderson Community Center courtyard a fairy statue was set atop a pedestal to honor Ellen. This was purchased with donations of family and Deaf Community friends. The Fairy is dancing with a scarf. The O'Hara family feels this represents Ellen as she was known for her happy and positive outlook on life.



Ellen loved learning new things. That's one reason she became a teacher. She wanted to help children love to learn. She found sooo many interesting things in the world to enjoy: colors and shapes and tastes and smells. She didn't want anyone, young or old, to feel

afraid to learn new things. She would try new foods like hummus, tofu, and purple carrots. She loved to explore new places and went to Romania, France, Italy, and



Hawaii. She loved to challenge herself to do new things like marathons, Mud Run team-challenge, skydiving, and zip line. Ellen always supported positive thinking and positive actions. Anyone who knew her knew how she loved to put uplifting quotes around on her walls.

If I can leave you with any message from Ellen it would be: "Life is for learning".

Learn all you can and see the

beauty around you. Feel God's love for you, you, you. That's what Ellen did. You can do the same.

We all go through difficult experiences. Find ways to pick out the positive in any situation. Find ways to help each other.



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