

Donna Byrnes, 56, Former Resident Director for A Better Chance in Darien

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Date : October 2, 2017

Donna Booth Byrnes, 56, died on Tuesday, Sept. 26. She was a former resident director for A Better Chance program in Darien.

She grew up in Topsfield, Mass. and graduated from Masconomet High School in 1979. She was an expert skier and an avid horsewoman, entering many events on the North Shore with her horse, Hud.

She attended Boston University and Regis College and graduated from the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vt. She received her law degree from the Massachusetts School of Law in 2005, and practiced Family Law in Danvers and Newburyport, Mass.

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Donna's true love was helping people. During college she traveled to Kenya to work with a social service agency in Nairobi. After college she worked with young people, recruiting and preparing teenagers for the Outward Bound Program.

— [an obituary](#) from the Campbell Funeral Home. This obituary previously was published in the Boston Globe.

With her young family she served as resident director for the A Better Chance program in Darien and guided eight inner city young women through the turmoil of high school and into college.

She held several responsible jobs in the health field before studying law. In her law practice, she was always available to her clients who found her fair, compassionate and forthright.

Donna was recognized by co-workers for her dedication to her clients and her skill in mediation and in the courtroom.

Donna inspired her family and all who witnessed her remarkable fortitude during her lengthy treatment for cancer; she remained involved, funny and feisty. True to her nature, Donna never stopped comforting and encouraging anyone who needed it.

Donna is survived by her devoted husband, Robert H. Byrnes of Newington, N.H.; her mother, Barbara Keady Booth of Topsfield, and her father, Dr. Donald F. Booth of Rye, N.H. She was the center of her close and loving immediate family: her daughter, Keady Kanelos of Newington, NH; two sons, Luke Devins and Casey Devins and his wife Tracy, of Portsmouth, N.H., a son, Daniel Byrnes of Newington; and a daughter, Margaret Byrnes of Concord, N.H.

Donna will be greatly missed by her loving and supportive brother, David K. Booth and his wife, Lisa of Moultonborough, N.H., grandsons, Leotie and Koda Devins of Portsmouth, N.H.; her nephew, Noah and nieces, Maria and Avery. She also leaves an aunt and uncle, Richard and Ann Booth of Topsfield, her aunt and godmother, Maureen Augustine of Palm Springs, CA, and several cousins.

She was preceded in death by an infant son, Jake Booth Devins.

A remembrance service will be held at the Campbell Funeral Home, 525 Cabot St., Beverly, on Friday, October 6, 2017 at 4 p.m. Relatives and friends are invited to attend. A private burial will be at Pine Grove Cemetery in Topsfield.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in her memory to the New Hampshire Special

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Olympics, www.give.specialolympics.org. Information, directions, condolences
at www.campbellfuneral.com.