

KAREN MICHELE KEROACK

KEROACK, KAREN MICHELE, 60

Gainesville - Karen Michele Keroack, 60, of Gainesville FL, passed away on July 7, 2015 following a long illness. She died peacefully in her home surrounded by her loving husband and two daughters.

She was born December 1, 1954 in Rockville Center, NY to Ernest Tealey and Sheila (DePass) Tealey.

After graduating from Bayport High School in Long Island, NY she earned a Bachelor's degree from [Arizona State University](#) in 1976. Following that she moved to Florida where she received a Master of Social Work from Florida State University in 1977 and then began a long and productive career as a social worker and educator. She worked at various sites in the Gainesville area including Shands Hospital in the Department of Social Work Services assigned to medical hematology/oncology and bone marrow transplant services. While there she was a founder and first president of the Florida Society of Oncology Social Workers and was actively involved in many capacities in the [American Cancer Society](#). From 1986 to the present, she served as the coordinator for the Gainesville area off campus part-time MSW program for FSU. In that capacity she trained and supervised many students who have become active professionals in the area. From 2000 to 2013 she was a social worker at the [University of Florida](#) Levin College of Law Vergil Hawkins Civil Law Clinic. There she provided consultative and instructional support to law students, and direct clinical services to juveniles in the criminal justice and foster care systems. Her most recent accomplishment in this role was designing and teaching a course called 'The Human Side of Lawyering.' The Gainesville Unit of National Association of Social Workers named her Educator of the year in 2010 and selected her twice as the Social Worker of the Year. In 2014 the Florida Chapter of NASW presented her with a Special Recognition Award for her many contributions and support of their organization. In recognition of her valuable service the social work department at the VA Hospital in Gainesville established a yearly award called the 'Karen Keroack Follow Your Passion Award,' given to recognize outstanding trainees.

In her first few months living in Gainesville, FL she met her husband, Roger Keroack and they were married in 1982. They have two daughters, Nicole Keroack and Jessica Keroack, who both currently reside in Washington DC. One of Karen's lifelong passions was horseback riding. She continued to ride 3 or 4 times a week until shortly before her death. Throughout her life she expressed her creativity in many forms including macramé, basket weaving, stained glass, quilting, jewelry making, and most recently pastel and watercolor painting, which brought her great joy. She also enjoyed gardening. Karen brought passion and meticulous care to all of her work. In short, she brought beauty into the world with her creative handiwork, as well as her physical presence. She was a loving and devoted wife and mother, who provided her daughters an outstanding role model of a strong, creative, and accomplished woman.

She is preceded in death by her father, Ernest (Tim) Tealey. She is survived by her husband of 33 years, Roger Keroack, her daughters, Nicole and Jessica Keroack, her mother, Sheila DonGhia, and her sister, Christine (Tealey) Donahue.

The memorial service will be held Saturday, July 18th at 2:30 at the Baughman Center on the University of Florida's campus (982 Museum Road). In lieu of flowers, her family requests donations be sent to the Florida Cancer Specialists Foundation

(<https://foundation.flcancer.com/donate/>)

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