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In Memoriam: Kelly Nan Beardslee

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IN MEMORIAM

Kelly Nan Beardslee

This year the students and faculty of the University of Oklahoma, as well as family and countless friends, lost a very special person. Kelly Beardslee was killed on November 23, 1993, when her car was struck by a drunk driver as she was returning home from work.

Born on February 28, 1968, Kelly's hometown was Wichita, Kansas. She earned a bachelor's degree from Wichita State University. She is survived by her parents and one sister.

Kelly was known throughout the College of Law for her academic achievements, establishing herself as the second-ranked member of her law class. She also found time to work as a member of the Oklahoma Law Review, a legal intern in the Criminal Defense Clinic, and in the office of an Oklahoma City attorney. She was also a research assistant for Professors Joyce Palomar and Rodney Uphoff. Kelly planned to become a Judicial Clerk upon graduation, and later practice in criminal law.

Kelly had a love of learning that was beyond compare. She distinguished herself early in her law school career by winning several honors: the American Jurisprudence Awards for Academic Achievement in Contracts I, Civil Procedure I, Property I, and Contracts II; the George B. Fraser Scholarship for outstanding performance in Civil Procedure; the Phillips Petroleum Company Scholarship to the outstanding woman in the second-year class; the Corpis Juris Secundum Award for Scholastic Excellence; and the American Judicature Society Award for the first- and second-ranked students in the second-year class. She made the Dean's Honor Roll every semester, and was the kind of student who had to know every possible consequence and angle of any subject.

Yet Kelly was so much more than a great student. She was known as a wonderfully warm, giving, and humble person. She touched the lives of everyone she came in contact with, and always had time to share with a friend, or a stranger. Her compassion for her fellow human beings was demonstrated time and time again. She dedicated herself to helping people in trouble at the Criminal Defense Clinic and as an active member of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Wichita Chapter.

What made her so different was her love not only for learning, but for enjoying life. She seemed to know as much about having fun as she did about black letter law, and took time out to "smell the roses." She was wonderful about making the most of every minute, and she did not waste time with negativity; it would have taken more time to formulate a bad thought than Kelly would allow.

Kelly was a beautiful person, inside and out. She was easily recognized by her long, naturally curly auburn hair, her bright smile, and her laughter. After her death, many students, who even briefly crossed Kelly's path, recounted stories about her warmth and generosity they will remember for the rest of their lives.

In Kelly's twenty-five years, she touched more lives and made more of an impact on this world than many people ever do. She is an inspiration not only to her class, but to everyone who sets high goals for themselves. Her death brought many students closer together, bonded by anger at a senseless tragedy, but also, more importantly, bonded by the love that Kelly created while she was here on this earth.

A Memorial Scholarship has been established in Kelly's name at the University of Oklahoma Foundation. Her family will be awarded a posthumous Juris Doctor degree, during the May Law Commencement ceremony.

Thank you, Kelly, for being an example of a true friend and for giving so much to us in the short time you were allowed a place in our world. We will never forget you.

*Heather McClure
David Prater*



KELLY NAN BEARDSLEE
1968-1993