

Mary Guo: Her Legacy Lives On

On Sunday, July 26, 2020, we suffered the unexpected and tragic loss of Mary Guo, a stellar graduate student in the University of Hawaii at Manoa's (UHM) Doctor of Nursing Program (DNP) and an exceptional steward to the community. Mary Guo exemplified what it means to be a nurse. She earned her reputation as a compassionate, hard-working, and brilliant student, friend, relative, and provider.



"Mary was very caring, level-headed, highly motivated and quick-witted with a positive attitude," recalls fellow DNP student Roxanne Haverkort-Yeh.

Guo seemingly figured out how to have it all. She served as a graduate assistant in the Office of Public Health Studies while exceling as a full-time DNP student, providing care at Palolo Chinese Home, and maintaining a vast social network of friends and colleagues.

"As a friend, I found myself motivated and joyful being around her because she was determined and passionate about making a difference in our community," says DNP classmate Adeline Adachi. "She truly had a love for life and others. Mary and our mutual friends would try new restaurants, attend shows, share life moments with one another, and we all enjoyed listening to stories of Mary's travels, tennis matches, and boba (bubble tea) experiences."

Tetine Sentell, PhD, Chair/Director of OPHS, met Guo while she pursued her masters of public health (MPH) degree, and got to

know her well when Guo worked for her as a junior specialist assisting in research projects.

“There is so much heartbreak and shock about this loss. Many of our young alumni reached out to me as well as our faculty and many others with the hope that we could do something,” Sentell says. “I think we all want to acknowledge her legacy in terms of what she had already achieved and also in terms of the hope of what she would do over time for our community with her care, intelligence, leadership, and hard work.”

Guo’s friends, classmates, and faculty from nursing and public health wanted to honor her legacy through a scholarship fund to help students in both programs.

“Her heart and dedication to the health care field/community will live on through this scholarship with the hopes that any applicants/recipients of the scholarship will be motivated by Mary’s legacy and continue their educational/professional goals with the same fortitude as Mary had,” Adachi says. “From the moment I met Mary, I knew that she was bound to make a positive impact in the world.”

The Mary Guo Memorial Scholarship Fund, supported by UH Foundation, has been established and will award funds as early as this Fall 2020 to assist graduate students in the OPHS at the School of Social Work and the Graduate Entry Program in Nursing (GEPN) at UHM Nursing. The scholarships can be used for costs associated with attendance, such as tuition, books, and student fees.

“As we mourn her loss, the scholarship fund will serve as an enduring memorial to her spirit and connection to the community,” says Mary Boland, DrPH, RN, FAAN, Dean of the Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing.

Donations will fuel the fund, and once they reach \$50,000, UH Foundation will invest those dollars as an endowment, managing it for prudent growth and ensuring that earnings exceed

inflation. The GoFundMe page set up by Guo's family and friend to assist with memorial expenses illustrates the impact Guo had on the community. In just 10 days, the account raised nearly \$46,000 from 577 donors.

"Mary was an irreplaceable asset to the health care community and an inspiration to those who worked with and looked up to her," says the closing message from Guo's friends and family on the page. "Mary brought people together in life, and indeed even in her passing, this remains true."

Gifts in Guo's memory may be made online at www.uhfoundation.org/MaryGuoScholarship. Checks can be made payable to "UH Foundation" with a note or cover letter indicating for the "Mary Guo Scholarship" and mailed to UH Foundation, P.O. Box 11270, Honolulu, HI 96828-0270.