



Dr. Christine Fay Knupp Sorensen Irvine

MAR 15, 1958 - JAN 27, 2023



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HAWAIIAN
MEMORIAL PARK MORTUARY
AT VALLEY OF THE TEMPLES

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Dr. Christine Fay Knupp Sorensen Irvine

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Dr. Christine Sorensen Irvine, beloved professor, and former Dean of the College of Education at University of Hawaii at Manoa, died on Friday, January 27, 2023 in Honolulu, Hawaii. She was 64 years old. Christine was born in Fort Dodge, Iowa on March 15, 1958 to John Franklin Knupp and Jayne Rochelle Lautenschlager Knupp. She grew up in the South with the family moving to Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, and finally Texas.

She attended Lufkin High School in Lufkin, Texas, where in 1974 during her junior year, the ambidextrous and rebellious Christine decided to write her book reports on banned books in mirror script (backwards). Her English teacher (Mr. Williams) encouraged her to keep writing like that if she wanted to, even though he had to hold her book reports up to a mirror to read them. Christine never forgot that lesson on how to be a good teacher. Christine took the SAT test that year, a year early, and scored a near-perfect score (the top .05% of national SAT scores). She was offered full scholarships to multiple universities when she was only 16. She later attained a PhD, served as the Dean of the College of Education at two top-tier research universities, and was a tenured college professor, all without a high school diploma.

Christine accepted a scholarship to Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa, because it was near where her grandparents lived. She felt much younger than her peers, so she took a break from school from 1975 to 1979, during which time she was elected to serve on the City Council of Dakota City, Iowa, beginning at age 17. She continued working in radio as a news announcer and on-air personality, which she had done since she was 15 at radio and television stations in Mississippi and Texas.

Christine married in December 1979 and then returned to Texas to attend University of Houston, where she attained her BA degree in Speech Communication in May 1982. Her prophetic thesis was titled, "The New Right: Study of a Social Movement and its Rhetoric." While working on her undergraduate degree, she won four academic awards and gave birth to her daughter, Kathryn Laurielle Sorensen.



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In the summer of 1982, she led her family back to Iowa where she gave birth to her son, Michael Jacob Sorensen. Christine returned to radio as News Director, soon winning an Iowa state award for public service programming on mental health. She served on the Humboldt County Task Force on Alcohol and Drug Abuse from 1983-1988, and during this time gave birth to her second son, Andrew Joseph Sorensen. With three young children at home to care for, Christine opened Something Special Daycare and applied herself as a daycare business owner from 1986-1989. In the summer of 1989, Christine moved her family to Ames, Iowa and began working on her Master's Degree in Professional Studies in Education at Iowa State University (ISU). She worked as an adult student advisor for off-campus students and served as counselor for the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). She achieved her MS degree from Iowa State University in May 1990.

In 1991, Christine's career in higher education began taking off. She worked as a private consultant in education research and evaluation, while also working as a research associate and program coordinator for the Research Institute for Studies in Education (RISE) at Iowa State University. She received Iowa Educational Research and Evaluation Association (IEREA) awards in 1993 and 1994, and an award from the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) for Outstanding Contribution to Research in the Field of Distance Education in 1995. From 1990-1996, she served as lead evaluation specialist for numerous education projects, was active on ISU service committees, and became involved with the Ames Community Theater Organization (ACTORS), where she served on the Board of Directors from 1994-1996, while continuing to pursue her PhD. The story of how she wrote her dissertation is that she had worked out most of it in her head until one weekend, close to the deadline, she locked herself in a hotel room and wrote her entire dissertation in two days. In classic Christine fashion, there were virtually no corrections needed. Christine was awarded her PhD in Professional Studies in Higher Education from Iowa State University in December 1994.

Christine continued to work at RISE at ISU and as an adjunct professor until 1996, when she accepted employment as Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Northern Illinois University (NIU) and moved her family to DeKalb, Illinois.

In 1997, she was named Assistant Department Chair for the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. In 1999, she was named Assistant Department Chair for the Department of Leadership in Educational and Sport Organizations. In 2000, Christine served the College of Education as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and was responsible for all academic aspects of



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the college. In 2001, she was appointed Acting Dean and then became Dean of the College of Education at Northern Illinois University in 2002. As Dean, Christine was responsible for all operations of the college— one of the top ten producers of teachers in the nation— and oversaw six academic departments, including undergraduate, masters, and doctoral programs serving approximately 5,000 students. She continued to teach as a tenured associate professor during this time. In 2006, Christine received the Virgil Lagomarcino Laureate Award for distinguished achievement in education, a high honor from her colleagues, recognizing her as an outstanding educator in research, grant-writing, publication, community service, and teaching.

In 2007, Christine accepted the opportunity to serve as Dean of the College of Education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa and moved to the island of Oahu. During her tenure as Dean, Christine was responsible for all operations of the College of Education (ranked in the top 50 by U.S. News). She oversaw eight academic departments, including undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral programs, as well as two major research centers. She led the college successfully through NCTAE and WASC accreditation, established positive relationships with community college partners, helped to found the doctoral program, and was instrumental in expanding and improving technology integration throughout college operations and instruction. Christine continued teaching as Professor of Learning Design and Technology within the College of Education throughout the years she served as Dean.

Christine met her second husband, Michael Andrew Irvine, in December of 2009 at Jazz Minds in Honolulu, HI. They were married in Kaneohe, HI on May 11, 2013, moving to Aiea, HI in 2014 where they lived until his death in 2021. Michael Andrew Irvine was the love of Christine's life. Christine and her husband were active in the Trinity Missionary Baptist Church in Honolulu, HI, where she served as church treasurer, and treasurer for the church's Land Acquisition Project. She sang with the Voices of Trinity Choir and was the director of the children's choir. She also founded the Trinity Missionary Baptist Church Bereavement Support Group.

In 2012, Christine made a difficult decision for her career. She decided to step down from her position as Dean in order to focus on her health and that of her terminally-ill mother. She optimistically returned to teaching graduate classes in research evaluation and technology. She enjoyed mentoring masters and doctoral students and was nominated every year for the Excellence in Teaching Award. At the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Christine graduated 13 doctoral students as dissertation chair after helping to found the doctoral program five years



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earlier. She was advising more than 30 doctoral students as a dissertation committee member at the time of her death.

Christine presented nationally and internationally throughout her career. She served as director and co-director of numerous contract and grant programs and was a lead grant-writing evaluator. She authored and co-authored a multitude of books, chapters, journal articles, and funded evaluation reports. She belonged to many professional organizations and served on dozens of state-level boards and advisory committees. Christine chaired a total of 66 dissertations during her career. She loved supporting people, helping them learn and grow, and inspiring them to excellence. Her passion was helping people succeed in attaining their PhD degrees. To honor her passion and contributions, the University of Hawaii at Manoa has established the Dr. Christine Sorensen Irvine Memorial Endowment Fund for doctoral students in the College of Education so that her legacy will live on.

Christine enjoyed music, dancing, singing, and the ocean. She could often be found at the beach, dancing to her favorite bands, or singing on-stage with a karaoke mic in her hand. She delighted in traveling, learning about other cultures, and trying new things. Most of all, she loved to have fun, tell stories, and make people laugh. Her joie de vivre was contagious. If there is one sentence to sum up the life of Christine Sorensen Irvine, it is this: "She did everything from the heart."

Christine is survived by her daughter Kathryn (Sorensen) Veyna and son-in-law Daniel Veyna of Houston, TX, her grandson Jacob Veyna and granddaughters Evelyn Veyna and Ava Veyna of Houston TX, her sons Michael Sorensen of Pearl City, HI and Andrew Sorensen of Kailua, HI, her step-daughter Chelsea Irvine-Pascua of Honolulu, HI, and her step-sons Colton Irvine of Honolulu, HI and Justin Irvine of Rochelle Park, NJ. She is also survived by her father, John F. Knupp and stepmother Loyce Rey Knupp of Conroe, TX, her sister Emery Lauten Meadows of Issaquah, WA, her brother-in-law Scott Empringham of Conroe, TX, her sister-in-law Carol Coffey-Knupp of Houston, TX, her nieces Isabel Meadows of Issaquah, WA, Lisa Knupp of Houston, TX, Katie Empringham of Nuneaton, Warwickshire, England, Laura Empringham of Lindsay, OK, nephew David Knupp of Houston, TX, great-nephew Dathan Empringham and great-niece Baylee Strizek of Lindsay OK. Christine was preceded in death by her mother Jayne Lauten-Borg (2013), her sister Dianne Kay (Knupp) Empringham (2019), her brother Daniel Franklin Knupp (2021), and her beloved husband, Michael Andrew Irvine (2021). Christine will also be missed by her many other relatives, hanai family, colleagues, and friends.



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A memorial service will be held Saturday February 18, 2023 at 11 a.m. at Trinity Missionary Baptist Church, 3950 Paine Circle, Honolulu, HI 96818. Flowers may be sent to the church for the memorial service. The service will also be webcast at <http://tmbchawaii.org/live-stream/>, or on the Trinity Missionary Baptist Church Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/tmbchawaii/>.

A scattering ceremony will be held on Monday, February 20, 2023 at 12 p.m. at The Valley of the Temples Memorial Park (in the Scattering Garden), 47-200 Kahekili Highway, Kaneohe, HI 96744. A memorial plaque in Christine's honor will be installed next to her husband, Michael Andrew Irvine, on a memorial wall in the Scattering Garden.

The remainder of Christine's ashes will be buried next to her brother in Texas during a private family graveside service at Klein Memorial Park, 14711 FM 1488, Magnolia, TX 77354.

Cards or letters of condolence may be sent to Kathryn Sorensen Veyna at: P.O. Box 680205 Houston, TX 77268. Monetary contributions may be sent via Zelle to 832-510-5540 in the name of Kathryn and Daniel Veyna.

To donate to the Dr. Christine Sorensen Irvine Memorial Endowment Fund, please visit: <https://giving.uhfoundation.org/funds/13023804>



Tribute Wall

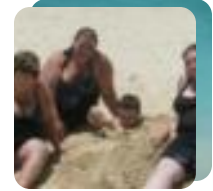
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Laura Empringham shared 2 photos to the **Tribute Wall** album.

I have so many good memories with my Aunt Chris but I'll never forget the 3 weeks I got to spend with her in Hawaii. The trips to the beach, the sea life park, the cultural center, the amazing house party with the live bands. My Aunt Chris knew how to have a good time I can't say I have one mad or sad memory with her. She was a beautiful person. I'll miss u Aunt Chris. Love you always.



February 7 at 7:21 AM



Kathryn lit a candle in honor of Christine.

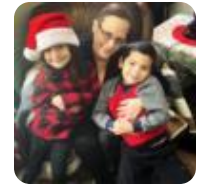


February 7 at 6:57 AM



Kathryn shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

Beloved Grandmother



February 7 at 6:56 AM



Emery Meadows shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

My sister, Christine, on the day she married Michael Andrew Irvine.



February 7 at 5:53 AM



Pat Dobelis February 7 at 1:12 PM

Such a beautiful soul. My heart is so sad to have lost a friend



Media

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February 7 at 7:21 AM





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Kathryn shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

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Emery Meadows shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

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Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Christine by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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