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Angela Lambrix, 53, fulfilled dream of becoming a teacher

BY DALE ANDERSON
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Angela Lambrix began dreaming of becoming a teacher when she was in high school, but it took more than 20 years to fulfill her wish.

First she worked as a health care aide and then as a manager in supermarkets before she earned a degree in English education from Buffalo State College, now University.

Joining the Tapestry Charter School faculty in 2013, she thrived. She was school photographer, yearbook adviser, bowling coach and adviser to the Anime Club. Students gravitated to her classroom during their free periods.

Poor health led her to retire in 2019. She died under hospice care Sept. 13 after a long battle with cancer. She was 53.

Born in Waterloo, Angela Renee Llano was the older of two daughters of Gaspar and Frances Llano. Her father was a careerist in the Navy. The family moved to North Buffalo in 1977.

She was the spelling champion at St. Margaret School and co-captain of the cheerleading squad at McKinley High School, where she was among the top 10 academically in the Class of 1990. Then she became a certified nursing assistant. She worked in private duty and at Autumn View Health Care Facility in Hamburg. After the birth of her two daughters, she began a long career with Tops Markets at various locations, first as a cashier, then rising to assistant store manager. She and Brett Lambrix met as co-workers at one of those locations and were married in 2004.

She excelled again scho-



lastically after she enrolled at Buffalo State with her husband's encouragement. A member of Kappa Delta Pi, the education honor society, she made the dean's list every semester and finished with a grade point average of 3.97. She helped run the student-tutor writing center and was managing editor of the "Buffalo Art Project" and "Writers' Compass."

She received numerous scholarships, including the Nicholas Patterson Perpetual Fund Scholarship, the Business and Professional Women of Buffalo/Amherst Scholarship, the Hazel M. Bleeker Scholarship and the United University Professions Scholarship. She also received the Ross B. Kenzie Family Presidential Scholarship and was admitted to the Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program.

She was a founder and president of a chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the international educational honor society. She earned the English Department award, the Dean of Arts and Humanities Award for Excellence, the President's Medal for Outstanding Undergraduate Student and the SUNY Chancellor's Award for students. She gave the student address at commencement in 2010.

Ms. Lambrix remained at Buffalo State to assist in the McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement program and helped other students with graduate school applications. She went on to graduate school herself and completed a master's degree in English literature at the University at Buffalo in 2012 while undergoing her first treatments for cancer. After substitute teaching for a year, she joined the Tapestry Charter School as a librarian and media specialist, then became an English teacher.

A two-pack-a-day smoker beginning as a teen, she stopped in 2007 and gave testimony to her experience for the Great American Smokeout in 2018 in a video for Tobacco-Free Western New York.

"Quitting was the absolute hardest thing I ever did," she said. "I would rather give birth to 14 more children with no medication than ever go through it again."

She said it took her three weeks, noting that she was starting a new career and "didn't want to bring old habits into my new life."

A Hamburg resident since 2019, she enjoyed hiking, camping, biking, skating and time at the beach. Also a traveler, she and her husband cherished Disney World.

In addition to her husband, Brett, an Apple store supervisor, survivors include two daughters, Aurora Bouvier and Karissa Farrell; a son, Raheem Lambrix; her mother, Fran Llano; and her sister, Marcia Nigro.

A celebration of her life will be held from 3 to 8 p.m. Sunday in Tapestry Charter School, 65 Great Arrow Ave.