

MARYANNE YERKES



Maryanne Yerkes, 50, of Arlington, VA, died Sunday, July 30, 2023. She was the devoted mother of 6-year-old John Aleksandar Arturo del Granado Yerkes and the beloved wife of Hugo del Granado. She passed away peacefully after a year-long struggle with cancer.

Maryanne was born in Charlotte, NC, on February 26, 1973, the second child of Barbara Anne Cone Yerkes and the late John H. Yerkes. She graduated from Independence High School in Charlotte, North Carolina in 1991 and went on to receive a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies & French from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1995, where she was also honored with induction into the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

Maryanne kick started a long career of serving people in need by working at an NGO that services Chicago's homeless, then spent four years at the Africa Desk of a Catholic peacebuilding organization in Belgium. In 1999 Maryanne moved to Washington, D.C. where she earned a master's in International Peace and Conflict Resolution, with a focus on transitional justice in the Balkans, at American University's School of International Service in Washington, D.C. The completion of her studies launched another chapter of travel for Maryanne, this time to some of the poorest regions in the world, in Africa and Latin America, as a democracy officer with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

For more than two decades, Maryanne employed her experience in international development and peacebuilding to advance the voices of civil society and better the lives of people in developing countries. She was especially passionate about championing youth. As a member and division chief of the Center for Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance's Civil Society and Media Division, Maryanne was the first in the agency to pilot an online game to empower young people to become engaged citizens and work together to improve their communities. Maryanne also led the development of the agency's first-ever Youth Policy, paving the way for the positive youth development agenda at USAID. After advocating persistently for an agency-wide youth coordinator position, she designed the role and continued to help strengthen the position and portfolio. Thanks to her efforts, Maryanne changed the trajectory of how USAID and missions around the world approach youth-integrated development.

Most recently, Maryanne was deputy director of USAID's Honduras Education Office, where she led a team that works on education and economic growth. She spearheaded the design of the USAID/Honduras "Creating My Future Here" program, which has resulted in increased educational and income-generating opportunities for thousands of young Hondurans.

Though she led an adventurous life, Maryanne's greatest love was her family, especially her darling son, Aleksandar. She will be remembered by all for her selfless nature, generous spirit, empathy, enthusiasm, creativity, unflappability, graciousness, joy for life, and, of course, for her strength, resilience, grit, and courage. She was an exemplary model of true grace under fire. Though Maryanne is no longer here physically, she will always remain here spiritually, close to her family and friends, the invisible string of love forever connecting her to us. In addition to her husband and son, Maryanne is survived by her mother, Barbara Yerkes, and her sister, Lori Yerkes, both of Boston, GA.

Well-wishers are welcome to a visitation on Friday, August 11 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Advent Funeral in

Falls Church, VA; and a funeral service at Columbia Gardens Cemetery on Saturday, August 12 at 10 a.m. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Appendix Cancer PMP Research Foundation (<https://acpmp.org/get-involved/donate/>) at 491 Baltimore Pike, #177, Springfield, PA 19064.

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