



Ms. Jennifer Leigh Turner

October 15, 1977 - May 16, 2019

Jennifer Leigh Turner, age 41, passed away on Thursday, May 16, 2019, with family by her side, at the T. Boone Pickens Center of Faith Presbyterian Hospice in Dallas, Texas, following a brief but fierce fight against cancer. She was born on October 15, 1977, in Little Rock, Arkansas, to Terry and Carolyn Turner.

Jennifer was raised on the family rice farm near DeWitt, Arkansas. She graduated in 1996 from DeWitt High School. Like her parents and brother, she went on to study at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, serving actively in Chi Omega and earning her B.A. in Journalism in 1999.

After college, Jennifer worked as a journalist for community newspapers in Nashville, Tennessee, and Bentonville, Arkansas. In 2007, looking for adventure, she moved to Costa Rica to teach English in a public school in the small, rural town of Potrero Grande. It was there that Jennifer found her true passion in life – teaching.

In 2009, Jennifer moved to Dallas, Texas, and earned her teaching certificate. She became a 5th Grade Science Teacher at DISD's John Q. Adams Elementary School in Pleasant Grove in South Dallas. In 2013, Jennifer was accepted to a program with Teaching Trust, a Dallas-based non-profit whose purpose is to transform education by improving schools.

In conjunction with Teaching Trust, and while still working full-time as a teacher, Jennifer earned her M.Ed. in Education Leadership with Specialization in Urban Schools from Southern Methodist University in 2015.

Also during that period, she and 3 other inspired female educators developed a proposal for an innovative school model. Impressed by the proposal, the Dallas ISD Board invested to bring the school to life. In 2016, the Solar Preparatory School for Girls, an all-girls public school with a focus on science, technology, arts, engineering, and math, opened on Henderson Avenue in Dallas with Jennifer serving as Assistant Principal.

Because of its passionate staff and students and its ground-breaking approach to social-and-emotional learning, Solar Prep quickly became a success and earned a national reputation. Jennifer played critical roles in all aspects of the school's development. She was adored by her students, appreciated by parents, and respected by her colleagues. Known for her work ethic, encouragement, and hugs, Jennifer epitomized what it means to be a Solar Fierce Female.

Jennifer is survived by her parents who reside in DeWitt, Arkansas; by her brother Chris Turner, sister-in-law and close friend Suzanne, and adoring nephew Whit and niece Emory, of Dallas, Texas; by beloved extended family; by Principal Nancy Bernardino, 50 staff, 455 girls, and numerous parents and supporters of Solar Prep; and by Linsley Kinkade and countless other cherished friends and former colleagues around the globe.

A graveside service for family only will be held at Cedarcrest Memorial Park in DeWitt, Arkansas, on Wednesday, May 22, at 1:30 p.m., followed by a public reception from 3-5 p.m. at the Community Room of the Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas in DeWitt. A Celebration of Life event open to all friends, family, colleagues, and others who were touched by Jennifer will be held at the Solar Preparatory School for Girls in Dallas, Texas, on Saturday, May 25, at 2:00pm.

The family has designated the Jennifer Turner Scholarship Fund of the non-profit Friends of Solar Prep for memorial contributions (www.friendsofsolarprep.org/jennifer-turner-scholarship-fund).

Tribute Wall

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“ Kevin and Diane Hughes (and family) purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Ms. Jennifer Leigh Turner.



Kevin and Diane Hughes (and family) - May 21, 2019 at 11:24 AM

BS

“ Carolyn, what a wonderful tribute to your beautiful, caring daughter! I know your heart is broken but my prayer is that you will find peace in knowing Jennifer is free of pain and is experiencing the beautiful heaven. May God continue to comfort you. Love, Beverly Sivils

Beverly Sivils - May 21, 2019 at 10:09 AM