



## Sharon R. O'Meara

March 29, 2017

Sharon R O'Meara of Avon, CT, beloved spouse of Cheryl Coutsonikas passed away peacefully on March 29, 2017 after a sudden illness. She was surrounded by family and friends.

In addition to her spouse, she is survived by the entire Coutsonikas-Lacey family, her extended family Betsy Bruno, Carol St. Jean, Patricia Lee, Marcia Duval, Jack & Judy Martin, Ruth Anne Wrobel, Richard Chin and the entire staff of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Sharon was the only child born to Philip and Lillian O'Meara of New Hampshire. After graduating from High School, Sharon attended Emmanuel College where she received a Bachelor degree and Boston University where she received her Masters of Social Work.

Sharon's career started in Boston, MA where she worked with the Quincy School System providing case work and group therapy as Co-Director with Richard Chin. Sharon shifted her focus to work with the Non-Profit sector. She moved to Worcester, MA in the 1980's to become the Executive Director of the YWCA of Worcester where she spent the next ten plus years working with the Worcester Community through her position at the YWCA to achieve goals that carried the organization through her tenure and beyond. After leaving the YWCA in the 1990's, she became the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Psychological Association in Boston, MA. There again she was able to accomplish many goals to position the organization to adapt to the ever changing environment psychologist faced at the time

After leaving Worcester and Boston, Sharon took a position with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Through the HFPG as Director of Community Investment Sharon was able to do what she loved, helping other non-profits fulfill their missions and goals. Sharon absolutely loved working with the many non-profit agencies in Hartford. She believed in team work and consensus. Her ability to think outside of the box was amazing. Her contributions to the Hartford Community through her work at HFPG are too many to mention. She was grateful that she had the opportunity to serve the Hartford Community.

Sharon worked tirelessly to promote Hartford and took every opportunity to enjoy the rich entertainment and dining experiences Hartford and the surrounding towns offered.

Sharon's love of life, her humor and her creativity will be missed. Please join us in a "Celebration of Sharon O'Meara's Life" on Friday, April 7, 2017 from 1-5pm at Infinity Music Hall, 32 Front St., Hartford, CT. Here we will pay honor to Sharon through tributes from her family, colleague and the community, along with beautiful music and wonderful food that she loved. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Sharon O'Meara Fund at the Hartford Foundation, 10 Columbus Blvd., Hartford, CT 06106. For directions and online condolences, please visit [www.taylorandmodeen.com](http://www.taylorandmodeen.com).

# Comments

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“ Cheryl I was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of your dear wife Sharon. I am consoled by the fact that when the two of you reached out to me I was there for you and I was able to make your lives complete. May Sharon's memory be a blessing and comfort to all those whose lives she touched and made better in some way. Joel Kent

Joel Kent - Windsor, CT - Friend - July 24, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ Having just learned of Sharon's passing, it is with great sadness that I send condolences to her wife, family, colleagues, and friends. I had the pleasure of working with Sharon several times over the years (with multiple agencies) when she was responsible for representing HFPG. Her efforts made a very real positive difference to many agencies and people throughout Greater Hartford. That she cared deeply was always clear. Her kindness and consideration for those she worked with was generous. She will certainly be remembered fondly - and missed greatly.

Roberta Echelson - West Hartford, CT - Acquaintance - June 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ On behalf of the entire Malta House of Care family, I offer my deepest sympathy on the sudden passing of Sharon O'Meara. As with so many other nonprofits, Malta House benefited directly from Sharon's huge heart and wise, thoughtful approach to grantmaking. Her legacy will be forever found in the thousands of lives she helped to improve every single day. We are very sorry for your loss.

Michelle Murphy - Hartford, CT - April 19, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ My deepest sympathies go out to Sharon's wife, family, friends, and colleagues... and to the entire nonprofit and philanthropic community that was made better by her efforts. Her intelligence, wit, kindness, and authenticity will be greatly missed.

Jane Lennox - West Hartford, CT - Coworker - April 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ Such a Lovely Lady. I will always think of her with a SMILE!!!!

Patty Buonocore - Torrington, CT - April 07, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ As a person who is seldom without words, I am at a loss. Just a few short weeks ago Sharon and I were laughing and talking...unimaginable that would be the last time that we would speak.What a loss in a world that needs more people like Sharon O'Meara.

**Adrienne Cochrane - Hartford, CT** - April 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ I met Sharon 17 years ago when I was a new CEO at Chrysalis Center. Through the years, she was always supportive and cared about the real issues in our communities; the ones that really mattered and always not the sexiest of causes but the ones that had huge impact on the fabric of our well-being. Sharon's intellect and sense of humor made her my go to person at the foundation and I was blessed to work with her on so many projects. While today we mourn the loss of Sharon, I know she has left her mark on this earth in the most positive way possible. My deepest of sympathies to Cheryl, Sharon's family and friends and all the great people who worked with Sharon at the HFPG. Heaven gained an angel today

**Sharon Castelli - Hartford, CT - Coworker** - April 06, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ I met Sharon when I worked at the Hartford Foundation 17 years ago. She has been a source of wisdom, guidance and caring ever since. No matter how much time had elapsed since we'd seen each other, she would be as warm, engaged and interested as ever. There will never be another like her. I miss her already. Blessings to Sharon's family, friends, co-workers and all those whose lives she touched.

**Kate Busch Gervais - Hartford, CT - Coworker** - April 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ How does one celebrate the life of a very special person, who meant so much to the Greater Hartford community? It is not only about the important work Sharon immersed herself so deeply in to help those in need following the true spirit of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's mission, but more so the wonderful and thoughtful person Sharon was. Truly someone who had and practiced a very strong set of core values that defined her as a strong, supportive, giving, focused, committed and kind person.I knew and worked with Sharon for almost 20 years. I will miss her valuable counsel, enthusiasm for the important work and causes, her professionalism and that wonderful sense of humor. One memory I have was to take a picture of her office and as some of folks know there would be stacks and stacks of files on her desk and the floor for all the projects she was working on. I sent her the picture saying I had forwarded it to the Hartford Fire Marshal's Office as her office was a fire hazard. She loved the teasing all in good fun.Sharon was very humble and I am sure she would say all that is planned this week to celebrate her life is a bit much and not necessary. But I and so many others would disagree for someone who

was so highly respected and loved as a colleague and friend. You will be greatly missed, but your spirit will always be in all of us. Tom Phillips

**Thomas Phillips - Glastonbury, CT - Friend** - April 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM

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“ I first met Sharon at the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, shortly after she arrived in Hartford. She was full of life then and, when I last saw her a few weeks ago, was every bit as energetic and engaged - perhaps more so, I think - then she had always been. She had been asking, post election, "How do I get involved?" and had allowed me to connect her with my professors at UConn School of Social Work. She very much wanted to roll up her sleeves and get involved in the fight for social justice. "I am a social worker! That is my core identity, how I identify most completely." I always, always learned from Sharon and will miss her restless intelligence, humor and love of the arts - not to mention her transformative work in service to the communities of Hartford.

**Stephen Haynes - Hartford, CT - Coworker** - April 05, 2017 at 12:00 AM