

### **Lori Lynn Furlong Distinguished Endowed Undergraduate Scholarship**

Lori Lynn Furlong was born November 3, 1953 in Chehalis, Washington. Her family father James, mother Jaquelynn, two sisters and a brother-lived in the town of Boisfort. James taught in the public school in Chehalis, and when the family moved to south Tacoma, Lori's mother also taught in the Tacoma public schools. With the addition of another sister, the family of seven grew. When the children started their own lives, they spread from Tacoma to Eatonville.

Lori graduated from Franklin Pierce High School in 1972 and continued her interest in school by beginning classes at Western Washington University in 1973. She transferred to the University of Washington in 1975 with the intention of graduating within two years. However, with rising tuition and the need to support herself, Lori left school and began working in the restaurant industry. Two of her favorite locations in Seattle were the Lanai Lounge in the Roosevelt Hotel and II Bistro at the Pike Place Market. A good income, and more importantly, lifelong friends were the benefits provided by both.

Lori's husband, Charles Joy, came into her life in 1980 and the two remained together until she passed away in 2014. While living in Seattle in 1988, Lori was diagnosed with Primary Progressive Multiple Sclerosis. With her husband's support, she began learning about the disease and the possible treatments and lifestyle changes that might keep the disease under control. As Lori thought of a future limited physically, she stopped working in the restaurant field and went back to school. At Gompers, now Wood Technology Center at South Central Community College, she earned her Associate of Arts and Sciences degree in cabinetmaking, graduating in 1989. She worked with wood for as long as her physical abilities would allow. Some of her wood pieces are cherished family keepsakes.

With her physical abilities declining, Lori's thoughts turned to finishing the bachelor's degree she had started back in 1973. She enrolled at University of Washington Bothell and completed her degree in Liberal Studies, graduating in 1993. Lori knew when she undertook the challenge that she would not be going back to the work force following completion of her degree. Her education was purely for the sake of learning. She was thrilled and proud to complete her degree some 20 years after starting her journey into higher education.

Lori was an avid reader throughout her life. Her thirst for knowledge was endless. She sought to learn about everything around her, even the simple things that most do not take beyond a first glance. Lori understood that there was more to the book, plant, art subject, or place before her that she could learn about.

What mattered most to Lori in the last year of her life was maintaining the ability to live, to be able to read, learn and communicate with her husband and friends. That "*being able*" is a precious gift, as precious as breathing, as precious as love. Lori's husband would remind students who have earned this scholarship on behalf of Lori Lynn Furlong to remember this part of her: ability is a gift. Use it often, use it with joy, and make the effort. You will have success. Good luck.