



## Shari Kaye Brown-Balla

October 25, 1962 - May 5, 2022

Shari Kaye Brown-Balla (née Brown) was born on October 25, 1962 to Millie Jean Brown (née McAnally) and Thomas Herman Brown in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Brown-Balla graduated from Waynesville High School in 1980 and moved to Springfield, Missouri to attend Southwest Missouri State University (now Missouri State University) where she received a degree in interior design. After many years of specializing in floral design and sewing, she returned to school to receive her teaching certification while working as a para-professional. She received a master's degree in early childhood education from Drury University in addition to managing her own classroom. Brown-Balla was an ardent proponent for early childhood education. During her 20-plus year career for Springfield Public Schools, she worked at Delaware, Shady Dell, Williams, and York Elementary Schools. Brown-Balla was a 2019-20 finalist for Springfield Public School's Teacher of the Year and was named the 2019 York Elementary Teacher of the Year. During the final years of her career, she taught for the "Wonder Years" early childhood education program and taught for the Missouri Parents as Teachers Program.

Shari's family and friends will remember her for her passion, kindness, and selfless acts. When she wasn't teaching, she was working on projects for her family, friends, and colleagues. Her greatest joy was fostering the wellbeing of others. Her family was her greatest achievement. Shari raised her children, Nicholas (32) and Isabel (28), to dream big and spread joy. She was vocal about social representation within her communities and believed that education was the gateway to a more loving, just world.

She is survived by her husband of 37 years Christopher William Balla; son Nicholas Thomas Brown Balla and his fiancé Branden Christopher Surgnier; daughter Isabel Christine Balla; and sister Elizabeth Ann Tritten (née Brown), her husband David Ray Tritten, and their children: Jason David Tritten, his wife Tracy and their children Mabelle, Cash, and Millie; Elise Brianne Schnarr (née Tritten), her husband David and their children Matylda, Charlotte, and Caroline; and Noelle Catharine Frank (née Tritten), her husband Darin and their son Gibson.

In lieu of flowers, please consider giving a donation. Funds will be split between two foundations that were near to Shari's heart: Springfield Public Schools Early Education and research to find a cure for scleroderma. Donations can be made at this site: <https://givebutter.com/sharibrownballa>.

# Tribute Wall

CA

“ *Shari was such a kind hearted person Her smile radiated goodness. I was closer to her sister Liz . The love these two shared kept and made their families beautiful people. My love and prayers for comfort for all the family left behind. Your precious Angel will be waiting there for you in glory.* ”



Carla and Jimmy Allen - May 14 at 05:58 PM

GD

“ *It was my pleasure to work with Shari at York Elementary. Gary Danielson* ”

Gary Danielso - May 14 at 05:29 PM

SL

“ *Mrs. Balla had my son the first half of this school year. She made a HUGE impact on him, and even today he uses some of her phrases in her tone. He would make her art and cards because he loved her so much. I appreciate the time, love, and effort she put into each child. I wish my family would have had the privilege to know her longer. We will miss her, but know her family carries on her legacy. ❤️* ”

Sapphire Lewis - May 14 at 03:54 PM

KL

“ *Everyone who knew Shari was BLESSED! She was down to earth, so sweet and loved her family and students more than anything! We would always have a good laugh because one or both of us would always have a bag of things to gift each other every time she came in for a nail appointment! We were so looking forward to Shari teaching my son this next year in the fall, I knew she would have nothing but an amazing impact on him.* ”

Kamron Liepins - May 14 at 07:50 AM



“ *I was lucky enough to have taken care of Shari while at Mercy Hospital. She was one of the most kind hearted, funny, and passionate ladies I've ever met. Thinking of her amazing family and sending all my love* ”

Brittany Rayburn - May 12 at 01:40 PM

LG

“ *Shari was a very special friend to me. She helped me learn the way to give more to people. She made every child, parent, teacher, person that she met know that she cared about them. That she wanted the best for them.*

*We became close after my children were in her wonder years class. We had some of the same passions. We love children and crafting and helping other people.*

*She had a heart of GOLD.*

*One of the things I will miss the most is not being able to talk to her or spend time with her. Take her Starbuck's coffee. We used to laugh when I would bring her coffee and she would not know I was bringing it. But it was exactly what she needed. The way she smiled, laughed, her way of knowing exactly what you needed to hear even when you didn't know that you needed to hear it. She knew how to make you feel great even when you didn't think anyone could.*

*I will always have you a space in my heart for you. You were my best friend from the time I met you. I will see you when God is ready for me. I will always miss and love you. You changed my life for the better for ever.*

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**Lori Grady** - May 11 at 08:15 PM

SD

“ *Sheila Debo lit a candle in memory of Shari Kaye Brown-Balla*



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**Sheila Debo** - May 11 at 03:27 PM