

Kathryn Knowles 1976 - 2018

Kathryn Knowles was a uniquely vibrant person. She was bursting with intelligence, full of humor, and at the same time kind, sympathetic and caring. She was honest to the core. In the thirteen years from 2005 to 2018 that Kathryn worked with the Collegium Ramazzini she became the heart and soul of our organization. She led the team that organized our annual Ramazzini Days meeting each October. She handled logistics, meal planning and meeting agendas. She found ways to retrieve lost Fellows from train stations and airports across the north of Italy. She rationalized and automated our financial systems. She was always available for a telephone conversation or an email exchange on any matter, great or small. She treated everyone around her with respect and compassion. We extend our deepest sympathies to Kathryn's husband, Marco, to her son, Jackson, to her mother, and to all those who knew her, worked with her and loved her.

Kathryn believed deeply in the mission of the Collegium Ramazzini. The Collegium is an international scientific academy founded in 1982 and comprised of 180 renowned experts in the fields of occupational and environmental health from more than 40 countries. It is named in honor of Bernardino Ramazzini, the father of occupational and environmental medicine, who was born in Carpi and served as Professor of Medicine in Modena and in Padua. The Collegium is fiercely independent and proudly free of the commercial ties that too often can corrupt science. Its mission is to serve as a bridge between the world of science and the world of public policy and to apply the knowledge gained from scientific research in occupational and environmental medicine to improve health and prevent disease in vulnerable populations. The Collegium has worked to

protect workers against asbestos, benzene and a range of occupational carcinogens. It has become an internationally respected advocate for children's environmental health. It translates the policy implications of scientific findings to legislators, regulators and other decision makers. It fights to protect the independence of international scientific organizations. Its ultimate goal is to find solutions of occupational and environmental health problems in countries around the world and to save lives. Kathryn became deeply knowledgeable about every aspect of this work. She supported the mission of the Collegium Ramazzini with all of her great energy and with all her heart.

The Fellows of the Collegium Ramazzini will greatly miss Kathryn. It will feel odd and empty this year to come to Carpi and not be greeted by her smile and a big hug. It will be quiet without her laughter. But her spirit will live on. The colleagues whom Kathryn trained and inspired will continue her good work. The spirit of decency, honesty and respect that she fostered will continue. The structures she built will endure.

Today we grieve. Kathryn Knowles' death is a great loss, and she and was taken from us too soon. But at the same time we celebrate Kathryn's life. In her 42 years she accomplished much. She spread love, joy and humor wherever she walked. To spend time with Kathryn was to be given a great gift. She lit our lives. She taught us well. This we must remember.

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