

In remembrance ...



Michelle Franta was the managing editor of *EFFEKT*. In addition to putting together every issue, she wrote and edited many of the articles that have appeared in the magazine. Her editing was exemplary and meticulous, and her writing was compelling. But her work is the last thing on my mind as I look at the desk where she sat each day for the last two years. Her chair is empty with a well-worn, black sweater draped over it. She has framed photos and fun toys placed prominently on the desk. There is a to-do list off to one side. It's as if her work station is in suspended animation.

Michelle died on Wednesday, March 10 of a ruptured thoracic aneurysm while on vacation with her fiancé and his family. She was 26 years old.

As we mourn her loss, our group has traded stories and memories of Michelle. Through these remembrances, many of us have come to the conclusion that in her brief time, Michelle had somehow discovered the secrets to a happy life. She laughed often, loved those closest to her and cherished every moment.

Michelle was known for her compassion. She went out of her way to be nice to everyone around her. I remember the story of Michelle giving up the last pair of shoes in her size on a rack for a friend who had a wedding to go to that weekend. Of course, Michelle was also very resourceful and called every store in the Twin Cities to track down a pair for herself. She eventually found them. Some of our designers participated in a triathlon two years ago, and they all appreciated seeing Michelle's beaming face cheering them along the way. Nothing was going to stop her from supporting her co-workers, not even the lightning storm that persisted during the entire race.

Michelle was our friend, our writer, our colleague. She will be missed, but her smile will live with us forever. We are fortunate to have known her.

I keep looking at her desk. It's amazing that the sight of a lived-in desk and an empty chair can so easily put our short time on Earth into perspective. It reminds us to live our lives fully every day, like Michelle did. ●

Letters to the Editor

EFFEKT wants to know what you think! Tell us what you love, what we should change, and what you, the reader, are most interested in seeing in our magazine. Mail or email letters to the editor to the address below.

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