

IN LOVING MEMORY OF.....

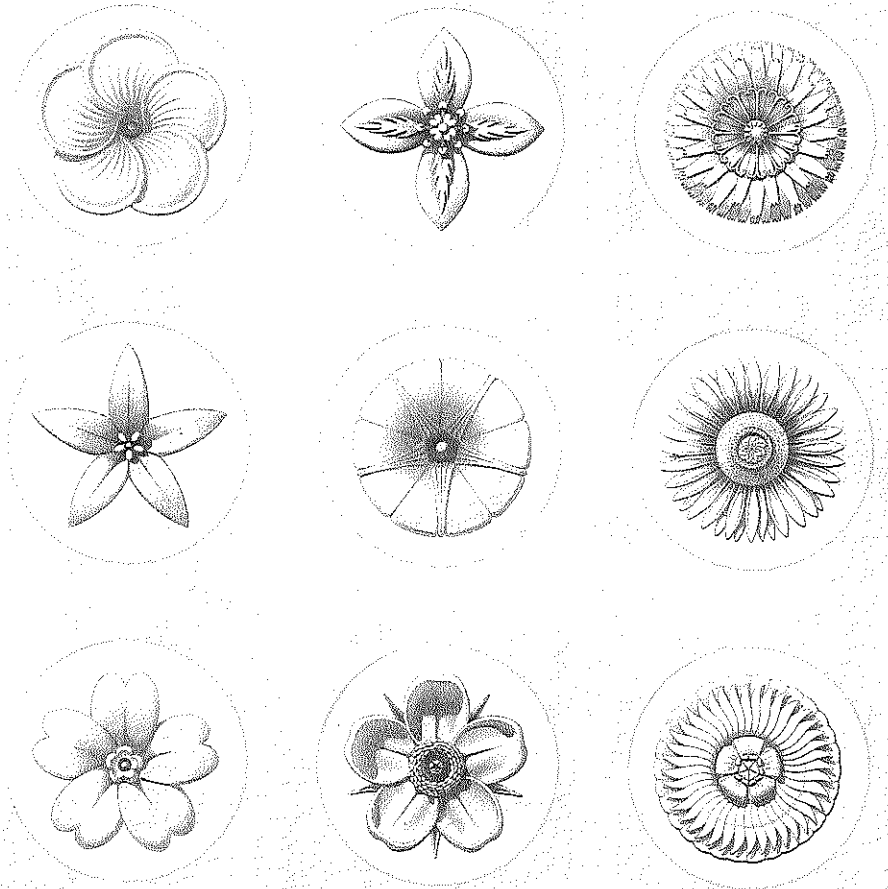
MELISSA KUPFERBERG



WITH DEEPEST

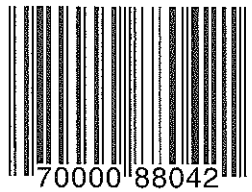
Sympathy

FROM ALL OF US



THIS CARD IS MADE
WITH RECYCLED PAPER.
20% Recycled Fiber

Hallmark.com



U.S.A. 3.69
Canada 4.69
S 548-1

© HALLMARK LICENSING, INC.
HALLMARK CARDS, INC.
KANSAS CITY, MO 64141
TORONTO, CANADA M2J 1P6
MADE IN U.S.A.

Honorable Donna Lee Elm
and Staff,

OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS
ARE WITH YOU, YOUR OFFICE
AND MELISSA'S FAMILY.
Peter Pompano

May the heartfelt sympathy
Of those who deeply care
Make this time of sadness
Somehow easier to bear—

And may the hand of friendship
We're extending in your sorrow
Help to bring you comfort
And strength for each tomorrow.

Although we did not
have the pleasure of
working with Melissa,
we had the privilege
and honor of meeting her
at the July 2009 IODL
Conference in Naples. Our
thoughts and prayers are
with all of you.

Glenn M. Fulgencia, Chief
Investigator

JOHN ANZICO - INVESTIGATOR

TOM SLEATER - INVESTIGATOR

I am a senior secretary in the Tampa office of the Federal Defender's Office. I have worked with Melissa on numerous cases and her knowledge and assistance was unmatched by any other. Her dedication to her job was such an inspiration and her witty personality would bring a smile to my face even on the worst day.

What a joy she was to work with and I am so glad that I was given the opportunity to know and work with Melissa. What a beautiful soul, she is sorely missed and will never be forgotten. My heart goes out to you and your family for this terrible and tragic loss.

No farewell words were spoke,
No time to say goodbye,
You were gone before we knew it
and only God knows why.

Until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand. God Bless.

Deborah D. Flanigan
Senior Legal Secretary
Federal Defender's Office
Tampa Division

I am the newest attorney at the Tampa Federal Defender's Office and had the privilege of knowing Melissa for about two months. Even though she and I were just getting to know each other, I considered her a friend and feel a deep loss from her passing. Melissa was special - she could make you feel, from the first day she met you, as though you had always known her and she was excited to get to know you even better. I have no doubt that this quality helped her excel in her career. I know the clients she worked with must have felt that palpable quality and for them to see Melissa on their team fighting for them must have been a great comfort to countless people. I apologize that these, or any, words do not do Melissa the justice she deserves, but the feelings I am trying to express will endure in my thoughts and in my heart. I mourn Melissa as a talented colleague and as the close friend she surely would have become in time.

Jenny L. Devine
Assistant Federal Defender
Federal Defender's Office
Tampa Division

May your memory be eternal dear Melissa.
May your sweet smile shine on in our minds.
May your gentle spirit live on in peace.
May your kindness be paid forward by those you left behind.
May we meet again some day in paradise.
Until then, sweet Melissa, we will miss you.

Rosemary Cakmis
Assistant Federal Defender
Chief, Appellate Division
Federal Defender's Office

I am so sorry to hear this news and can only imagine the grief your staff is experiencing.

Sheila Jacoby
Chief Pretrial Services Officer
Middle District of Florida
Orlando, Florida

Hello Donna! Jose Montanez, my supervisor in Tampa, has spoken with your supervisor and offered to provide assistance in any way possible to your staff. If you need phone coverage at any time please don't hesitate to contact me and I will line it up for you in every division. If you need staff to leave early Thursday for the service we will be happy to do whatever we can to allow your staff to get on the road. There are times like this when you are not sure what you can do, but most of all I want you to know that we are here and I want you to know that I am here for you.

Sheila Jacoby
Chief Pretrial Services Officer
Middle District of Florida
Orlando, Florida

My heart is with your staff. What a tragedy.

Elaine Terenzi
Chief Probation Officer
Middle District of Florida
Tampa, Florida

We are just learning of Melissa Kupferberg's tragic death this weekend. Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with your entire office.

David C. Tremmel
Senior United States Probation Officer
Tampa, Florida

I am sorry to hear that sad news. I forwarded your email to all our judges.

The Honorable Anne C. Conway
Chief Judge
Middle District of Florida
Orlando, Florida

Judge Anthony Porcelli called and sent his deepest sympathy. He advised that if anyone needs any hearings before him re-set he would be glad to accommodate any needs we may have.

Our hearts go out to Melissa's family and to her colleagues. I've sent a message to Brian [Albritton] and Lee [Bentley] about the tragedy, as they are on travel. I've also left my card with your receptionist: If there is anything we as an office can do, or any information you or Melissa's family would like disseminated to our attorneys (and staff), please let me know.

My condolences,
Karin B. Hoppmann
Acting United States Attorney, 11/08/09-11/09/09
United States Attorney's Office
Middle District of Florida

I am so very sorry to hear about the tragic death of your colleague Melissa. How incredibly awful. Our prayers are with her family and associates.

Kathy and Tony Peluso
Assistant United States Attorneys
Middle District of Florida, Tampa Division

Thank you for talking with me. It is comforting to know that Melissa had people there who cared for her. Here is my contact information in case you need anything from me. Please send me all the information you have available regarding the services and how I might make a donation.

Linda R. Sobotka
Mitigation Specialist
Chicago, Illinois

My condolence .. for your loss ... Apparently Melissa was that special person who also saw something "special" in all of her clients.

Angela Wright
Attorney, Criminal Justice Act Panel, Tampa

I can't imagine the sadness of this loss. When we investigators work together, we do so with such a commitment to the client that is on a very personal level. We share our feelings about the client, the cases on such an emotional level. Bill Withers was right when he wrote "Lean on me". When that friend, that pillar is lost, there is an absence of the person's presence that comforts us and we come to depend on. We in Montana all have one investigator per office. When I go to conferences, I am impressed most with the comradery within each office. I am sorry for your loss. Rest assured that the work Melissa did, that we all do, I believe, is as close to the golden rule as one can come. I have no doubt Melissa did for her clients and friends as she would want someone to do unto her.

Russ Curry
Investigator, Federal Defender's Office
Montana

Thank you Donna very much for sharing. Our sympathies to you, your office, and especially Melissa Kupferberg's family and friends over the loss you share. It is very difficult to endure the pain of suddenly and tragically losing a colleague. Especially, one so respected and with such high promise for the future.

Philip L. Oliver
Chief Investigator
Federal Defender's Office
Sacramento, CA

I wanted to extend my condolences to you and everyone in your office for this terrible tragedy. I'm so sorry. It's just awful.

Elaine Silvestrini
The Tampa Tribune

I was so sorry to have heard about this. I had only met her once, but had always heard great things about her as a person.

Mark Rankin
Private Attorney in Tampa
Former Assistant Federal Defender

So sorry to hear about this tragedy. My thoughts are with the family during this difficult time.

Betty Farr
Paralegal, Federal Defender's Office
Arkansas

Words cannot begin to express the sadness in my heart for the loss everyone is feeling right now. I know you, especially, have lost an incredible colleague and friend.

Having grown close to Melissa the past 3 years since teaching together for ODS at the Para/Inves'r Workshop and being colleagues at NDIA, I feel honored to have gotten to know her as well as I did. She was absolutely brilliant, an incredible speaker, knowledgeable in so many areas that she just can't be replaced as a speaker, a comic, an outdoorsy type, an animal lover, a fun all around bright & light-hearted spirit. You never saw her without a smile. If you were down or frustrated, she'd make you laugh. Always and I mean ALWAYS upbeat. We'd have lunch or dinner and of course, at some point we'd all talk about case issues - and I'd just be in awe of her insight and knowledge (and I have 30+ years experience!). Her compassion for our clients, their mental health and social dysfunctions and needs, as well as her all-around caring nature were inspiring. We all need to take from her example and keep her memory alive by choosing to embrace that spirit in our own daily work with clients.

What a huge loss to the defense community and to all of us who will miss her friendship.

Such a tragedy to lose someone so young. My prayers and thoughts are with her family and to you, Donna, and all who are in your office and who knew Missy as a friend.

Jan Kullberg, Paralegal
Federal Public Defender
Phoenix, AZ

This is terrible Donna. So sorry for Missy's family. Sorry for you as well.

Tennie Martin
Public Defender's Office
Maricopa County, Phoenix, AZ

I had been assisted by Melissa on cases. Personally, I am in shock to hear this news, truthfully.

Sally S. Perez
Investigator, Federal Defender's Office
Southern District of Florida, Ft. Lauderdale Office

Just got the news article from Sally Perez my co-worker. I read the article and it was truly a sad story. My thought and prayers goes out to the family and friends. She will be missed.

Bosco Guzman
Investigator, Federal Defender's Office
Southern District of Florida, Miami Office

Melissa has been a tremendous resource and "mitigation friend." I am so saddened. My thoughts and prayers go out to her family and her defender family.

Kimberly Collins
Investigator/Mitigation Specialist
Federal Community Defenders Office
Philadelphia, PA

Missy had helped me out in the past with some information on a case of mine in Arizona. What a tragic loss to the mitigation community.

Nora Shaw
Private Investigator

This is indeed a tragedy. I regret that I never met Melissa.

Linda Ramirez
Private Attorney, Criminal Justice Act Panel
Tampa, Florida

Our deepest condolences to you, your staff, and Melissa's family. Melissa was a gifted and committed professional who touched the lives and contributed greatly to so many of our colleagues and your clients.

Ted Lidz, Assistant Director
Training Branch Chief
Office of Defender Services
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
Washington, D.C.

I am in shock. Melissa was near and dear to me as both a friend and a colleague. She was just absolutely amazing and I can not believe that she is no longer with us. My Training Branch colleagues and I would often remark on Melissa's talent, dedication and accomplishments. Melissa was that person we could always rely on to go beyond the call of duty, think outside the box and do it all with enthusiasm and passion. She truly had a heart of gold. We will miss her dearly. Thank you for allowing us to get to know her by extending her to us to train the defender and CJA community. We have all been enriched by knowing Melissa and learning from her.

Andrea Taylor, Deputy Chief
Training Branch
Office of Defender Services
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
Washington, D.C.

I second Ted's thoughts. We so valued her as a trainer, professional and friend.

Bob Burke, Chief
Training Branch
Office of Defender Services
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
Washington, D.C.

I am heartsick about the loss of Melissa. I met her in Chicago at the investigators/paralegals conference in June, and she was kind enough to include me in the breakout group that she led so ably. I was so impressed by the depth of her knowledge, her openness to others, and her pleasure in teaching that I made a point of attending one of her sessions at the multi-track training later in the summer. She had a special radiance about her -- a truly gifted person whose presence will be missed by so many. My deepest condolences to you and your staff.

Richard "Dick" A. Wolff
Chief, Legal, Policy, and Training Division
Office of Defender Services
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
Washington, D.C.

I had the pleasure of working closely with Melissa on a number of projects over the last several years, and got to know her well through her indispensable help with the Paralegal & Investigator Skills Workshop, the program Dick sat in on this year. That program would not be what it was without her input. Seldom have I come across a more hard-working, thoughtful, dedicated, warm, caring person. I am heartbroken at her tragic death. My condolences to you and everyone in your office. She will be sorely missed.

Lisa M. Porcari, Attorney Advisor
Training Branch
Office of Defender Services
Administrative Office of the United States Courts
Washington, D.C.

I am so sorry to hear of this tragedy. Please know that you and yours are in my thoughts and prayers.

Charles "Chuck" Arberg
Asst. Div. Dir. For Judges & Attys. Prog.
Federal Judicial Center
Washington, D.C.

Thank you for letting us know. And thank you for honoring her by giving those of us who did not have the pleasure of knowing her, a sense of what a wonderful person she was, and an understanding of her contributions. She will be missed by her FPD family.

Debra M. Malcolm
Investigator
Federal Public Defender
Western District of Washington

So very sad to hear of Melissa's death ... condolences to her friends and family.

Rich Spies
Washington Federal Defender's Office
Seattle, WA

My deepest condolences to Melissa's family from a colleague investigator.

Thomas R. Krzyzanek
Investigator, Federal Defender's Office
Spokane, WA

While I never met her, it is always sad to lose a fellow worker and I am sorry for your loss and that of her family.

Bob Versis
Investigator
Office of the Federal Public Defender
Greenbelt, MD

I am a good friend of Missy's and am heartbroken over her tragic death. I worked with her at the Legal Defender's Office in Phoenix and she has remained a dear friend. I have no idea how to reach her family, so I was hoping if you receive any news regarding services for Missy you could share it with me. I am very appreciative. She will be missed dearly by all of those who lives she touched. Thank you,

K. Dawn Whitt

Just heard the dreadful news about Missy. Just unbelievable. My condolences to everyone there who loved her.

Vikki Liles
Capital Defense Lawyer from Phoenix, AZ, who worked with Melissa there

I just heard a terrible story about Melissa being shot ... please tell me it's not true

Nora Steele
Paralega, Federal Public Defender's Office
Phoenix, Arizona

We are sorry about Missy.

Jon Sands
Federal Public Defender
Phoenix, Arizona

I met Melissa in Boston last year. She was very knowledgeable, skilled and friendly person. I am sad to hear of her passing.

Jo Anne DeVoy
Paralegal
Federal Public Defender's Office
Buffalo, New York

OMG .. I'm soooo sorry to hear about Melissa. I knew her from NDIA and the Defender Services Investigator Workshop. My prayers are with her family.

Bev Solomon
Investigator
Legal Aid & Defender Associatio of Detroit
Detroit, MI

I write to express my solidarity with all of you in Tampa who loved and worked with Melissa, and to let you know that although I will not be able to be at the funeral today in body, I will be there in spirit.

Steven Kruer
Paralegal
Jacksonville Division, Federal Defender

I am so terribly sorry to hear about Melissa's death. She was a rising star. Her gentle spirit and dedication to her work will be greatly missed by myself and the many other members of NDIA that were fortunate to know her.

Please express my sincere sympathy to her family and your office family as well. My prayers are with you all.

Patricia Gallo
Investigator
Gainesville, Florida Federal Public Defender's Office

My condolences to you, the office and her family. I met her at the convention, full of life, vigor and an outstanding advocate for the "down trodden" may she rest in peace.

Cuando se muere un Angel, todos lloran. Today I cry with you.

Juan Guerrero
Investigator
Federal Public Defender
Western District of Texas

First of all let me offer my sincere condolences on the tragic death of Melissa. She will be so missed throughout the country. As chair of the National Alliance of Sentencing Advocates and Mitigation Specialist and as a long time friend of Melissa, I can not express the level of sadness I feel. I am sure I speak for all when I say that Melissa was a shining star amongst us all. As you know Melissa was very involved with NLADA/NASAMS and served as vice-chair and chair of our annual conference.

NLADA would like to recognize her service to our community.

Please let us know if there is anything we can do for all the friends and colleagues in her Federal PD family.

Sincerest Sympathy
Lori James-Townes, LCSW-C, Chair
NASAMS

I'm so sorry to hear about Melissa's untimely death. Although I did not know her personally, my thoughts and prayers go out to you and your staff and Melissa's family, as well.

Lacey DeSanta
Investigator
Phoenix, AZ, Office of the Federal Defender

My thoughts and prayers go out to Melissa's family and her "work family" at the Federal P.D.'s Office.

David Dee
Criminal Defense Attorney
Tampa CJA Panel

Condolences to you and your entire office. Russ is quite right about the camaraderie and heartfelt bond shared by those of us in this field. All over the country we share in your loss.

Wesley, Bill, Brenda & Gatl
Southern District of Illinois, Office of the Federal Defender

Condolences to you and your co-workers. We share in your loss in thoughts and prayers.

Tony Pagan
Investigator
Northern District Of Texas, Federal Defender Office

So sorry to hear the sad news, from all of us here at the New Mexico Federal Defender Office, our most heart felt condolences.

Maclovia Guardiola
Chief Investigator
District of New Mexico, Federal Defender Office

I am heartbroken for all of you in your office about Melissa's death. I had met her at some conferences and she was a very bright spot in the room. Thanks for sharing the news. The investigator community is small and close and we are all struggling with the loss of one of our partners. Please let us know if we can help in any way. Take care.

Cindy G. Johnson
Chief Investigator
District of Kansas, Federal Defender Office

All of us here in the southern district are grieving your unimaginable loss. Please let us know if there is anything we can do. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and Melissa's family.

Kathy Williams
Federal Defender
Southern District of Florida

My thoughts are with you guys, the lucky ones who got to see her everyday.

Linda Mroz
Idaho, Federal Community Defender

I am writing to let you know that our staff in Kansas has you all in our thoughts upon hearing the news about your loss of Melissa Kupferberg. Also, if you get the chance, please let her family know that we are thinking of them, as well. I was sent the article by one of our investigators. From reading it, I can tell Melissa was a great member of your team.

Cyd Gilman
District of Kansas, Federal Defender

This is truly sad news.

John J. Toma, Ph.D.

The New Jersey office also wants to offer our condolences to you. I'm sure that the office is reeling from this tragedy. Please let us know if there is anything that we can do.

Kevin J. Murphy
Chief Investigator
District of New Jersey, Federal Defender

My name is Jana Hamilton and I am one of the Legal Secretaries in the Federal Public Defenders Office, Tampa location, that has worked with Melissa for approximately 3 years. Melissa was such a happy spirit. We will miss her laughter, her smiles, her giving heart and and her love for life.

Here is a quote that I hope will encourage you:

Death comes to all, but great achievements build a monument which shall endure until the sun grows cold.

My thoughts and prayers are with you during this time of sorrow.

Jana Hamilton
Legal Secretary
Tampa Division, Federal Defender

As your *office* is our nearest neighbors here in Florida, I can tell you that we are devastated by the loss of Melissa. Whether we were fortunate enough to have met her in person or merely spoke to her on the phone, she was always helpful and sweet. It is always a shock to learn of one of our colleagues passing, but Melissa's sudden death at such a young age has added to that shock. She will, as you said, be sorely missed.

Our deepest condolences, the Investigators from the Southern District of Florida,

Debi, Joe, George, Tom, Mike, Eddie, Sally, Bob, Stuart, Matt, Yamil, Monique,
Frankie, Louie, Marlon, Bosco, Joey and Randy
Deborah McMullen Richman
Chief Investigator
Southern District of Florida, Federal Defender

Melissa must have been a very special person. Upon receiving such sad news, it would behoove us all to take time from the frantic pace of our jobs to reflect upon our good fortunes, our families, friends and co-workers. Time is too short not to appreciate those blessings. We in Chattanooga hurt for our friends in Tampa. May God give you peace ...

Bill DiPillo
Investigator
Eastern District of Tennessee, Federal Defender

My heart aches.

Thank you for letting us all know the terrible news, and highlighting some of the many things that made Melissa so special.

One of the great things about our various national trainings is that we get to meet our colleagues across the country and realize that we are not alone in our work. There are smart, competent professionals who are committed to giving our clients the best representation possible, and treating them and respecting them as human beings no matter what they have done (while not being Pollyanish in the process). Melissa Kupferberg was Exhibit A, B, and C for that concept.

Besides the incredible work that she did on behalf of clients and in various trainings, she was the kind of person who remembered little details about you (she would recall the various cute sayings my son would make better than I; her last email to me last week was about Harvard now having a class on The Wire since she knew I loved the show). Of course, the second to last email I received from her was reflective about her desire to help her clients - she was asking friends and colleagues throughout the system for information about what was going on their districts in order to better help her clients.

Melissa was smart, funny, competent and positive, even in the most trying of circumstances. Condolences to you, your entire office, and Melissa's family and amazing network of friends. Like so many of us, I will miss her greatly. She leaves a proud and remarkable legacy.

Sean Broderick
National Litigation Support Administration
Administrative Court Operations, Oakland, CA

I am sorry for your staff loss, as well. Melissa helped us out on a case this year. I thought you might want to pass on to your staff and Melissa's family, the observations below of one of our folks.

Christine A. Freeman
Executive Director
Middle District of Alabama Federal Defender Program, Inc.

Cheri and I had the privilege of meeting and working Melissa this past spring when she assisted us in a case by helping to set up witness interviews in the Tampa area. She also spoke at the NDIA seminar this past April. This is such tragic news and her presence will definitely be missed in the FD community.

Nancy Ezell, Paralegal
Middle District of Alabama, Federal Defender

Please receive our most deepest and sincerest condolences on your loss, Margarita, Minnie, and Billy from the McAllen Division.

Margarita Del Angel
Investigator
McAllen Division, Southern District of Texas, Federal Defender

I heard about Missy yesterday after returning from the conference in Nashville. Missy had helped me out in the past with some information on a case of mine in Arizona. Such a sad year for her and her family and what a tragic loss to the mitigation community.

I met several of your Orlando staff at the conference in Nashville this past week and we were talking about Missy. I am still reeling from the news as she and I talked or emailed frequently.

Nora Shaw
Private Investigator

On behalf of the CDU investigators here in Tucson I wanted to send our condolences to Melissa's family, to you and your staff at the FPD, Tampa.

William O. Reyes
Investigator
Tucson, AZ, Federal Defender

I am so sorry to hear about Melissa Kupferberg's passing. I just spoke with her a few weeks ago and she always struck me as a sincerely nice person who really cared about what she did such a huge loss. I was just thinking about her this weekend as my planned trip to Tampa/Orlando/Keys this winter. Anyway, please keep us in the loop about any scholarships or memorial funds as I will definitely send a contribution. Very sad news indeed. I will keep you and her family in my prayers.

Kevin Eiser
Investigator
Flagstaff Arizona, Federal Defender

I'm sorry for the loss of your friend. You had it really hard the few minutes. Take care and know that you are in my thoughts. With sympathy,

Carla Lee
Realtor
Tampa, FL

Sorry to hear of her passing. I hope her family manages to do well.

Greg Bartolomei
Assistant Federal Defender
Phoenix, Arizona, Federal Defender

I am so sorry to hear about your loss. Such an awful tragedy. My thoughts are with you and your office.

Yvonne Contreras
Legal Secretary
Phoenix, Arizona, Federal Defender

I just wanted to extend my condolences. I just found out about the tragedy. I'm so sorry.

Ted Crews
Former Maricopa County Public Defender
Phoenix, AZ

Our deepest sympathies and heartfelt condolences to you, your staff, and especially Melissa's family, from everyone in the Rhode Island Federal Defender Office.

Daniel Fortier, Investigator
District of Rhode Island, Federal Defender

I am so sorry about Melissa. I knew her from Nasams. Once she moved to Florida she seemed transformed. She looked so rejuvenated and beautiful. Her hair was like the Florida sunshine and she was perked up with more colorful attire and seemed to radiate. She was very dedicated and a kind, good person. My condolences to you and everyone who loved her.

Marilyn Romanowski
Eastern Pennsylvania, Federal Community Defender

I am in shock. Melissa was near and dear to me as both a friend and a colleague. She was just absolutely amazing and I can not believe that she is no longer with us. My Training Branch colleagues and I would often remark on Melissa's talent, dedication and accomplishments. Melissa was that person we could always rely on to go beyond the call of duty, think outside the box and do it all with enthusiasm and passion. She truly had a heart of gold. We will miss her dearly.

Thank you for allowing us to get to know her by extending her to us to train the defender and CJA community. We have all been enriched by knowing Melissa and learning from her.

Below is an e-mail I sent to the faculty she trained with at last year's Sentencing Advocacy Workshop.

* * *

I am so sad to let you know that Melissa Kupferberg, one of our Sentencing Advocacy Workshop family members, died tragically over the weekend. Melissa was an absolutely amazing person. She was always thinking about new ways to approach an issue. She was always working hard to raise the level of education and defense advocacy in the defender and CJA community. She was always upbeat and smiling. Just a week and a half ago we exchanged e-mails about the mitigation book she was writing and her thoughts regarding Sentencing Advocacy in 2010 at which she was to serve as faculty again. I will miss her unending energy, ever-positive spirit and kinship as a Sentencing Advocacy Workshop family member.

Andrea P. Taylor
Deputy Chief, Training Branch
Office of Defender Services
Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts

I met Melissa about two years ago during a conference in Boston and she really stood out as someone who was very capable and so nice. It's really tragic what happened. I read about it online. Incredibly sad for her and her family. Our community has really lost a good person.

Alicia Hutton
Investigator
District of Massachusetts, Federal Defender

I was so very sorry to hear about Melissa's death. We would like to make a contribution to an organization or other project in her honor. I know she was deeply concerned about your clients.

Susan M. Otto
Western District of Oklahoma, Federal Defender

My thoughts and prayers are with Melissa's family as they cope with the loss of such a wonderful spirit.

My most poignant memories of Melissa are of her bubbly personality and kindness.

I was privileged to see her in a training seminar and in our office on several occasions. She and I also exchanged numerous emails and phone calls about various office operations.

My last phone contact with Melissa was just a few of weeks ago. It was lunch time, and Melissa called me about our computer software program, Casemap. She was so worried that she was going to erase all her work if she did a certain operation, and she just wanted re-assurance everything would be okay if she did it. I told her to go ahead, do it, and I would stay on the phone with her in case anything bad happened. I admitted to her that there was nothing I could do if she really did delete all of her hard work, but what the heck, do it any way! Of course, nothing bad happened, and she was grateful just to have someone talking to her as she went through the motions and found out what she needed to know about the program. We laughed afterward about how worried she was that she would mess it up.

Melissa made me feel important, needed and respected on more than one occasion. Her last email to me was teasing me about how certain staff members totally depend on my help. She was the best of the best, but she always made you feel like YOU were the important one.

Her selflessness and true goodness is what I will remember and miss most about Melissa!

Sharon Mercer
Investigator
Orlando Division, Federal Defender

I'm so very sorry for your loss. Valued colleagues become family, sometimes closer than family. Please know that my thoughts are with you, the Tampa office, and Melissa's family and friends. With sincerest regards,

Carol Hale
Mitigation Specialist
Southern District of Alabama, Federal Defender

Our thoughts and prayers are with you, her family and friends.

Kevin, Richard, Robin & Connie
Investigators
Western District of Pennsylvania, Federal Defender

My thoughts and prayers go out to you, her work family, and all of her family and friends.

Wanda Rivera
Investigator
Albany, New York, Federal Defender

I was fortunate enough to share Melissa's space at the Chicago Workshop earlier this year. She facilitated our breakout session, and I can say with all honesty that she just emanated a very warm and inviting spirit.

I pray for God's comforting Grace on her father, family and friends. Her untimely departure is a sobering reminder of how fleeting life is and the importance of expressing appreciation, and sharing words of encouragement, with those in our immediate and extended circle.

Victor Jackson
Investigator
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Federal Defender

I just wanted to express my deepest sympathy to all in the Tampa office that knew Melissa on a professional and personal level. I just lost my father the middle of October so even when death is expected, as we know it's still very hard to deal with, that being said, I just wanted to share a scripture with all of you that's comforting to those that are living, it's in Psalms 51: 17 which says, "The sacrifices to God are a broken spirit. A heart broken and crushed, O God, you will not despise." God knows what you all are going through and will help you through this tragedy. Take care, my prayers are with you all.

Dottie Began
Senior Legal Secretary
Jacksonville Division, Federal Defender

I am Judy Muschewske, the receptionist in the Orlando FPD office.

I didn't know Melissa real well, and wish I had known her better. I always heard positive things about her. When she would visit our office, I remember she was always smiling, and had a certain energy about her. When she frequently called our office, to speak with one of the Attorneys or Investigators, she would always say "this is Melissa inTampa" like it was all one word. I recognized her voice anyway, but I thought it was cute that she always said it anyway.

I am very, very saddened by this tragedy, and my prayers & thoughts are with her family. This is a tremendous loss to all of us.

Judy Muschewske
Receptionist
Orlando Division, Federal Defender

One of the things that comes to mind when I think about Melissa was her passion for our clients. She cared deeply about fighting against the death penalty. I know that she helped in various training seminars. This was not just a job for her. She was a proselytizer. She shared her knowledge and inspired others.

She made me laugh. She brightened my day. I miss her and the jokes we shared. She lifted my spirits.

Mary Mills
Assistant Federal Defender
Tampa Division, Federal Defender

The first time Melissa met my wife and daughter, Melissa was in the middle of working on a major trial. She was carrying a stack of files in her arms and obviously had much to do, Melissa didn't just say "Nice to meet you" and continue on her way, Instead, Melissa put down the files, kneeled down to my daughter's eye-level, lifted my daughter into her arms, and then stated, "Daddy has told me so much about you and says that you've been making good choices," That loving gesture sums up what Melissa was all about. Melissa was selfless, caring, and never too busy to make time for a friend, She gave from her heart, mind, as well as her soul. She was self-driven, extremely bright, and carried herself with humility. I hope and pray that my wife and I raise my daughter to be as selfless, driven, and humble as Melissa. Simply stated, I am a better person for having had the opportunity to know Melissa. I miss her dearly and am blessed to have her memory with me.

In Loving Memory,
The Badalamenti Family (Dina, Amanda, and John)
John Badalamenti
Assistant Federal Defender
Tampa Division, Federal Defender

We would like to thank the entire family from the bottom of our hearts, for giving us the opportunity to grieve as extended family and friends of Melissa. I say extended family, because that is what Melissa was to us.

We have been getting a lot of emails from all over the United States. Recently, our defender Donna Elm forwarded us an email from Arizona. In the email Donna said that Melissa was affectionately known as "Missy." Funny, I thought, I never knew. You see, I had a pet name for Melissa, I'd call her "lil Missy."

The group here with me is what we call the "scalloping" crew. Not all could be here today, including my husband Michael. Melissa loved talking to Michael about all his spear fishing adventures. We were planning on taking her diving sometime. She especially loved his stories of any close encounters with sharks. I guess most would be scared away but not Melissa, she thought it was "cool."

Melissa L-O-V-E-D scalloping. The first time she heard us talking about it, she wanted to go with us the next season. Melissa wasn't the type of person that said she was going to do something and not do it; she just did it. She embraced life and all it had to offer. The season came around and Melissa met up with us to go scalloping. For those of you who have never been scalloping, it's like Easter egg hunting in the ocean. She loved it so much she came with us every season since. Some of our fondest memories of Melissa come straight from our scalloping adventures.

I can still remember the smirk on her face when she put on the “one-size fits all” wet suit that we all shared to avoid any jellyfish stings. I can picture her standing on the back of the boat with the solid black suit covering her entire body and the look she gave me before she dove in the water. Thinking back on that memory still makes me laugh and reminds me of how much a free-spirit she truly was.

After a long day of scalloping, we’d all follow each other in our boats back to the ramps and then off to Rick and Charlene’s house. The worst part of scalloping is truly the best part. It’s when we go back home to clean the scallops we collected that day, all the while enjoying laughing, joking around, drinking a beer (or two), and taking pictures. Of course, Melissa was the one making funny faces and making sure everyone was having a good time.

Melissa will be remembered for a lot of things. When I think of her, I can’t get the picture out of my mind of that certain look in her beautiful eyes and the smile on her face. You never knew what kind of response she was going to give. Almost always, it was a reply that would have you burst out laughing. I believe that is how Melissa wants us to remember her.

We will always have a chair at our scalloping table for Melissa. Even though the chair will be empty, we know she will be with us in spirit. She will be missed dearly and remembered forever.

Written by: *Margaret*

Scallop Crew: *Captain Michael and Margaret Bundy* (Paralegal Specialist), *Rick and Charlene Kenyon* (Financial Administrator), and *Donna Lee Elm* (Federal Defender)

I knew Melissa from her days at OLD where she was a kind-hearted, passionate advocate for our clients. I am saddened to hear of her tragic death. I am also sorry for your loss, both personally and professionally. Peace be with you.

Charlie Vogel

Former Maricopa County Public Defender

Dear Kupferberg Family:

There are no words but only fond and beautiful memories.....

I met Melissa when she was in Phoenix, Arizona. I was excited to know that she was in our Tampa office. When I moved her from Phoenix as well, she welcomed me and took me under her wing. We share a love of German Shepherd's and her puppy had just passed away. She gave me a list of all the doggy parks and list of dog friendly beaches. *She was that kind of person.* Always sharing her knowledge. She always had something positive to say. I will truly miss her hi-fives as she passed by my desk each morning. She would always have a kind word to say and had a way of making *us all feel special.* I sit here and write this and still cannot believe she will no longer "pass by my desk each morning". Melissa was a true friend that one could count on. She would go to lunch with us on Friday lunches every other week or so. She will live in our hearts forever. My sympathies go to her family and may you find peace knowing that God has a promise for everlasting life and the opportunity to see her once again through the resurrection plan God talks about in, John 5: 28, 29. God Bless,

Martha Lugo

Secretary Supervisor &

Secretary to the Defender

DONNA L. ELM

Florida Middle District