



Julie A. Gardner Memorial Scholarship

Julie A. Gardner was a devoted Watertown City School District employee for nearly 40 years. Her kindness and empathy for students and colleagues was unmatched. Upon her unexpected passing in 2022, her friends joined together to establish a scholarship to perpetuate Julie's meaningful legacy of kindness and compassion for others.

Julie A. Gardner was a positive force in her community who enjoyed serving countless students during her nearly 40 years of work in the Watertown City School District.

Born in 1964 in Watertown, Julie attended Watertown High School. She joined the school district staff as a custodian in 1984, proudly working to create a safe environment for others until she retired in July 2022.

Julie enjoyed seeing students succeed in the classroom and in the community and became a beloved "aunt" to many children at Harold T. Wiley Intermediate School. Above all, she cherished her family and friends.

She consistently showed kindness to staff members, parents, and children. When she wasn't caring for others, Julie ensured her school was in tip-top shape. She approached her work thoughtfully and selflessly, helping anyone along the way however she could, routinely offering candy to lift the spirits of students and adults with whom she worked.

Julie always had a smile for everyone she passed in the hallway and happily acknowledged them. She was known for her great sense of humor and innocent teasing with others and she always knew how to



Julie A. Gardner
1964-2022

make people laugh.

More important than her humor, Julie was an empath. She went out of her way each day to model kindness, responsibility and, most of all, friendship. She was a kind and warm soul who filled her heart with love for her Wiley School kids. Julie had a unique ability to make every person around her feel special and that they mattered most. She left a permanent imprint on the lives of her colleagues and the lives of thousands of children, quickly becoming a special member of many student families.

Julie possessed many wonderful qualities that made it easy to love her. Every year, Julie would take students who needed a little extra care under her wing by putting them in charge of recycling. She always had a special task for them, which gave those students an enduring sense of purpose. She often recalled how, years later, students would approach her in a store, and thank her for what she had done for them.

After Julie passed away in August 2022 following an unexpected illness, her friends and family responded to honor her life and legacy in a special and meaningful way.

The **Julie A. Gardner Memorial Scholarship** was established at the Community Foundation to support future Watertown High School graduates for years to come. It is awarded to a graduating Watertown High School student who plans to pursue a career in a vocation or trade. Recipients should be hard-working and known for their kindness to peers, faculty and staff.

We are honored to be the permanent home of Julie's legacy. Her thoughtfulness and kind affection for Watertown's students and those with whom she worked is genuinely missed in our community.

