



HUMAN RESOURCES AND LABOR RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

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To: County Staff

From: Andrew S. McKinnon, Director
Human Resources and Labor Relations

Date: January 17, 2021

Re: Karen Upshaw

It is with a heavy heart that I share with you the loss of one of our Macomb County team members, Karen L. Upshaw.

Karen started with the County part-time in 1987, when she was only 17, and hired in full time in 2004. The longevity in this organization never ceases to amaze me and what a tribute to Karen to have served on behalf of Macomb County for over 33 years.

Karen was a long time member of the Register of Deeds Office as an Office Assistant Senior. However, whenever I mentioned her this last week, I would be met by people who remembered Karen from her time in Purchasing as a Mail Services Clerk. Everyone I spoke with from the County Executive to those in my office and in finance all mentioned how nice it was to see her familiar face filling that important role. In addition, Brian Jacks from my office remembered working with Karen at the Library years ago and he had many fond memories of her there.

While Karen was employed with us over 33 years, from birth she was part of the fabric of Macomb County. Karen and her sister Sharon, who also worked with us, along with her brother Bonner, are the proud progeny of Bonner and Dorothy Upshaw, Jr. I spoke with her sister Sharon a couple of times this week, and the pain the family is feeling was very evident. Karen passed far too young and while I never had the pleasure of meeting Sharon, or Karen's other family members, my heart, thoughts and prayers go out to them. Arrangements have been made for Karen by her family and the particulars and more information about her can be found here: [Karen L. Upshaw](#)

Something of interest in her obituary and perhaps fitting for this weekend, Karen was a charter member of the Interfaith Center for Racial Justice (ICRJ) Black Women's Project of the First 42. I hope you will join me tomorrow in individual quiet reflection and maybe in doing so think of Karen and the contributions she made to our County and Community.

Loss of a colleague is incredibly difficult. Please remember that we provide confidential no-cost support through our Employee Assistance Program ("EAP") and it can be accessed by dialing 1-888-333-6269. Additional EAP information is also attached to this memo.

I hope you all have a safe, reflective and peaceful weekend.

Life Advisor

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Confidential, No-Cost Support

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Consultants are
available 24 / 7 !

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- Explore your unique work-life balance needs and identify the right Life Advisor services to support you and your family.
- Schedule you to see a local Ulliance EAP Therapist - Close to where you live or work at no charge to you or your covered dependents.
- Provide you with immediate telephonic support for pressing issues.
- Assist you by researching information you need for Work-Life balance.

Counseling Services

- Face-to-face or phone sessions with a licensed counselor close to work or home
- Short term, solution-focused support for work-life issues such as stress, major life transitions, relationship issues, substance use, grief/loss and overwhelming emotions

Life Advisor Coaching Services

- Telephonic sessions with a counselor
- Support and motivation to achieve a work-life goal such as education, career advancement, financial or savings goals, or self-improvement goals

The Life Advisor Monthly Newsletter

- An electronic monthly publication with information and resources on a variety of work-life concerns, such as relationships, substance abuse and goal setting

Work-Life Materials

- Books and other helpful materials on a wide variety of work-life topics mailed directly to your home at no cost to you

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- Anytime access to articles, resources, healthy-living tips, as well as our orientation videos
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