

Freiburg's passing a community tragedy

To the editor:

I'm writing from California, where I am currently pursuing a Ph.D. in clinical psychology. I started on this path eight years ago when I was a student at Centennial High School, thanks to the inspiration of a special friend.

Her name was Susan Freiburg, and, tragically, the world lost her when she died of leukemia Oct. 25. I cannot begin to express how saddened I am by our loss. Susan was a gift to so many people.

I met Susan in 1988 at the Illinois Teen-age Institute, a summer workshop designed to train young people to start substance abuse prevention programs in their communities. Susan was a volunteer counselor and made a huge impact on me with her warm, compassionate and loving ways.

She has been my friend, role mod-

el and mentor ever since.

When I'd come home on breaks and we'd meet to have lunch and catch up, she was always on her way to see someone or go somewhere. No matter how many projects Susan was involved with, she always had energy for more. Even when she was ill, she never stopped.

When I saw Susan in August, I had the opportunity to meet one of her many friends, who is homeless. Each week, Susan would pick her up and bring her home to shower and to wash her clothes.

The last time I saw Susan was at the Courier Cafe. Ill as she was, she was still so full of hope and plans for the future. I learned that we had the same dream — to start a mental health foundation for families that encompasses the mind, body and spirit. Someday I hope to fulfill that dream in Susan's name. She always will be my inspiration.

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