

inspired

legacy philanthropy



LA'S FOUNDATION:

Laura Meikle Koch Memorial Legacy Foundation - *established 2008*

Laura Meikle Koch Drexel University Scholarship Foundation - *established 2008*

Laura Meikle Koch Henderson High School Scholarship Foundation - *established 2008*

Laura Meikle Koch, fondly known as “La,” was a compassionate young woman who loved to nurture animals. She was a decorated athlete in both soccer and lacrosse. After a valiant fight with lung cancer, La passed away in 2008. Today, **passion, leadership, selflessness, and determination** are the keystones to La’s Foundations.

An exceptional athlete, while at Henderson High School La started in five state championships. Soccer teammate and close friend Stacy Arrison remembers, “La was the fastest person that I have ever met. She and I were so fortunate to be gifted athletes. Together on the field we were pure magic. I would pass La the ball and she would use her speed and score almost every time. (I always told La that she owed half of her goals to me!) Not a day goes by that she is not in my thoughts.” La’s parents were honored when Henderson retired its first ever jersey, La’s #9, as a lasting tribute to her exceptional play on the field.

Kelly Homick, La’s best friend, played against La on the soccer field in high school. Kelly and La roomed together at Drexel. “La was an amazing person in so many ways. She was the only person who never judged me. She taught me so much about being strong and being an individual.”

Known as one of the greatest players in Drexel women’s soccer history, La left an outstanding legacy as the Dragons’ all-time leader in goals and points. Dan Simmons, Drexel’s associate athletic director of recreation, said, “La was always full of energy and always smiling. Her winning attitude was infectious on the field.”

After graduating from Drexel in 2002, La worked for Veterinary Referral Center in Frazer, a 24-hour emergency-care service. “She had four cats and loved to nurture animals. La had a winning sense of humor and was smiling to the end,” explains her husband Stephen Koch.

To preserve her memory at Drexel, each year La’s #9 soccer jersey is worn by the woman who displays traits that define the way La lived her life and the way she played the game. Additionally, Drexel’s Athletic Department raised funds to build the Laura Koch Memorial Locker Room, with a wall of recognition that tells La’s story. A tree and plaque stand outside Vidas field commemorating La’s outstanding athletics.

“Everyone wanted to do something to help us honor La’s legacy,” explains her mother, Sandy Meikle. “We spoke with our estate planning attorney, Anthony Morris, Esq. at Buckley, Brion, McGuire, Morris & Sommer. He suggested we contact the Community Foundation.” Tony has his own fund at the Community Foundation established to honor his college roommate Nick MacElree, so he is familiar with the Community Foundation’s services.

“We found that the Community Foundation helps make legacy philanthropy easy,” notes La’s father, Cameron Meikle. “The staff takes care of the logistics of administering charitable funds and scholarship funds. They keep us in compliance with IRS regulations, so that we can say ‘yes’ to La’s friends and family members who want to do something, rather than ‘hmmmm, I’m not sure how we can do that.’”

Cam also notes, “It made sense for someone else to manage the fund. It felt comfortable, and the right place. The Community Foundation gave us a feeling of trust and that what we were doing was being supported”.

La’s sister, Shauna Iannarino, adds, “I participate in La’s Foundation so that other people’s lives can be touched by Laura even in her death...that some life can live on without her here, something good can come from the pain of her death.”

Family, friends and even those who did not know La have demonstrated a fierce **passion** to keep La’s legacy alive. Numerous fund raising events draw support from diverse communities, including annual rock concerts at West Chester’s The Note, annual 5K run/walks, and lacrosse camps. “The Lace ‘Em Up for La Lacrosse Camp” is run by Mary Fran Riffel. “Camp is my way of continuing La’s legacy through the sport of lacrosse, educating young girls about how wonderful a role model she was.” Lacrosse camps surely instill a sense of **leadership**.

Each year, La’s Foundation awards scholarships to deserving young women attending Henderson High School , as a tribute to the **selflessness** La demonstrated. Soon, scholarships will be awarded to young women attending Drexel University as well. In the short time La’s Foundations have been in existence, they have done so much, and yet are **determined** to do so much more. La’s Foundation has also awarded grants to the SPCA’s Guardian Angel Program and Crossing the Finish Line, now known as “For Pete’s Sake,” a local nonprofit that gives young adult cancer patients and their families an opportunity to reconnect, renew and relax in the midst of cancer crisis by creating unforgettable and lasting respite vacations. La will forever be remembered for her incredible smile and great sense of humor. A woman full of determination, La lived her life with love, kindness, passion and courage.



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