

Two years ago we lost Erica Vallario to a tragic car accident. Former camper and first-time counselor (in 2006), Erica was beloved throughout the Campus Kids-NJ community. I'm not just saying that; she was unusually friendly and energetic and she reached out to many people beyond just her specific bunk group and staff friends. She lived the spirit of camp and I'm sure she would still have been a counselor today. I'm wondering tonight what each of her many camp friends is doing. One thing I'm certain of is that each of us is stopping what we're doing and thinking about or praying for Erica and her family. I would find it hard to believe that each of us is not also crying. You can't have known Erica and not be deeply saddened by this senseless loss, even two years later. I am hoping that each of you is alright because I know how close you were to Erica. I saw your unfathomable heartache during those days following the accident. I could not believe the pain you were enduring and the courage that you showed and the support you gave each other. I know that you still have this support and that you are finding comfort tonight, each in your own way. I also know that remembering Erica is a joy. She was happy and funny and active and caring and loving of everyone around her. The memories of her days at camp are wonderful and they are part of our lives forever. We share a common sadness, but we also share an amazing friend.

Tom



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