



Dr. Alina Concepcion Lopo

June 14, 1951 - February 14, 2025

Alina Concepcion Lopo was called home to eternal rest on February 14, 2025.

Alina was born in Havana, Cuba, on June 14, 1951, to Emma (née Gonzalez) and Armando Lopo.

She grew up with her two younger sisters, Diana and Emma. Even as a toddler, Alina loved to learn and, by the time she was 3 years old, her Abuelo Celso had taught her to read.

Alina was attending the Ursuline Academy in Havana when her childhood was disrupted. Part of the Cuban diaspora, Alina, with her parents and sisters, fled to the United States. Her parents instilled in her a love for the United States and liberty and the American Dream.

She graduated from Immaculata-LaSalle High School in Miami at age 15. There, Mrs. Knight, her beloved science teacher, ignited a love for science that would last a lifetime.

Alina completed her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Biology and

Chemistry at the University of Miami in 1972 and 1974, respectively. In the summer of 1974 she loaded up her car and drove cross-country, by herself, to Davis, California, to begin work on her doctorate. In 1979, she earned her PhD from UC Davis & UC San Diego/Scripps Institution of Oceanography. She especially loved her time doing research at Scripps and Woods Hole in Massachusetts.

At Davis, she met Stephen Wolfe and they married in 1982. Steve shared his passion for flying with Alina and Alina earned her private pilot's license.

Alina was awarded several fellowships, continuing her research at various UC-affiliated institutions. In 1985, she joined the Department of Biomedical Sciences at UC Riverside as an assistant professor, teaching undergraduates, graduate students, and medical students.

In 1987, the arrival of her son, Christopher Thomas, rocked her world. She loved being a mother and Chris became the center of her world.

While teaching at Riverside, she decided that she was ready to become a full-time student again and was admitted to the UCLA School of Medicine at age 39 - at the same time that Chris entered pre-school.

In 1994 she received her medical degree and completed her internship and residencies at UCLA, becoming Chief Resident. In 1998, she entered private practice while continuing to teach at UCLA School of Medicine. Over the next 25+ years, she loved practicing medicine, making lifelong friends with the doctors, nurses, hospital staff, and specially patients who loved her dedication, keen intellect, brilliant mind, and loving care.

Alina loved family trips to the Caribbean, Europe, especially Spain, as well as more recent trips to Israel, Jordan, and Tanzania. She also loved hosting her renowned Christmas parties where she shared her delicious Cuban pork, black beans, and yucca with a wide circle of friends.

A lifelong fan of all things Star Trek, she was a true Trekkie, and her wish was for everyone to Live Long and Prosper.

She was predeceased by her parents, husband, and brother-in-law. Alina leaves behind Chris, her son, who she could not have loved more. As she fought cancer for over a year he was her constant focus and concern. She is survived by her loving, caring, and dedicated partner of 10 years, Jeff Vranesh, two sisters, Diana Lopo of Boerne Texas (Maryellen Tria) and Emma Lopo-Sullivan of Alexandria, Virginia (Dan Sullivan, dec.), her favorite niece and

godchild, Emma

Sullivan of Alexandria, Virginia, her best friend, Lorin Schiff, and her beloved pups, Skye and Bandit.

A wake will be held on Saturday, March 15 th , from 1 to 4 pm at Utter McKinley San Fernando Mortuary 11071 Columbus Avenue Mission Hill, California. Tributes will be shared at 2pm followed by refreshments. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Monday, March 17 th , at 10 am at St. Francis De Sales Catholic Church at 13360 Valleyheart Drive, Sherman Oaks, California.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Alina's memory to a fund that has been established in her name supporting STEM studies for girls at her high school. Donations may be made to the Dr. Alina Lopo, Class of 1967, Memorial Fund which directly supports the Immaculata-LaSalle STEM Program. You may donate by clicking the link, <http://weblink.donorperfect.com/TheFundforILS> or sending a check payable to Immaculata-LaSalle (please add Alina Lopo Memorial Fund to memo line), 3601 South Miami Avenue, Miami, FL 33133.

Previous Events

Wake

MAR 15. 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM (PT)

Utter McKinley San Fernando Mission Mortuary
11071 Columbus Avenue
Mission Hills, CA 91345
(818) 361-4751
<https://www.uttermckinley.com/>

Funeral Mass

MAR 17. 10:00 AM (PT)

St. Francis De Sales Church
13360 Valleyheart Dr
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423