



Ann Coburn-Collins

May 1, 1952 - August 5, 2025

With deep sorrow and tender remembrance, we share the passing of our beloved mother and grandmother, Ann Coburn-Collins, who left us on August 5, 2025, after facing a swift illness, one she met with quiet strength and uncommon grace. Though the illness was relentless, Ann never allowed it to define her. Instead, she chose to live fully, fiercely, and entirely on her own terms.

Ann was born on May 1, 1952, in Kansas City, Kansas, the cherished daughter of Clay E. and Nancy (Ludlow) Coburn. On August 19, 1978, she married the love of her life, James J. Collins, with whom she shared a life rich in laughter, love, and purpose. She is survived by her devoted brother, Clay Coburn, Jr., and his wife Esther of Prairie Village, Kansas; two loving sisters-in-law, Sr. Ann Collins of New York and Joanie (Jim) Thomas of North Carolina; and several beloved nieces and nephews. She now joins her husband, her parents, and her sisters—Sandra Kay Coburn and Karen Louise Coburn Stewart—in peace.

Ann was the devoted mother of three children who brought her endless joy: James J. (Julie) Collins, III of Dallas, Texas; Katie (David) Collins-Ihrke of Baltimore, Maryland; and Claire Collins of Bay City, Michigan. To her six grandchildren—Benjamin, Nora, Ivy, Samuel, Lora, and Evianna—she was simply “Mia,” a name that came to embody unconditional love, a playful spirit,

and quiet reassurance. She celebrated each of them just as they were, offering unwavering support, gentle guidance, and that signature smile.

To know Ann was to witness brilliance, compassion, and grace woven together in one extraordinary woman. As a gifted sociologist and educator, she spent her life helping others understand both the world around them and the quiet truths within. Whether in the classroom or across a dinner table, Ann had a remarkable way of opening hearts, leaving people feeling not just heard, but truly seen.

She infused her life with warmth, creativity, and beauty. Her home was a reflection of her, a place of elegance, comfort, and care. The meals she prepared were more than food; they were memories, rituals of love. Her kitchen, like her heart, was a sanctuary for those lucky enough to enter it.

Among her many sayings, one stood out as a quiet philosophy for living: “You buy the dress when it fits you.” It wasn’t just advice. It was as a reminder to seize joy, embrace the moment, and honor yourself without apology.

Ann also shared an unshakable bond with her beloved dogs, who walked beside her through many chapters of life, offering loyalty, comfort, and wordless understanding.

Her absence echoes deeply, yet her presence endures in the lives she shaped, the lessons she gave freely, and the love she left behind.

We will carry her with us. Always.

In lieu of flowers, the family invites you to honor Ann’s spirit in simple, meaningful ways: take a long walk with someone dear, light a candle in your coziest room, or buy the dress—just because it fits. Memorial donations may

be made to the YWCA Great Lakes Bay Region.

Tribute Wall

RD

“ *My heartfelt condolences to the surviving family. I am so sorry to hear of Ann's demise! I feel like I have lost a friend and the most upfront, compassionate, accepting, and authentic human, and the world has lost an optimist who rolled with the punches and made every living moment count, no matter what the moment brought! A rare accomplishment for most sages!! I will miss her dearly...*
Ranjana

Ranjana Dutta - September 09, 2025 at 04:32 PM

BJ

“ *I'm so sorry to hear of Ann's passing. I enjoyed working with her. We often had long, meaningful talks about how we could best contribute to the campus community and the community beyond. She always faced challenges, including health challenges, relentlessly, and never let them cloud her sunny nature.*

Beth Jorgensen - August 12, 2025 at 12:54 PM

BM

“ *I am so sorry to hear of Ann's passing [just now]. I worked with her the last several years I was employed at SVSU and, as others have said, she was always witty, friendly, and had a smile on her face. My best to her family. Sincerely, Brian Mudd*

Brian D. Mudd - August 11, 2025 at 08:43 AM

JB

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Joni Boye-Beaman - August 07, 2025 at 07:27 PM

JB

Everyone should have a friend like Ann in their life. She was a singular shining star. The best friend, colleague, teacher, and sociologist one could imagine. Countless students' lives are richer for being in her classroom. We had many opportunities to teach together and I always learned something new as a result.

We shared many laughs, tears, and ordinary days together over the last 25 years. And, many, many good meals - boy could she cook! Her house and heart were always graciously open to friends and family.

Ann once convinced me I needed a tiara, just in case the queen showed up for tea some afternoon! And so, I will sit in my tiara this evening and think fondly of my dear friend for she was the queen!

Joni Boye-Beaman - August 07, 2025 at 07:42 PM

VH

“ *I will never forget Ann. We met in 2008 when I became an adjunct faculty member of the Department of Nursing. She had the warmest smile, easiest spirit, and a way of making you feel that as an adjunct faculty you were truly valued at SVSU. She had all of the answers no matter what I needed even if it was just a quick chat. She was a rare jewel and will be missed dearly. God gave his beloved rest. I send prayers and my deepest sympathies to her family.*

Valeriah Holmon - August 07, 2025 at 03:17 PM

HK

“ I will always be grateful to Ann for her mentorship, and I will always remember her beautiful smile. Rest well, my friend.

Heather Kanicki - August 07, 2025 at 12:35 PM

MH

“ I am so sorry to read of Anne's death, She was a beautiful person in so many ways. I will remember her smile, her grace, her helpfulness, her determination. She will be missed by so many.

Mary Rose Harmon - August 07, 2025 at 12:27 PM

RK

“ I always appreciated Ann's spirit & her support over many years at SVSU!

Robert Koch - August 07, 2025 at 11:52 AM

JM

“ Ann was such a bright light — a talented, brilliant woman with a great smile and a huge heart. She was such a pleasure to work with. She will be deeply missed and remembered for her meaningful contributions to Saginaw Valley. My deepest sympathies to her family.

– Jill Miller, Director of Marketing and Creative at SVSU.

Jill Miller - August 07, 2025 at 11:36 AM

GM

“ As an Adjunct Faculty member, Ann touched my life in so many ways. Ann's mentoring of not only me but all of the Adjunct faculty that came in contact with her was extremely evident. Ann welcomed ALL and assisted me in achieving my Adjunct Faculty program certificate and plaque. We were both very proud of that accomplishment. Blessings and thoughts to the entire Coburn-Collins family. Ann will remain in my heart forever. Gina Miller-Adjunct Instructor of Communication

Gina Miller - August 07, 2025 at 11:10 AM



“ I am sorry about your loss of your mother and Prayers for you and your family. I always remember the talks and her smile at SVSU when she always ask for computer help. Douglas Woodington SVSU Support Specialist.

Douglas Woodington - August 06, 2025 at 07:42 PM

LM

“ Although I did not personally know Ann, I do know her son James Collins III and his wife Julie. I can see that warmth, light and contagious reassurance she exemplified, living on in them. May she rest in the Father's embrace. May we learn to live joyfully and listen to those inner truths.

Liz Martinez - August 06, 2025 at 05:34 PM

SL

“ Ann was one of the most pleasant clients I've ever had. She was so genuine. Jim also. They were quite the pair. I really don't consider them clients as we became good friends. So easy to do. Jim and Anne were the best people, and really worked with me on making their new house their home. im sure they are somewhere cheerin someone up. RIP Ann-- Sue&Joel & the crew @Bay City Builders

Sue and Joel LaBrie - August 06, 2025 at 05:07 PM

JP

A beautiful person inside, and out. My deepest sympathy to the family.

Jan Poppe - August 07, 2025 at 04:44 PM

TF

“ The Burkemper Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ann Coburn-Collins.

The Burkemper Family - August 06, 2025 at 05:02 PM