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Jennifer Wightman Harlow



Resident of Cape Town, South Africa Formerly of Tahoe City, California December 9, 1984 - May 13, 2018

and valleys there, enjoying breathtaking views of the Flatirons.

Jennifer Wightman Harlow, 33 years old, died in a rock fall accident on May 13, 2018 while hiking on Table Mountain above Cape Town, South Africa. Jen will best be remembered for her steadfast individualism, infectious laugh, and stellar dance moves.

The daughter of Dianne Shorett Harlow and Peter Wightman Harlow, Jen was born in 1984 and grew up in the North Lake Tahoe area of California. She enjoyed Nordic skiing and academic challenge, and in 2003, graduated as Valedictorian of her class at North Tahoe High School. During her late teens, Jen was a part of the Far West Nordic Ski Association, and twice competed in the US Junior National Cross Country Ski Championships in Alaska and Utah.

Jen followed her father, grandfather, and great-grandfather to Harvard College, where she captained their intercollegiate Nordic ski team and earned an A.B. in Physics.

Following her undergraduate work, Jen made her way out to the Rocky Mountains, where she earned her Ph.D. in physics from the University of Colorado, Boulder. From 2007 to 2013, Jen studied and worked at JILA in the lab of Konrad Lehnert. She and friends often hiked the peaks

After completing her graduate education, Jen moved to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, as the tech manager for EGG-energy, a small company focusing on affordable solar energy access for people without electricity. A year later, she moved to Cape Town, South Africa, to work with Dimagi, Inc, a global social enterprise using mobile application technology to increase access to critical services in developing countries. Jen played a critical role in some of Dimagi South Africa's biggest projects, collaborating with NGOs and community health workers in countries throughout the African continent. Her development work included addressing HIV, TB and malaria treatment, empowerment of female farming collectives, and most recently, leading the design of a mobile application intended to improve maternal and newborn health outcomes in rural Ethiopia.

In South Africa, Jen found a ready group of likeminded hiking enthusiasts who made regular trips up the rugged terrain of Lions Head and Table Mountain. In January 2018, she joined Hiker's Network Search and Rescue team, excited to spend time outdoors and to help keep others safe. The last few years of her life were the happiest for she had found her true home there.

Jen is preceded in death by her father, Peter Wightman Harlow, and grandparents John Hopkins and Elizabeth Eddy Shorett, and Albert Mason and Hazel Wightman Harlow. She is survived by her mother, Dianne Shorett Harlow of Moraga, CA, her brother Michael Shorett Harlow of St. Paul, MN, and brother Stephen Wightman Harlow of Venice, CA.

A celebration of life will take place at 4 pm on August 4th at Tahoe XC Ski Center in Tahoe City, CA. The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be made in Jen's name to The Tahoe Nordic Search and Rescue Team (www.tahoenordicsar.com; PO Box 7703, Tahoe City, CA 96145; 530-581-4038) .

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