

## Vicki Eaklor, retired history professor and social justice advocate, passes away

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Vicki Eaklor

ALFRED, NY Vicki Eaklor, who taught history at Alfred University for more than three decades before retiring two years ago, passed away Thursday, March 8. She was 63.

Vicki was a well-known professor who received numerous honors and awards during her tenure at Alfred University. She was the recipient of the Abigail Allen Award in 2004 and in both 1998 and 2005 received Excellence in Teaching Awards from the University.

“Time and again, when I talk to Alfred University alumni, I hear about professors who mentored and guided them,” said Alfred University President Mark Zupan. “As a professor of American history; as a drummer and teacher of percussion; as a leader in our Women's Studies program, Vicki Eaklor had that kind of profound impact on our students for more than 30 years.”

Added Beth Ann Dobie, dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Alfred University: “Dr. Eaklor was a superb teacher. She had high expectations and her students loved her. Often one would see a flock of students talking with Vicki in the halls of Kanakadea.”

Vicki was born Nov. 24, 1954, the daughter of Warren and Josei Eaklor, and grew up in Grand Junction, CO. She had a passion for both history and music and would go on to earn BA degrees in history and music education from Adams State College (Colorado) in 1976. She earned MA degrees in musicology (1979) and American Intellectual/Cultural History (1980) from Washington University in St. Louis, MO. She also earned her Ph.D. from Washington University, in 1982.

She was appointed professor of history at Alfred University in 1984 and taught at AU for 32 years, until her retirement in 2016. She also taught the course, Women in Society, and created the first-ever history courses at AU in Queer America and Queer Hollywood.

Vicki's academic accomplishments also include dozens of published articles on music, history and gender issues. A

published author, she wrote the books “Queer America: A GLBT History of the 20th Century” and “American Anti-Slavery Songs: A Collection & Analysis.” She also edited the book “Bringing Lesbian & Gay Rights Into the Mainstream,” by Steve Endean.

“Vicki Eaklor was a faculty leader, always stepping up for what she believed was right and fair even when it was difficult to do so. She was a mentor and a role model for many of us, especially the female faculty,” said Dobie. “Vicki was a passionate advocate for social justice. She was a pioneer in Women and Gender Studies at AU, and provided a faculty voice and vital support for lesbian and gay students.”

A talented percussionist, Vicki&s performances on the drums with AU&s concert band, its orchestra, and in smaller musical ensembles -- were nothing short of spectacular, and she often gave private percussion lessons to Alfred University students.

She is survived by her partner, whom she was with for 29 years.