

## **Memorial service set for J. Steven Mayes**

6/19/08

John Steven "Steve" Mayes of 33 Pine Hill Drive, Alfred passed away at home on Wednesday, June 18, 2008 surrounded by his family. He was an associate professor of Mechanical Engineering who joined the faculty of the Inamori School of Engineering at Alfred University in 2000. "I sincerely admired Steve," said Alfred University President Charles M. Edmondson. "He was always an outstanding professor whose dedication to students exemplified everything that is best about our profession. All of us admired his courage, optimism, and dignity in the face of a terrible disease. Steve inspired us in so many ways." A 2007 recipient of the Joseph Kruson Trust Fund Award for Excellence in Teaching, Dr. Mayes is remembered with affection and respect by his students. Speaking on behalf of the 2008 graduates of the Mechanical Engineering program, Joseph Kovac said, "Dr. Steven Mayes was a great professor as well as a great human being. It was easily demonstrated in the way that he taught that he was excited and had a passion for teaching and opening the minds of his students. When he took some time off to recover and spend time with his family, I ran into him one Sunday morning. He explained to me how anxious he was for the upcoming semester so he could be with his student and advisees. I was also blessed to have his final Dynamics 2 class, where he allowed us to build and analyze trebuchets instead of taking a paper final exam. Launching our mechanical contraptions and talking with him about school and social life will forever be a day that I will treasure. Dr. Mayes has left a deep impact on me as well as my colleagues in more ways than one. We will miss him greatly and as a representative of the recently graduated mechanical engineering class of 2008, we send our highest condolences to Dr. Mayes's wife and children." His colleagues in the School of Engineering respected him as well. "Steve was an outstanding engineer and faculty member, who maintained high standards and expected his students to meet those standards," said Dr. Alastair Cormack, dean of the School of Engineering. "They inevitably did. Steve's contributions to the School of Engineering and the University were numerous and diverse; he will be sorely missed. Other faculty will come along and be outstanding in their own right, but they will not replace him. It's amazing how he managed to keep his spirits so high, right until the very end, but that was the essence of Steve's personality." Dr. Mayes was born July 18, 1956 in Newport News, VA, and graduated from Menchville High School. Steve studied mechanical engineering and business administration at Old Dominion College, and earned a master's degree in structural engineering at George Washington University. He completed his doctorate in mechanical engineering at the University of Wyoming in 1999. On August 17, 1991 Steve married Debra Spangler in Arlington, VA. Their daughter Stacy was born in 1995, and Mathew was born in 1998. Steve is survived by his parents, John and Betty Mayes, brother Rodney, and sister Joyce, all of Yorktown, VA, and extended family members. Steve had a successful career as an engineer, working for 18 years in government research. He was part of the research team at NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton, VA, and then at the Navy's David Taylor Research Center in Bethesda, MD. After completing his doctorate, he moved to Alfred in 2000 to begin his academic career as an associate professor of mechanical engineering at Alfred University. He was a recognized expert in composite materials design and fabrication. Steve loved the outdoors, especially his ancestral farm in West Virginia's Monongahela National Forest, which he visited several times a year. An avid outdoor sportsman, Steve enjoyed skiing, sailing, bicycling, backpacking, and camping. He was a member of the University Union Church, where he held a position as trustee. Steve will be remembered for his "relentless pursuit of a good life" and his devotion to his family and friends. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations may be made in his name to the Union University Church, 29 North Main St., Alfred, NY 14802. Friends are invited to join a memorial celebration of Steve's life on Sunday, June 22, 4:00 pm at the Union University Church.