

Yvette LeMoine Sangster

May 24, 1951 — April 18, 2023

Southington, Connecticut

Yvette LeMoine Sangster, 71, of Southington and formerly of Lawrenceville, Georgia, passed away on Tuesday, April 18, 2023. Yvette passed peacefully at home surrounded by her family.

Since her birth on May 24, 1951 in Carbondale, PA to Stella (Molanaro) Mickel and Paul Lemoine, Yvette led a full life of fierce love, passion, determination, and strength.

There is a symphony of thoughts that come to mind when remembering the force that was Yvette LeMoine Sangster. The most prominent being memories of her admirable advocacy, perseverance, and dedication.

In the earlier years of her life, Yvette became a young mother at the age of 16 and worked tirelessly to provide herself and her young family with everything that they needed. Not only did she work hard for herself, but she eventually built a career helping others as an award-winning advocate.

Lending a hand to those who needed it was nothing new to Yvette, as her passion for advocacy began in her childhood. Since she was a young girl, Yvette was known for befriending and protecting anyone who needed her as a friend or a strong voice. Her protective, advocating spirit would eventually serve her son who had a tragic car accident as a teen which left him with a traumatic brain injury and therefore in a service system with many barriers. Through advocating for her son, she found a professional path for her enormous heart and passion for justice as an advocate at the Center for Independent Living in Stratford.

As Yvette's affection for advocacy expanded, so did her career path. Perhaps one of the most unique and praiseworthy aspects of Yvette's career was that she pushed boundaries and created her own opportunities. Any door that was ajar to Yvette had been opened on her own.

She went on to become an advocate for the Connecticut Legal Rights Project in 1990 at Fairfield Hills Hospital. Her passion for the work and the people that she served was so strong that in 1994, she founded her own advocacy education organization for people with psychiatric disabilities -- the Community Advocacy Education Division of the CT Legal Rights Project -- which she would later transform into a stand-alone advocacy education agency called Advocacy Unlimited. This organization was the first of its kind, drawing state, national and international acclaim, awards and attention. She worked tirelessly, made enormous strides and remained the Executive Director of Advocacy Unlimited until 2002.

Yvette's trailblazing path eventually led her to Georgia, where she joined forces with the Georgia Advocacy Office and became the program director for Protection & Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI), bringing advocacy educational training to the community for over two decades.

Yvette's pride in her work was evident to all who witnessed her in action. She was honored with multiple awards, including the 2013 Samuel B. Mitchell Lifetime Achievement Award, the ADA Groundbreakers Award, the Disability Resource Center of Fairfield County Certificate of

Appreciation, Connecticut Legal Rights Project Certificate of Recognition and Appreciation, the State of Connecticut General Assembly Citation, and the National Mental Health Consumers' Self-Help Clearinghouse Certificate of Appreciation, to name a few.

Yvette never stopped advocating, even in her last days. Her ability to speak truth to power whether it be on a board, with a commissioner or an "expert" in the field and move the needle forward in favor of people and their rights is unmatched. She has made countless contributions big and small to the rights and for the justice of people affected by the mental health system -- be it through rallies she planned, conversations had with those in power, testimonies given and gathered for the legislature, working with SAMHSA or the Presidential Task Force for People with Disabilities, building curriculums and teaching classes on individual and systems advocacy, boards she worked on, people she advocated with and cared for and countless one on one conversations with so many as a friend, advocate and confidant that will continue to ripple in the right direction for us all.

When Yvette wasn't busy planting seeds in the systems that she worked in, she was busy being a cheerleader for her children and grandchildren always encouraging their dreams and supporting their passions, loving her cat, Ginger, creating art, learning and dreaming about new things she wanted to do and places she wanted to see (she always wanted to go on an archaeological dig), watching movies, listening to music and audio books, playing video games, or her favorite, tending to her gardens where she was visited by her favorite creatures, hummingbirds. Those who loved Yvette will know that she was a lot like her favorite animal. Hummingbirds are symbols of intelligence, beauty, and love and are also credited for being fierce protectors of the things they care for, like Yvette.

In her last days, Yvette enjoyed spending time visiting with her family and friends, working on puzzles, crafting, tending to her cut flowers and house plants, happy dancing to her favorite songs, and surrounding herself in lime green... her "happy color".

Her surviving family members; son Richard Sangster and 3 daughters, Stephanie Lanteri and her partner Justin, Renee Descoutures and her partner Loic, and Danielle Sangster and her partner Andy Flach of Oxford, her 13 grandchildren, Yvette and Danielle Brady, Olivia and Nicholas Lanteri, Adelyn and C Descoutures, Maya and her partner Bradley Stotler, Kiarra and Leala Torres, Koraleana, Landon, Dior and James Flach, her 3 great-grandchildren, Marlana, Willow and Jaxon, her brother David Mickel and his partner Robin, as well as her many beloved nieces and nephews will find Yvette "in the sunshine". She was predeceased by her great grandson, Hudson Stotler, her sisters Paulette (LeMoine) Brady and Jeannine (Lemoine) Gillott and her brother James Mickel.

It is difficult to find a word that encompasses the breathtaking energy that Yvette LeMoine Sangster brought to our world. She was a tremendous presence, who brought about a tidal wave of liberation and empowerment that reached far and wide. Her force will continue to inspire and make a difference long after she is gone.

A Celebration of Life gathering for Yvette will take place at 1:00 p.m., on June 4, 2023, at Southington Community Cultural Arts (SoCCA), 93 Main Street, Southington, Connecticut. Parking is available in the two lots behind the building. Plantsville Funeral Home has been entrusted with handling the arrangements. [Donations](#) in Yvette's memory may be made to the National Association for Rights Protection and Advocacy (NARPA) c/o Ann Marshall, P.O. Box 855, Huntsville, AL 35804. For online condolences, please visit www.plantsvillefuneralhome.com.