

Kathleen Hajdamacha (or KB, which was her sign name) was a Deaf Studies Lecturer at Towson University for 9 years. She held a BA from Gallaudet University and an MA in Deaf Education from McDaniel College.

Last winter, Katherine Hajdamacha found out suddenly that she was suffering from very serious cancer. Her inability to conquer the disease was heartbreaking for all who knew her. Faculty members in the Deaf Studies program, who had worked with her for years, were particularly hard hit by the loss, as she had contributed so significantly to the program and the community. Colleagues and students remembered Kathleen as a sweet person and an attentive listener. She demonstrated her close connection to faculty and students in everyday ways: gestures of caring and engagement that students recalled as they mourned her loss. Students appreciated that she took the time to talk and to get to know each student well, especially her DFST major advisees. For her colleagues, KB's strength was sharing her calming presence when the semester felt particularly tense or chaotic. As one colleague noted, "Kathleen was the only faculty who always had a wonderfully sunny attitude every day." When KB took a leave of absence last winter because of her illness, students frequently asked about her, prompting another of her colleagues to ask her what her secret was. She laughed and responded that it was important to be friendly, positive, and to always chat with the students.

Kathleen was survived by her husband, two stepchildren, three grandchildren, her brother and sister, and many nieces, nephews, and friends. She will be missed by her family, her friends, and all current and former Deaf Studies students and faculty.

Jennifer Ballengee and JB Begue