Dr. Mathilda van Niekerk was our lioness from South Africa with the highest courage, determination, positive energy, and professionalism. Anything she worked on, she did with a style, smile, and perfection. She was a faculty senator representing the Rosen College of Hospitality Management for eight years. She served on the Parking Advisory Committee, Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee, Graduate Policy Committee, University Master Planning Committee, Senate Steering Committee, and Committee on Committees. She was a strong advocate for all UCF faculty and represented the Rosen College faculty well.

For all those who knew her, Mathilda was more than a good colleague – she was a great friend that cared and supported us all. Recognizing that there were hardships for faculty in that many of us live away from our families, Mathilda initiated the “We Care” Rosen College campaign – a hospitable supportive network for faculty, staff and students. Her “We Care” campaign at Rosen College continues to stimulate an environment where faculty and staff members embrace each other as friends and family.

During Mathilda’s seven-year battle with cancer, she openly voiced how appreciative she was to have a support network within the college that helped her face her illness. She also acknowledged that she knew that other UCF faculty facing health hardships were not as fortunate as her to have such a collegial and supportive network. This lack of support network disturbed her. She spoke with the UCF President to ask him to look into how UCF could serve faculty, staff, and students facing health hardships so that those faculty, staff, and students could continue to serve the UCF community. Unfortunately, the time was not right. Thus, it is with this Memoriam and resolution that UCF is asked to examine how the institution may better support faculty, staff and students facing health hardships with a hospitable “We Care” framework such as that developed by Dr. Mathilda van Niekerk of the Rosen College of Hospitality Management.

Whereas, the University of Central Florida strives to make measurable improvements to enhance the quality of life within the regional community, it is necessary to examine how to best improve the quality of life of the immediate UCF community (faculty, staff and students) especially during times that a faculty, staff or student is facing health hardships; and

Whereas, the University of Central Florida is an educational institution that follows a guiding principle for a sense of community; and

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In Memoriam – Dr. Mathilda van Niekerk
**Whereas**, this guiding principle helps to direct the actions of the University, it is crucial to provide the UCF community with the utmost support during circumstances where faculty, staff, and students may face health hardships; and

**Whereas**, the University of Central Florida strives to attract a diverse and international faculty body of faculty, staff and students, it becomes essential to stimulate a supportive network that creates a dependable environment that supports faculty, staff, and students to aspire to their best work during both good and challenging times including times of illness; and

**Whereas**, the University of Central Florida has in place existing policies, procedures, and programs to assist faculty, staff, and students that are facing health hardships these efforts can be improved to include a hospitable support network; therefore

**Be it resolved** that the University of Central Florida Faculty Senate supports the University’s intention to assist faculty, staff, and students that face health hardships; and

**Be it further resolved** that the University of Central Florida Faculty Senate supports the examination of how the existing University policies, procedures and programs used to assist faculty, staff, and students facing health hardships may be improved to include an empathetic, hospitable and friendly support network that will enhance the quality of life and work environment for all of UCF faculty, staff, and students. It is essential that UCF stands beside the faculty, staff and students, cares for them, and provides a community that all faculty, staff, and students may depend upon for help; and

**Be it further resolved** that the University of Central Florida Faculty Senate requests that the University investigates resource opportunities to develop, maintain, and sustain such a program.

*Approved by the Faculty Senate on October 3, 2019.*