

# Virtual Card for Jan Tullis



It is with a heavy heart that we must share that Jan Tullis passed away on **September 15th**. The outpouring of love, support and sympathy since she was hospitalized has been incredible – a wonderful collection of notes online and large stacks of letters, notes, cards and small mementos! We will continue to leave this virtual card posted and available for folks to appreciate all the memories, appreciation, and support.

It is not a tradition in Jan's family to hold services, so there will not be a formal funeral. In the Department, we will hold a few get-togethers this week to give some time and space to remembering Jan and sharing the impact she has had on so many of us. DEEPS will organize a celebration of Jan's life and legacy, to be held during the spring semester to allow people time to organize and plan to travel to campus. We will also be organizing additional ways to memorialize Jan's legacy. We will send updates as more information becomes available. Please feel free to reach out to [DEEPS@Brown.edu](mailto:DEEPS@Brown.edu) or the Chair, [Meredith\\_Hastings@brown.edu](mailto:Meredith_Hastings@brown.edu) directly if you would like to be involved in the organizing/planning or have other thoughts you would like to share.

*\*Note:* Many of the notes below were initially written when Jan was hospitalized, and they were shared with her during her final days. These messages reflect our community's outpouring of love and support for Jan, and we continue to appreciate these and more notes while we grapple with the loss of our colleague, mentor, and friend.

Read the DEEPS News Post: [Remembering Professor Jan Tullis, 1943–2024](#)

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Dear Jan,

Thank you so much for all of your love, help and support all throughout my time in school as I navigated health challenges, dreams of being a researcher, and balancing life overall. You have made such a profound impact on my life and the lives of so many others at Brown. You were always there for me even in my toughest struggles. Thank you so much!

Love,

Allie Cavallo '25.5

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Hi Jan - I remember you as the undergraduate advisor in the geology department during my tenure there (1976-1980). Thanks for helping me find my way into geosciences. Get better soon! Louise Criscenti

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Jan, I hope you have a rapid recovery. I remember well my time at Brown a few decades ago (about 5 of them) when we were young and so full of hopes for the future.

Eric Christiansen 1977-1978

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Jan, you've impacted the lives of so many. We're all thinking about you! Hoping for a speedy recovery.

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Please send my love and support to Jan. She has *always* supported me and I am sending her strength and a big hug. All my best,

Devra Wexler '97

Today's news is incredibly painful to process. To everyone at DEEPS and all the alumni—I'm so sorry. I'm grateful that we can share in our grief.

Devra

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Hi Jan, I hope you have a speedy recovery and can go back to inspiring Brown students with your wonderful presence!

Andy Chaikin BA geology Class of '78

Dear Jan, I am forever grateful for your warmth and enthusiasm in my then blossoming interest in geology when I first came to DEEPS. I would have never been able to join a large planetary mission researching the topics that fascinate me without your kindness and support! I think of you always whenever I see a beautiful mineral specimen, whether it's an intricately-etched fluorite in a museum display or a classic wine-red garnet dodecahedron crystal in the field. I am sending you all my love and support for your speedy recovery!

Daniel Zhou '23

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Jan - It is hard to find the words to describe all the amazing ways you influenced my career and helped me become the Geoscience Professor I am today. I think of you often. Sending strength and love for your recovery.

Pamela Burnley '81

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Dear Jan,

I am so happy to echo many of my fellow card writers here when I say that you impacted every moment of my time at Brown and continue to be a guiding force in the way I approach life today. Your zest for learning, understanding others, and improving the culture of DEEPS has changed so many lives for the better. Through your careful instruction I learned how to become a better scientist and an empathic teacher and mentor. Sending you love and wishes for a speedy recovery.

Solana Huang '20

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Dear Jan, sending you love and energy so that you recover soon. Thank you for your wonderful guidance cultivating a rewarding career.

Jasper Oshun '05

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Dear Jan, I hope you get well soon! I think about you whenever I see an inspiring outcrop and am always excited to inspire others just as you inspired me. Thanks for supporting me and encouraging me through my scientific journey. I hope some of your energy and support to me over the years may come back to you in this message! -Leo Penny 2020

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Dear Jan,

Your Geo 22 class was definitely one of the best classes that I took at Brown and it inspired me to switch from physics to geophysics - a switch that I have never regretted. I still remember how quickly you learned everyone's name in that class and your neverending enthusiasm for the subject. You are what every professor should be. I feel lucky to have taken your classes. I am sending you many positive thoughts for a quick and full recovery.

Urška Manners (Class of '00)

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Dear Jan, You were the reason I applied to DEEPs almost a decade ago, and I wouldn't be where I am today without meeting you! You mean so much to all students and alumni. Sending good energy and fast healing your way.

Jenna Pearson (Palmer) '20

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*Jan – Sending warm wishes. You were certainly a guiding light, role model, and inspiration for me while I was at Brown. I sometimes felt intimidated and out of place, but you were always so kind and uplifting. I owed my first job after graduation (at USGS in Menlo Park) to you! I cherished that experience and all of the subsequent doors that it opened. Thank you for everything!*

*– Gabrielle Katz (Class of 1991)*

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Hi Jan, wishing you a rapid recovery. Thinking of you, and remembering my time at Brown (so many decades ago) now. Take care and know that we are all thinking of you! All the best, Karen Kohfeld

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Jan, you've impacted the lives of so many. We're all thinking about you!  
Hoping for a speedy recovery.  
Jonah, '24

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Quite an echo in here! Jan, you have mentored so many folks (including this lump of coal) with enthusiasm, rigor, respect and kindness. Best wishes for a speedy recovery!  
Paul Ecker '90

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Sending so much warmth and admiration to Jan. I still think and talk about the caring and support she provided so many like me with our paths in life. May you recover well.  
Carlos Rincon '05

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Jan, sending you all the well wishes for a speedy recovery. Your support both in and out of Brown has been so appreciated, and it means the world that you put so much into your students and alumni. I'm thinking of you and hope to see you next time I'm in Providence!  
Johanna Garfinkel '19

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Hi Jan! I just got back from sampling Lake Superior which was bittersweet as it was likely my last time, but I am happy that we have new students in the lab to carry on the timeseries collection. My advisor and I have decided that I will defend sometime in on February and are actively working to finish my chapters. I am thinking of you and hope you have a speedy recovery. I need your wisdom and advice now more than ever!!  
Maria D Hernandez Limon 2014

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Dear Jan, I am sending you my best wishes and hoping you have a fast recovery. My fondest memories are of your starting each Geo 45 class in Rhode Island Hall by writing your outline of the day's class on the board. Your passion for the subject matter was contagious and as my co-senior thesis advisor, you were wonderful. Best wishes,  
David Bristol '83

Dear Jan. Best wishes for a speedy recovery.

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Hello Jan, I am forever grateful for the energy and enthusiasm you brought to the geology department at Brown University, and know I speak for so many when I say you were an integral part of cultivating an interest and fascination with the planet we find ourselves on. I personally can attest that you served as a model for an instructor that I work hard to emulate every day. I send all my love and energy, and hope for a speedy recovery.  
Tristan Reinecke '18

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Dear Jan,  
I would not be where I am today in my career or life without your guidance during my time at Brown. Thank you so much for all of the support, help, and warmth you've given to help me find my voice as a scientist. Wishing you a very speedy and smooth recovery, and sending you all of the love, support, energy, and hope you've given me over the years right back to you!  
-Bekah Stein '14

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Dear Jan, Thank you so much for all your guidance and career advice. Your insights have been invaluable, and I'm deeply grateful for your time and support. Sending lots of good energy.  
Rain Fan '22

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Dear Jan, I'm so grateful for the warmth, guidance, and mentorship you gave to me while I was an undergrad (now more than twenty years ago!). I hope you have a speedy recovery, and am sending you love and good energy.  
Carl Takei '02

Dear Jan,

It was 40 years ago that I took an intro geo class (your class!) because I liked rocks and field trips though I had no idea what my future career might be. Well, the first business card of my first “real” job after college said I was a “Geologist” and the rest is history. A very belated thank you! Thinking of you and wishing you a full and speedy recovery.

John Weiss '87

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Hi Jan! You were a wonderful professor and have shaped my career trajectory in more ways than you would believe. Since college (when I wasn't always the *best* version of myself), I've worked as a field biologist, high school science teacher, and just wrapped up graduate school at the University of Michigan (MBA/MS in Environmental Science). Thanks for caring so much about your students and about science education. Hope you recover fully and rapidly.

Daniel McGill, '14

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Dear Jan, I am sending my strength and energy and hope you have a rapid recovery. I am truly grateful for all the support and guidance you gave to me.

Yichen Geng '19

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Dear Jan,

I'm thinking of you. You are such a special human and I hope you feel surrounded by all of us who have been shaped by your kindness and wisdom over the years.

Sarah Garlick '02.5

Dear Jan,

My first days in your Geo 22 class quite literally changed the trajectory of my life, and so too did your encouragement and mentorship in the years after I joined Brown Geo. Thank you for being so kind, so rad, and so giving of your time to so many of us. I'm sending you that positivity back tenfold for your recovery! We love you!

-Camera Ford '16

Ps. I also want you to know that just graduated with my MSc. in remote sensing this summer! Your impact continues!

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Dear Jan,

I am so sorry to hear that you are not well. You are in my prayers for a speedy recovery! You were a role model for so many of us when you were the only woman faculty member (albeit research faculty) in RI hall. You can't imagine how many lives you changed. All those people are sending their energy to you now.

Best wishes, Louise Levien '74

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Dear Jan,

It's been a long time since I sat in your Geo 22 class and realized on the very first day that I knew exactly what I wanted to study. I have always been so grateful for your enthusiasm and kindness during my years at Brown, and to this day I still use you as an example of what a truly excellent university professor should be. I am sorry to hear you aren't well, and I am wishing you all the best in your recovery.

- Kali Wallace '01

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Jan,

You have touched so many lives over the years, including my own! It was such a joy to reconnect with you and Karin at the DEEPS career fair last year. It meant so much to me to get to see you all and the new members of the department and to connect with the next generation of DEEPS (geoscience) students who were passionate and eager and anxious to know what comes next. You helped me to find my own path so much, and I am so grateful for that.

-Molly Cohen 2009

Dear Jan –

I was just talking about you to my senior graduating students as I described my job search back in 2004. You helped me by introducing me to a number of geoscientists and educators in the upper Midwest that you knew, including your professors at Carleton. Because of your help, I got my job at Winona State University as the geoscience education specialist and started 20 years ago. You've been a shining light on my journey to celebrate geoscience and education in all things that I do as part of my job. Thank you so much for your support and encouragement when I was a student at Brown!! I'm thinking of you and I hope you feel better very soon! –  
Jennifer Anders hi on, 2004

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Dear Jan -

I would not have become the person I am today without your incredible guidance, support, and kindness throughout my time at Brown and my entire career. I cannot think of my undergraduate degree without immediately turning to our meetings and how you could always guide me through whatever I was working on, both in and out of the classroom. I've loved your amazing outreach and messages over the years and continue to be amazed with how much you check in and track where all your students end up.

Here's to a speedy recovery filled with the warmth from all these students you have impacted over the years. Sending you so much love and support.  
- Lillian Mirviss '12

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Dear Jan,

Thank you so much for everything you've done for me and so many other Brown DEEPS alumni. I'll never forget Geo 22 and Structure as some of the highlights of my curriculum. I'll be thinking about you and hoping for a quick recovery.

-Warren Smith '17

Dear Jan,

I always remember fondly the time you took out of your busy schedule to listen to my concerns, challenges and passions - providing advice that led me to eventually pursue a career in climate. Without your guidance, I'm not sure where I'd be right now. Thank you for being there for me when I needed it most - being able to learn from you was such a privilege (even though I wasn't always the best Geo student!). Wishing you a quick recovery!! - Sujay Natson '16

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Dear Jan,

You set me on my path in geology, and set in stone that geology was always meant to be a collaborative environment full of discussion, learning, and observation about the world around us. Geo 22 and structure have truly fully defined my career path, and I am so grateful! Sending you all the love and support possible, and wishing that you recover quickly.

-Julia Carr, '14

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Dear Jan –

Sending you wishes of well being and strength. Your role in supporting me as a young Earth scientist was pivotal in my life and career, and my appreciation for your encouragement and guidance is profound. You are in my thoughts now, and in fond memories of my time as your student.

Warm regards,

-Kena Fox-Dobbs '99

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Jan, Your influence on my academic trajectory can't be overstated. I have trouble picturing whether I may not have ended up majoring in geology if you hadn't suggested we meet freshman fall, but only because it's so hard to picture the department without you. I'm so grateful for all your support and guidance throughout my time at Brown. I will be thinking of you, and wishing for you to recover soon.

Warmly,

Carolyn '22

My dearest Jan,

I am not at all surprised that just one hour after the email about your condition, this virtual get well card is filling up with messages of love and care from five decades of geology classes. You are such an incredible human that there is no capturing it in words, yet we all still try, because you mean that much to us. You have lifted up and shaped our lives with such tenderness and encouragement that we cannot imagine our paths without your warmth, advice, and friendship.

Reading some of these messages brings back memories of the beautiful retirement celebration, still fondly known as "Jan-fest" among us alums, and the outpouring of love for you that just kept going. We want you to know how much of a difference you, and your work, have made. You have had more impact on the world than any of us can ever know, but the depth of your love for us and the ongoing nature of your mentoring is more precious than anything else I can think of.

As you begin the journey that will be your recovery and the many uncertainties that brings, know that you are in my heart and thoughts every moment. Just as you believed in me during that challenging sophomore year, I believe in you and your willpower to both find every possible pathway to healing and creatively adapt to living with whatever changes remain.

I love you, I love you, I love you.

Hugs always,

-Shauna Edson '05

Dear Jan:

I send infinite appreciation and the most positive wishes your way for recovery. Together with all the correspondents, reflecting Shauna's note above, I hope our collective support comforts you and energizes you as much as possible!

Thinking of you each day in the office, the classroom, the field, while facilitating climate change adaptation projects with communities and agencies, and especially while writing :). Your support through undergrad, grad school, job applications and beyond still powers me through challenges.

With love from the wilds of northern Utah and southern California,  
Marc Mayes ScB '09 / PhD '17

*PS: links to the "fun" movements of a JS Bach trio sonata, played by Yo Yo Ma (Cello), Chris Thile (Mandolin) and Edgar Meyer (bass) as musical well-wishes:*

[Trio Sonata No. 6 in G, BWV 530 I. Vivace](#)  
[III. Allegro](#)

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Dear Jan,

Coming to Brown as an undergraduate was the first time I'd ever travel alone outside my home country, to fly to a destination 10,000 miles away from my family. Excited, but deeply anxious upon arrival as I know almost no one on campus, in a place, environment and country so different from home. What a blessing to have met you from Day 1 as an advisor and you welcomed me and so many others into the department, helping us to set root, and creating a wonderful and cherished place for us to learn and grow. The Geology Department and the people became my home-away-from-home, and I only have beautiful, fondest memories of it, certainly with you as the inspiring, guiding light. Sending you all the love and warm wishes,

Fatma Khatib '05

Dear Jan,

I wish I was sending you an email sharing updates from the mountains or asking you about the latest books you are reading (and I can't wait to do that again soon - I have new books to tell you about). It feels impossible to capture in words the healing spirit that I want to share with you now, but since you taught me to write with precision and care, I will try. I am sending you all my love. I will be thinking of you over the next weeks, sending all my wishes for the speediest recovery with peaceful music to listen to and hot cups of tea to drink, and can't wait to have "tea" in your office when you're feeling better.

Love,

Rachel '19

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To one of the best humans on this planet - Jan Tullis.

You inspired me to teach a GEOLOGY 101 course at CSUN and design the GEOL 102 lab modeled after your class including a campus GEOWALK that is very popular. Your insight and teaching prowess lives on in us! I wish you health and happiness in the sunset of your life and hope you will pull through and in all cases find peace with the wonderful world you shared with all of us. I continue to share your career stories with GEM and WISE students of all colors, shapes, sizes, and orientations, a story which has inspired and will continue to inspire many generations. Thank you for being you!

Much love, Dayanthie (2005, Ph.D.)

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Dear Jan,

Wishing you health and ease as you confront this challenge. I remember fondly your gifted teaching, one assignment in particular, where you handed us a paper without an abstract and allowed us to write and rewrite that abstract as many times as we wanted, each time with more feedback. I've been a geophysicist (PhD, 1997, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UCSD), a software engineer and manager (MathWorks), and now a nervous system educator. My first [paper](#) in this new role was published just this week, so I carry those early lessons in science and writing with me still.

Fondly,

Mara Yale, '91

Dear Jan,

While I may not have had the biggest presence in geology, when I think about my time in DEEPS, I remember the wide love and support you gave to each and every person, whether they are a geology concentrator or not, and wish to give the same support back to you. You are such an incredible individual, and I know you light up everyone's day when we get to pass by you or your office. As a result of your welcoming self, I was able to explore a whole interest I had never thought of before and create beautiful memories on the SBFT to Utah and meet so many friends. I'm sending you lots of love and well wishes.

Sincerely,

Natalie Chang '24

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Dear Jan,

Your classes and your presence on our field trips - including the trip to The Big Bend - made geology fun. Though I only worked as a geologist for about 6 years, it is a part of my essence. Thank you for that. I wish you a speedy recovery and ease during the process. With fond memories, Sarah Sharlot Dietrich '81.

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Dear Jan,

My very best wishes for a speedy recovery. Thank you for all of your help back in the day.

With fondest memories,

Frank Horowitz, Sc.M. '82

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Jan,

You set such a wonderful example for so many of us to follow with your thoughtfulness, kindness and commitment to teaching countless young, aspiring geoscientists. Thinking of you and wishing you a speedy recovery.

David Abt, 2009

Dear Jan,

I am thinking about you, and the outsized impact that you had on my life (both professional and personal), and the lives of so many others in the Brown Geology community. Seeing things from the other side, I honestly don't know how you did it all. You always made time for me, and anyone else who needed guidance, with an open door and seemingly endless patience and wisdom. You continue to be a role model for brown alumni, especially faculty. You have given so much to so many of us over the years, and know that we are truly grateful.

Get well soon partner,

David Shean, Sc.B. '04, Sc.M. '06

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Dear Jan -

Thank you for being a great inspiration to me and so many other Brown geology students. Thinking of you and best wishes for a speedy recovery.

David Crown, 1985

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Jan -

Susan and I met you soon after you arrived at Brown, and were immediately impressed with your enthusiasm and special care for everyone. My work (and Susan's) was somewhat remote from yours, but we stayed impressed – and you were one of the people I most wanted to see again after decades away. One of the early conversations I remember was bringing you the sobering news that backpackers in the East generally found it advisable to take a tent and rain gear...

Jan, you built a different road, and have obviously made a huge difference to generations of students - and colleagues.

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Dear Jan,

I'm sorry to hear about your recent health scare. I'm wishing you a quick recovery. Thank you so much for being such an amazing mentor to all of us Brown geology students. You inspired my own career, and so many others! Thinking of you during this tough time. I hope you get well soon,

Lindsey Albertson, 2006

Dear Jan,

My sincere wishes for a speedy and complete recovery. I owe you more than can be easily expressed. You helped shape the course of my career path in my pivotal freshman year. As I confronted my choices and perceived limitations, you were no small part of the reason geology became my path to exploring the planets. Your kindness, patience, and knowledge were and remain formidable and inspirational, and I hope to have the privilege to tell you that again.

Noam Izenberg, '89

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Dear Jan,

Thinking of you and all of the amazing energy, advice, and passion in science you generated. I remember fondly meeting with you and your teaching and how inspired I felt. You are an inspiration. Best from Colorado, Jen Kay '99

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Dear Jan,

*It was such a pleasure to get to meet up at last year's reunion after so many years of distance. Getting to see you only reinforced all the incredibly fond memories I have of Brown, the Geology Dept and of you. Your warmth and attention to us undergraduates was a transformative gift. College and career choices and science can be fraught with so much anxiety (especially for indecisive kids like me), yet you were a burst of sunshine and calm and reassurance. I hope you know how much good you've done through your work and your relationships and how many people and careers you have influenced for the better!*

*Please stay strong and get well and home soon.*

*Sending lots of love,*

*Lynn Vaccaro*

*Brown Biogeo, 1998*

Dear Jan,

So sorry to hear that you are not doing well. I wish you a swift and thorough recovery. You continue to be an inspiration to me as I enter my final year of grad school. I think back fondly on the many hours I spent in the Geology Department working on homework for your classes with the other undergrads.

Best wishes,

Laura Blackstone, 2019

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Dear Jan,

You have given me so much support and encouragement to learn about being a good teaching assistant. You are one of the pillars of DEEPS and have inspired so many students. I wish you a thorough recovery and I am lucky to have learned from you.

Best,

Rosa '23

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Dear Jan,

I was very sorry to hear about your hospitalization. Your support throughout my time at Brown was invaluable and I often think about you and what you taught me. You have had such a positive impact on so many people. I hope all of our sincere well wishes result in a speedy and full recovery.

-Stephanie LaRose Lewison, '07

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Dear Jan,

What I remember most about you are actually the times outside of class where you lifted up and encouraged women in the department, and always had an open door to answer my countless questions about geology and beyond. It was because of you that I switched from engineering to geology and finally felt at home my sophomore year. I'm sending you love and hugs from NC, and hope that soon you will be back home and in good health.

—Gen Proctor, '97

Dear Jan,

Although I never took your class, you were my undergraduate advisor. I cherish those memories very much. You inspired me when I taught high school geology in Connecticut before I joined the Foreign Service. Wishing you comfort and peace. Sincerely, George Hogeman '79

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Dear Jan,

I also wish you a speedy recovery. I remember the "thank goodness we made it through the first week" celebrations we had. Geology was the best department on campus and you helped make it that way. I also benefited from your kindness and mentoring. Thanks so much and best wishes!  
Julie Robbins Lisle class of 1976

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Jan,

Please know you're in my thoughts as you work through your recovery. I'm sending my best wishes for healing and peace. As I write this message, I'm feeling so very grateful for your impact on me. My experience at Brown changed my life, and my work with you as my teacher and mentor was an essential part of that experience. Though my work ended up going in the direction of food fermentation, organic agriculture, and socially responsible business – rather than geology – there is much I learned from you that I have applied countless times in my career, perhaps most especially your rigorous process-oriented approach to solving complex problems. I know that so many other Brown alums - whether now working inside or outside geology - have benefited greatly from their time with you as their professor, as well. Thank you! And again, sending my very best wishes to you.

-Dan Rosenberg '98

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Jan,

Very sorry to hear you're in the middle of a stay at the hospital. Wishing you warm thoughts and a speedy recovery. Thanks again for all of your support over the years. I know I am just one of so many of your students so grateful for your guidance in geology and life.

Be well, Jen Rouda '95

Jan,

The farther I get in my own education, the more I appreciate how much of it I owe to you—for believing in me when I decided to change my major, for talking me through my self-doubts, for always making time for me and the other undergrads in the department, and for your unerring guidance and instruction. You've been such a champion for all of us, and I wouldn't be where I am without you! I can't thank you enough for any of it, but I am thinking of you and hoping you get well soon!

Sending you all the best from the Grand Canyon State,  
Keven Griffen '17

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Dear Jan,

My sincerest wishes for a swift and stable recovery!! I'm so thankful we got to meet up at reunion in 2022 and for our regular new year email exchanges and updates. You have touched the lives of so many and continue to inspire us long after college - I believe in your boundless energy and fighting spirit. It has always amazed me how much you care about your students' lives outside of the classroom, and having such caring professors and excellent teachers was what made Brown an unforgettable experience. My thoughts are with you and your family at this trying time.

Lots of love,

Wei Lin (class of '12)

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Dear Jan,

Your support made it possible for me to graduate from Brown and become the natural scientist I am today. I will forever be grateful for the time you took to lookencourage me in my education and beyond, as I truly don't know how I would have done it without you. It warms my heart to see so many others feel the same way. You are an inspiration for so many, and I can't thank you enough for sharing your light with me. I wish you a speedy recovery and a continued awe for life's deep mysteries.

Mat Becker, '13

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Dear Jan,

I echo the many voices above in recognition and thanks for the pivotal role you played in my education and career. I still think of your red ink on the first scientific abstract I wrote, and I attribute much of my love for writing and editing to you. I wish you a speedy recovery and am sending well wishes and strength your way.

Warmest regards,  
Julia Guimond '13

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Dear Jan, I wanted to thank you for helping convert me from an art major to a science major during my junior year at Brown in 1973. I was struggling with how to create a major that fulfilled my interests and was approved by you and the other faculty. With your guidance we created a bio-geology major and I was launched on my science career. I will never forget you and your support. I wish you a very speedy and full recovery.  
Carol Eberhard '75

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Dear Jan,

I am thinking of you today and I will continue to send my best wishes your way as you recover. I owe you a great debt of gratitude for the mark you made on my education at Brown. It is likely I would not have found the Geology department were it not for you and your boundless encouragement and contagious curiosity that I could not help but follow. I am especially grateful for your commitment to science writing and effective scientific communication—I found that to be an invaluable part of my education and my continued work as a tutor. I still try to emulate your wisdom on effective science writing with every student I tutor. While I have transitioned to working in another field, not a day goes by where I am not grateful for having been taught by you and the wondrous faculty of the Geology department. You taught me to visualize the Earth, to be fluent in Earth literacy, to think critically, write precisely and clearly, and to be a curious learner. Those are lifelong skills. Sending you my warmest wishes.  
Hillel Rosenshine '22

Dear Jan,

The year was 1994 when I walked into your office in the fall of my sophomore year as a chemistry major and asked if I could do a research project with someone in DEEPS. Oh, you were so pleased! Another young person pilfered from a rival department! Joy! #winning! You assigned me to someone – ok, they didn't work out. Undaunted and determined (two words that describe you so well!), you said, "I think you'd work out in Mac's lab." So began the first three years of the rest of my life! You are the linchpin, the connector, the instigator of so many careers. And look at us, full circle; decades later you sent undergraduates to my REU Site at Smithsonian. And now they are faculty members at departments across the nation.

You have given so many individuals the gift of finding their passion. And you have given geosciences the gift of so many passionate people! I wish you a speedy recovery, peace, and joy.

With love and affection (and the permanent association of jewel-tone-green wraparound skirts with powerful, smart, women),

Liz Cottrell '97

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Dear Jan,

I hope you make a speedy recovery. You've been such a wonderful, enthusiastic, advisor for many students in this department for decades. I still greatly cherish the advice you gave me when I was an undergraduate, and, more recently, when I contacted you late last spring, after meeting one of your colleagues at the Asia Society. I could see that your intense interest, knowledge and enthusiasm hadn't diminished. Hopefully your hospitalization will be a temporary setback and soon I hope you will share your wisdom with the current group of DEEP students. Get well soon.

John Kwok '82

Dear Jan,

Like so many others, you steered my life path towards a lifelong pursuit of scientific discoveries about our earth. You were the most welcoming and caring mentor that a young mind could have asked for. I wish for you a speedy recovery and all my good thoughts will be sent your way. Thank you for being you.

Andy Nager '09

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Dearest Jan,

I wish you the swiftest recovery possible and the best of health onwards. I'm very sorry to hear of this news. You have been one of the most inspirational people in my life - and you supported my time at Brown as no other, as a mentor and a guide and someone I could always turn to. Your strength, knowledge and passion have been unsurpassed and I am simply lucky to have crossed paths with you that fateful year that I decided to take Geo 22 - little did I know how it would change my life. You have shaped my life in more ways than you know, and my sister Karishma's too (I just knew she had to take your class when she got admitted to Brown 12 years after me). My parents also send their best wishes for your speedy recovery. Lots of love and hugs,

-Devina Swarup, ScB'07, ScM'08

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Dear Jan,

I'm so sorry to hear that you've been unwell and hope you will be back to your garden and in the classroom very soon. It'll be ten years this year since I visited Brown as a shy high school student and had my life forever changed because of how warmly and openly you encouraged my curiosity for the planet. Whether it's getting my Biology Department colleagues to be excited about sedimentary layers, revising my manuscripts through a 'Jan lens', or teaching high schoolers about climate change, I am always reminded of how lucky I am to have been mentored by you at Brown.

Ashley Bang '19

Dear Jan,

What an amazing positive impact you have had on so many of our lives! I hope you are comfortable and getting the help and support you need as you recover. Earth is a more beautiful place for having you on it.

Best wishes, Nemiah Ladd '06

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Dear Jan,

Like so many others, my life would have been so different without your impact. I felt the unfaltering support mentioned by so many others, but also knew that you had the highest expectations of me. You have been the model teacher and mentor I have strived to be throughout my career.

"Thank you" seems so inadequate at expressing gratitude for the impact you have had on my life.

With my warmest wishes, Steven Wojtal '74

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Dear Jan,

I'm sending you every healing and positive wish from Durban, South Africa—you would love the rocks this side!! Thank you for being such a soulful and enthusiastic proponent of strong science education. Much of your modeling of and chats regarding robust geoscience education, and of course the Sheridan Center, paved the way for me to make the transition from the research world to full-time secondary teaching over the past six years. Thank you for your light, love of learning, and kindness, and I'm wishing you all the best right now! Lots of love!

Chris Kelly, MSc in 2016

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Dear Jan, I started out at Brown as an Engineering student, but my first encounter with a department at Brown University was Geological Sciences as you hosted the booth. Reaching a wall in the middle of my sophomore year not knowing what to do, I remembered my encounter with you my freshman year. Your kindness, warmth and passion for Geology captivated me to study what you loved most. I have never looked back at my decision to change degrees, and I thank you so much for that. I'm saddened to hear this news but I just wanted to say thank you again for all the conversations we've had and for being a part of my story. I hope you get well soon!

Isaiah Spencer, '21

Dear Jan,

Sending you so much love and strength through your recovery. Just this week I was relaying to a friend how much I enjoyed the 'Jan Tullis celebration' in 2013 that brought back so many Geology alums. How unique that you bridge the community across so many generations of Brown alums instilling in us joys of collaborative work, hands-on activities, and field observations. With a recent camping trip to Mt. Rainier, I send you glacial blues, cascading wildflowers, and majestic mountain views. Thinking of you!

Elizabeth Denis, '10

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Jan:

It is with great sadness that I hear you are not well. You have always been the embodiment of strength, determination, and support. A true pillar in our community. I have always had such admiration for you, and your leadership. It gives me such pleasure to read everyone's thoughts and memories which are a true testament to all that you are.

Most importantly, I wish you a speedy and full recovery!!! Lots of love and support.

Gordon Binkhorst, '86

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Dear Jan,

Thank you for your support and guidance during my time in DEEPS and beyond. I do my best to channel your compassion and enthusiasm with my students at ODU, and hope that I am able to provide even a fraction of your inspiration. Wishing you comfort, peace, and a speedy recovery!

Sincerely,

Rip Hale, '06

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Dear Jan,

You are always in our family's mind. You have helped me so much even after my graduation, and I am very grateful for your kindness. I hope you feel better soon!



We love you, Jan!  
Nade Sae-Lim, '18

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Well, Jan, the length of document I've scrolled past to write to you says it all! Your truly massive academic family tree has clearly reached around the world and is now reaching back to you now. I am sending you the very best of wishes for your health and comfort from my little midwestern corner where I'm still benefiting from your teaching, advising, and the rigorous commitment to good science you imparted to me.

Love,  
Sami Overby '17

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Dear Jan,  
Not a day has gone by since I graduated where I don't think about you and the profound impact you've had on my life, my career, and my personal growth. Your strength, passion, support, and genuine care you've taken to find and develop generations of geoscientists will forever be unmatched and so inspirational. I'm sending you all the healing and strength, now and forever. We all love you so much!  
Alex Wilk, '23

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Dear Jan, I am hoping for a speedy and full recovery. You were such a wonderful mentor and inspiration to me when I first started graduate school in 1972. You stood up for me as a young woman geologist, and I will never forget that act of kindness and support. Thank you and get well soon,  
Martha Withjack

Dear Jan,

One of my first memories of being at Brown is when I went to the department fair and stopped by your table, and even though I only ever intended to take a few geology courses, you gave me your full attention and enthusiasm in recommending which courses to take. It made me feel welcome right away in this new place, and taking your course in that first semester was one of the best ways to start out my time at college. I'm wishing you the best, and I hope you're able to find good comfort and connection while you recover!

Calder

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Dear Jan,

I am deeply saddened to hear of your illness and wish you a swift and full recovery. Your mentorship and guidance during my time at Brown were invaluable, and you have been and always will be a role model for me. Your passion, knowledge, and unwavering support inspired me to pursue a geo-chemistry concentration and onwards to a career in ocean sciences. You are exceptional, and I can only aspire to make the kind of impact that this card attests to. Please know that my thoughts and well wishes are with you.

Kassandra Costa 2012

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Dear Jan,

Sorry to hear you're ill. Sending best wishes for a full and swift recovery. I will be forever grateful for your early lessons in both scientific rigor and writing. Thinking of all those you've raised up as scientists is awe-inspiring. Get well soon - the next generation awaits! 😊

Sue Smrekar

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Dear Jan,

I hope you feel better soon! I can't put into words how much you've inspired me and others with your passion and your tenacity and continue to do so every day. I am so grateful we crossed paths and am still leaning on your wisdom every day. Thank you and get well soon!

Sally Cai '18

Dear Jan,

Thank you for your enthusiasm and rigor. The support you offered me, and the opportunity I had to gain exposure to research during my summer internship. I have to say, it is quite breathtaking to see the sheer number and age range of all of these alums who feel so fondly of you. You've had quite an impact!

While I'm no longer working as a scientist (I'm now a psychotherapist and loving it), I have passed on my love of mineralogy to my kids. While they do sometimes roll their eyes, "there goes Dad again," they do know the difference between quartz and feldspar, fracture and cleavage.

Deep respect,  
Charles Strauss '96

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Dear Jan,

I was just thinking about writing my biannual "hey, I'm going to be in Providence soon, when can I drop by your office to catch up?" email when I saw that you've been unwell. I hope you know what an enormous impact you had on my Brown experience—starting when I met you at ADOCH, before I even decided to go to Brown—and beyond. Your insight and advice about geology, the courses I should take, and my career goals was invaluable, but what mattered the most was your personal support.

Throughout my time at Brown, you encouraged me to explore all of my interests and passions, including my Education concentration, the Brown Band, BOLT, the Rural Students club, and more, and you never made me feel like prioritizing those things over my Geo-Bio concentration meant that I didn't belong in DEEPS. I knew I always had someone in my corner at Brown thanks to your genuine care, and I truly don't know if I would've made it through Brown without it. You helped me feel like I was part of a community, and now I am grateful to be part of your community, sending love and positivity your way as you heal, alongside the generations of other students whose lives you've touched.

Victoria Rose '23

Dear Jan,  
Sending you best wishes—I hope you get better soon!  
Greg Jordan-Detamore '14

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Dear Jan -  
You have been an absolute champion of my and many other students' success and it has not gone unnoticed. I am so grateful for the energy and care you have spent helping me nurture my curiosity in the Earth sciences while at Brown and through many jobs and educational paths I have pursued since. I wish you a speedy and smooth recovery and can't wait to hear from you soon!!  
With Love,  
Jasmine McAdams '16

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Jan-  
Best wishes for a speedy recovery. As an AB/ScB, Economics/Geology, Econ is how I made a living but my heart was always in the Geology Dept (as it was then called). Many thanks for your warmth and hospitality half a century ago.  
All my best,  
Phil Lu '72

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Dear Jan,  
I have only the warmest memories of you during my years as a Geology-Biology major (class of 1985). You were an important role model as one of the very few women in the department. I learned a great deal from you. I wish you a full and swift recovery.  
Sending prayers and hugs,  
Amy Gerstein '85

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Jan,

Best wishes for a speedy recovery. You have touched the lives of so many students and we all appreciated your guidance, encouragement and passion for writing (as well as Geology). You made a big impact on my life. Thank you.

Caleb Tower '85

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Jan:

Sending warm thoughts and prayers for your recovery. It's been a long time, but I remember gratefully and fondly my years in the Geology department with you and your colleagues. Launched me into work in the offshore Gulf of Mexico, and I have never stopped loving geology. Thanks for your positive influence on me and so many others.

James (Steve) Lee '81

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Dear Jan,

I am so sorry to hear that you are in the hospital! I am so thankful that you took me as your (last!) grad student, which allowed me to combine my interests in plate tectonics and mineralogy! I learned so much as your student and greatly enjoyed my years working in your lab.

You were incredibly devoted to ALL of your students and it was obvious how much you cared about each and every one of them. Undergraduates loved Geo22 and I was always impressed by how quickly you learned everyone's name! You were truly passionate about teaching and it showed. I have wonderful memories of my time at Brown and thank you for the important part you played in my life!

Wishing you a quick recovery and sending positive thoughts your way.

Sincerely,

Linda (Chernak) Meyers, ScM'08, PhD'11

PS I will be heading into my son's preschool class to talk about geology for STEM Friday sometime this year!

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Dear Jan,

I hope you are on your way to a speedy recovery. I am so grateful for your support and avid curiosity about my education and career over the years, even as I pivoted away from geology. The care you show your students is inspiring, and it has made the DEEPS department such a special community. I hope you feel all our love. And I hope you get back to your garden soon.

All my best,  
Sofie Rudin '17

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Dear Jan,

What a joy to read through all these messages and think about the impact you have had on multiple generations of students! Like so many others, I am so grateful for your guidance, compassion, generosity, and encouragement and wouldn't be where I am without your enduring presence in my life. You were my favorite professor and best life advisor at Brown — you were the reason I switched to the geo department, and you gave me the support I needed as a young adult to make it through college and figure out my own path. Even long after I left Brown and became a classroom teacher, you still gave me such thoughtful, honest advice with the same twinkle in your eye. I've always tried to support my students the way you supported me, in academics and beyond, and I still talk about you with my friends and coworkers. In fact, I was just telling my colleague on Wednesday about how small and intimate you made your intro class feel because you and Karen knew everyone's name on the first day!

Sending hugs and wishes for a smooth and full recovery, and hoping you are buoyed by the love and appreciation of the community you have nurtured over the decades 

With much love and gratitude,  
Kavita Krishna '02.5

Dear Jan,

Once upon a time a young engineering student got lost, missed his Freshman reading lecture on The Beak of the Finch and accidentally stumbled into your session. You welcomed him with curiosity and compelled him to take your GEOL0220 Physical process in Geology and eventually convinced him to become your advisee. I was always amazed about the genuine care and compassion you had for so many young minds in the Geology Department and at Brown, in me you helped nurture my intellectual curiosity and a life long love for geology. That from my first days of freshman orientation spark grew into a double concentration of Geology with Civil Engineer, and eventually a Masters degree in Geomatics. Now I work in the space between geology and structural engineering, helping explore sites, define engineering properties, and design/build the best solutions that allow humans to create a modern built world on the buried history of the natural one. Everyday I get to apply what you taught me, un-winding the geology and processes that created the situation I now get to design around. You've inspired me to remain curious, search for an understanding of the process that created what I see in the field and have to design around. Wandering into that your freshman lecture truly reshaped the course of my life for the better. Thank you for all you've done for me and so many like me.

Your former student, advisee, and friend,

*Nathan P. Van Winkle, PE '13*

Dear Jan,

Reading through these thoughtful messages (over 36 pages and counting!) is a powerful testament to your impact on our lives over your tenure at Brown. In my freshmen year, I only knew a few things: (1) this city girl wanted to spend the next four years studying geology, and (2) I had no clue how I would get through this completely foreign experience away from home and pursuing my higher education for me and my family. I will never forget you welcomed our little freshman advisory pod into your beautiful home with delicious Kabob and Curry and eased our anxieties.

That's really how it was all four years. Your endless, unwavering support for seeing us succeed was such a fountain of strength. Even when I studied abroad in New Zealand, you managed to mail me a ProJo newspaper clip about geology in the South Island, a small but giant gesture that you were always thinking of your students. Also, who could forget your legendary apple cider, especially in the bitter cold months!

Thank you for everything you've done for me. Your warmth, care, and support have always encouraged me to keep moving forward, and your mentorship has been one that I still cherish despite my career taking a different direction. I wish you a speedy and easy recovery, and tons of hugs!!

Best,  
Erika Lopez Garcia '14

Dear Jan,

You are such an impactful, tough, and caring person. You've truly given me such a great gift just by being you. Just today I finished my very last "homework assignment" visiting the Grand Canyon. I told my family stories of you and your impact on me, how much I loved my education, and little odds and ends of what makes geology so great.

Teaching students how to think well, you showed me how to pursue knowledge with passion. You exemplify what an amazing mentor and friend should be. I'm endlessly grateful for you and in awe of your legacy. With love and well wishes, I hope your recovery comes very soon.

Katie O'Leary '21

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Dear Jan, These notes span 45 years of graduation dates, from 1978 to 2023. Your warmth and enthusiasm have buoyed us all and many more. I often find myself thinking of what a strong and caring role model you are and you continue to help me during my career as challenges come up. I'm very grateful we could spend some time with you in 2022.

Peace

Hugh Hurlow, Sc.B. 1984

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Dear Jan,

I'm sending many hugs and warm wishes your way. I have no idea where I'd be today without your compassion and guidance both during and beyond my time at Brown. A little bit of good news—I'm absolutely loving my job as an interpretive park ranger at Mount St. Helens! Interpretation is challenging, but all those writing exercises in structural geology helped prepare me for the art of communicating with the public. As always, wishing you all the best :)

Catherine Miranda, 2018

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Jan,

It is remarkable, and not the least bit surprising, to read note upon note here from students you've inspired. I recall my inspiration taking root over the many occasions I sat in that chair just inside your office door. With a warm "Hey Partner" greeting, you enchanted a bubble around that chair in which students felt your undivided attention, your respect for their individuality, and your sincere dedication to their growth. Your mentorship nurtured roots of intellectual confidence, critical reflection, and a passion for learning that have profoundly shaped my life. You are a true force of Earth!

Sending healing vibes.

With deep admiration,

Elliot Grunewald '05

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*Dear Jan,*

*Wishing you a speedy recovery! Words cannot express the thanks I have for the mentorship you've provided during my time at Brown and in the years since. You've been, if you'll pardon the pun, a "rock" of support, especially when I've turned to you about grad school, career advice, introducing Brown to high school students, etc. As evidenced by the pages and pages written above, many, many people feel the same! I can't wait to be able to share my stories from my trip to Hokkaido this year to see the volcanoes there and would love to see you again when I visit Brown in the spring. Sending you much love, best wishes, and healing energy to get well soon—*

*Ren-Horng Wang, '06*

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Dear Jan,

Very best wishes for a speedy recovery. And thank you so much for showing us that women can be strong, creative leaders in any field. Though I left the field of geology, your teaching and mentorship has stayed with me all these years.

Elizabeth Barnett '77

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Dear Jan,

Like so many others, my time in college and my career path afterwards was inspired substantially by your keen advice, enthusiasm for lifelong learning, and infectious love of science. When I had the opportunity to visit the Brown campus this spring after 26 years since the last time, your office was #1 on my list of places to visit. I couldn't believe how talking to you again felt just like it did in college, including how you took as a given that I had just as much to teach you and contribute to the discussion than you. You have taught me so much about how to be intellectually curious and how to be a good observer and listener.

I wish you all my good vibes in your recovery and getting back to doing what you love.

Rob Elleman, '97

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Dear Jan,

It's no surprise to me that 40 pages of notes have already been written to you! You brought inspiration, care, and mentorship to all of us. I'll always remember how you caught me falling asleep in Geo 220, and then asked me if everything was alright. That care made a huge difference for me during my time at Brown. Please get well soon <3

Zev, '20

Dear Jan,

You've done so much for me both in my development as a scientist and engineer, and as a person, and for these I am forever thankful. Had you not been my first year advisor, I would have never been introduced to the amazing world of geology in GEOL 220, and I would have never become a geochemistry concentrator. Thank you for always being interested in all of the music groups I was doing at Brown, even when it wasn't your cup of tea. Even after I left Brown, you've continued to support me as I applied to grad school and in my professional career. Whether it was being a TA in DEEPS or in my career as a consultant, I've always valued your lessons about paying attention to all the details and making sure I'm absolutely confident in my understanding of concepts before I try to teach someone a difficult concept or topic. Because of you, I've come to truly enjoy the successes when I am successful at teaching someone something new, whether it be about subducting plates or about a new classical composer.

It's one of my greatest honors to be a part of a long line of Brown geology graduates who've had you as a mentor. You've absolutely changed the course of my life for the better, and I wish you the absolute best in your recovery.  
Gordon Sherman, 2023

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Jan,

I trust that you are in good hands and well taken care of. I'd like to thank you for being yourself and providing me a role model at a time when there were few women in Geology (even at Brown). I am now a professor in archaeology and think back almost daily on how you & my other Brown professors shaped my life and career and I try to give that back to my students. I hope that you are as comfortable as possible and make progress every day,

All my best,

Elizabeth "Betsy" Scharf '87

Dear Jan,

Thank you for being one if not the greatest teacher and advisor I have ever had. You have had a profoundly positive impact on my life and I cannot express how grateful I am to have met you five years ago. Thank you again for all your help and support and I hope you are able to recover. Every undergraduate I know always says how much they...

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Jan,

I hope by the time you're reading this you're feeling much better and on a fast path to recovery. Your care and guidance have been invaluable to my path at Brown and in life, as I know is the case for so many students in DEEPS. It was partly your passion for the Earth sciences that drew me to the department my freshman year, and it was certainly your steady support and advice that kept me afloat throughout my academic journey. Thank you for supporting me in everything I did, and helping me understand and appreciate our beautiful planet. Wishing you the very best.

Evan D '24

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Dear Jan, you've touched the lives of so many with your energy and positivity. Sending some back your way in hopes for a speedy recovery. We're all thinking of you.

-Brian and Karen Kortz, 2001

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Dear Jan,

You were always a fierce defender of the students you mentored, and I can't emphasize enough how much that mattered. I wish we could do more for you now, because we would move mountains for you if it would help. Instead, we send our love. I am sending you all my love and energy for a quick recovery. Please know that we are with you Jan!

Rory Macfarlane '15

Jan,

Your influence on my life and career has extended far beyond my experience in geological sciences, teaching me core skills and encouraging me to both join the DEEPS community (and concentration) and to pursue a related but nontraditional career path afterwards. Your support means the world to me and hopefully my support can be some encouragement to you.

Thinking of you,  
Kelsey Peterson '10

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Dear Jan,

I wish you a speedy and thorough recovery and hope you can get back to inspiring the next generation soon! I'm forever grateful for your warm welcome into DEEPS after I was converted from physics, and I think fondly of my time in Geo22 and Structural (perhaps even more so because they were so challenging). My undergrad years were truly improved thanks to your empathetic mentorship that also challenged me to push myself when I lacked the confidence to. It's so inspiring how many generations of students you've helped and mentored, as well as your dedication to improving the department for everyone. It was so nice hanging out with other students at your place and having a backyard picnic, just basking in the summer day and watching the sky turn dim, letting time pass. My time at Brown was special in large part thanks to you Jan, you're a true role model! With love,  
Chris Yen '

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Jan,

I am thinking of you and wishing all the best for a speedy recovery. Your attention to me when I was a Brown made a profound difference in my life. Thank you. I was thinking of you just this morning! You introduced me to George Davis when I first came to Tucson in 1991. We have worked together ever since and this year Saguaro National Park is awarding George a lifetime achievement award for his work on the metamorphic core complex of the Rincon Mountains.

Your compassion and willingness to take the time with students like me to help us improve as scientists and people has made the difference for so many. I know you will continue to teach and inspire - thank you and good luck as you move through this difficult time. We are all thinking of you and sending great vibes in your direction.

Love,

Don Swann 1981

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Dear Jan,

When I traveled to the US alone at the age of 19 for college, you were one of the first people who welcomed me to Brown and guided me through the four year journey. I vividly remember that one evening from my freshman year in 2016, I was sitting alone in the basement conference room tearing up for an assignment, you came by to give me words of encouragement and support. When the whole world shut down for the pandemic in 2020, you showed up at the doorstep of my apartment in Providence with feedback on my senior thesis in an orange envelope and a box of handmade cookies.

Now in 2024, sitting at my desk in graduate school and working on my PhD in oceanography, I am reading all the emails you sent me after graduation asking for my updates. I have been slow in my responses, but you always wrote back in hours.

Today I keep refreshing my inbox and hoping to receive another email from you, Jan. You are a family to me. I wish you all my best for a speedy recovery.

Warmest,

Zihan Chen '20

Hi Jan,

I hope you are solidly on your way to recovery as I write. Your strength and determination will win the day!  
It took me a few days to click through to this card as I was traveling - and look at the lengthy list of well wishers. Just WOW! You are loved, respected and needed in our lives.  
I will write again soon.  
Rob Gailey Sc.B. '85

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Dear Jan,  
I struggle to think of a more impactful figure in my academic career than yourself. You have welcomed countless students into the world of geosciences with open arms, myself included, and fostered their learning within and beyond their time at Brown. As an unsuspecting sophomore joining your intro class, I could never have imagined the journey I was beginning. Sitting here in my PhD office at Michigan, I have so much to thank you for. You have always been a steady support for your students and the department - now, it is our turn to support you. We are all sending endless love and support, and wishing you all the best in your recovery. You are an icon of Brown University, and a shining example of what it means to be a geoscientist. Beyond an exceptional teaching and research career, your support and advising encapsulate the best parts of academia. I strive every day to follow your example, and will always work to support undergraduate students as you have. I am just one of many who you have inspired, but know that I would not be where I am today without you. Take care, and know we are with you.  
Warmest,  
Cameron Tripp '21

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Dear Jan,  
Like so many others, you altered the course of my life for the better. You plucked me from engineering and offered me a job in your lab. You inspired me everyday I was at Brown and for years after. When I became the undergraduate advisor at UCSC, I tried to emulate your enthusiasm, acceptance and deep concern for each and every student. You are so loved and appreciated! I wish you all my best for a speedy recovery.  
With love and appreciation,  
Susan Schwartz Sc.B '81

Dear Jan,

Your love and passion for geology and teaching is part of what inspired me to study geology at Brown. Your kind and helpful presence always uplifted people around the department, and your advice to me was always invaluable. Thank you for everything you've done for me and for everyone else whose lives you have brightened.

All my love,

Parker Simon '24

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Dear Jan,

I can't express how much you have shaped my path in life, since the moment I first sat in your GEO0220 lecture. Your immense kindness and passion for your students has always been clear. You have been a guiding light throughout my adult years and inspire me to be a mentor for others as you have been for so many. I'll miss our frequent chats and dinners and having you pop by the office to give out home baked cookies. I hope you feel the love and inspiration from everyone you have supported with you in these moments. You made my college experience what it was, both academically and socially - by creating a real community. You have inspired me to persist in difficult situations and be a mentor for others. I feel very lucky that my path has led me back to Brown where we have been able to keep in better touch and grow our relationship beyond a mentorship into a friendship. I can only hope that in the future I can help support others the way you have and try to make you proud. We love you, Jan and are so grateful for your presence and years of service to the community.

Love always,

Allie Coonin

Dear Jan,

You are the reason I came to Brown, and the reason I ended up at Carleton, teaching geology. I couldn't believe that you would even take the time to talk to a prospective student with a spotty academic record, much less welcome me into your first-year advising cohort when I finally did arrive at Brown!

It was especially inspiring for me to see a woman in such a male-dominated field, not just succeeding, but going out of your way to pave the way and to recruit and train more of us to follow your lead. You taught me how to be a good geologist, but also how to be a good teacher and mentor.

I kept all my notes from Geo 22, and used them to design my own introductory geology courses, inspired by yours. I tell my students that your Structure class was both the hardest and best class I took at Brown, and that it was 100% worth it!

Thank you so much for all you've done for so long. I am thinking of you and sending strength and hope.

Chloé Fandel '12

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Dear Jan,

It is difficult to overstate the impact that you have had on my life and so many others. Your positive attitude and enthusiasm shined through even those early Zoom lectures and played an invaluable role in fostering my interest in the geosciences. I fondly remember sitting on the steps of MacMillan hall during our first meeting. You took notes as I talked about my hobbies, and you introduced me to passing DEEPS upperclassmen. Your immense kindness, care, and genuine interest in the lives of your students made it easy to feel at home in DEEPS and at Brown. Thank you for your constant support and encouragement. It got me through my time at Brown, and I know it will continue to propel me into the future through many endeavors, geoscience or otherwise.

With love and gratitude,  
Aaron Freeman '24

Hi Jan,

It's Eric Sorge. I hope you know how much your support, guidance, and enthusiasm for science and the environment has meant to me over the years — your impact on my time at Brown and my life, my values, and my interests has been enormous. Between GEOL0220, your taking me in as an advisee when things were difficult for me freshman year, and the following years of emails and conversations, thank you so so much for being the teacher, mentor, application essay editor, and supporter that you've been for me and I know for so many others. And I'd meant to tell you: after you introduced me to Kabob and Curry at the end of the semester, it quickly became my family's favorite spot on Thayer — we ate there after graduation, so thank you for that too! :)

I wanted to let you know that, this summer, while Brazil fell through, I ended up finally getting out to Yosemite, King's Canyon, and Sequoia! I emailed photos to you at the end of August, but you may not have had a chance to see. It was an incredible trip and it was made all the more incredible thanks to the appreciation I gained for the Earth, its history, and its formations in your course. As my friend and I hiked up and between the granite domes, I tried my best to explain to him how they formed — crediting a few Youtube videos and, of course, Geo 22 — he'd never taken such a cool class at Harvard :). Even just this weekend I was telling some friends about the geology of Cliff Walk (as I often do!) — they'd been, but they never appreciated the granitic batholiths, ash depositions, or the carbon-rich rocks left behind from proto-Africa when Pangea split! They intend to go back to explore more than just the mansions and ocean views!

I never expected to take an Earth science course in the first place, but you made quite a case for it during my first visit to Brown at Brown Bearings day back in 2018 — and then again at the Fall 2019 freshman course expo when I told you I was interested in space and exoplanets. “Before we can worry about what's out there in space, we have to understand and protect what's right here on Earth,” you told me (more or less), inspiring a complete shift in my interests and attitude towards science, the environment and our relationship with it, and our duty to protect our own planet. I may not be a geologist by degree nor profession, but I've taken this message with me in all my pursuits — at work, we're pushing forward several sustainability initiatives, I'm getting involved in a climate lobby org, and I'm still helping out with the Brown Alt Protein Project :) And I'm excited to explore more nature and find more rock outcroppings with you in mind whenever I can!

Like my emails to you, I'm struggling to keep this concise as there's so much to say, but I just want to express how much you've meant to me since I started at Brown. I — and my

family — are wishing you the best.  
Thank you for everything,  
Eric Sorge '24

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*Hi Jan,  
You have left a huge footprint in the geological community, and in the hearts of your students. If the length of this document proves anything, it's that your warmth as a person and your passion for geology are simply unforgettable. I hope that you are spending lots of time resting and surrounded by loved ones. You will always continue to be an inspiration of mine as I enter the ocean sciences, working with NOAA.  
Ever so kindly,  
Sam Ouertani '22*

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Dear Jan  
Best wishes and thanks from another of the Cashman women geologists that you inspired!!! My thoughts are with you.  
Kathy Cashman

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Jan,  
You were the first person to email me from Brown in the summer of 2022. It made me feel so excited and even though I did not pursue geology, I pursued environmental science because of your commitment to showing an interest in my academics regarding nature. I was so nervous my first year and going to your office and discussing rocks in Norway, types of kombucha, or what biology classes were cool meant so much to me. You have a place in my heart and in giving me confidence to pursue the academics I want. I really appreciate it. Thank you for everything.  
With love! And admiration!  
Lizzy Duke-Moe 2026

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Dear Jan,

Many thanks for all you've contributed to structural geology, and to *women* in structural geology. You have been an inspiration to all of us! With warm and best wishes,  
Pat Cashman

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Dear Jan,

Thank you for sparking a love for geology in this Environmental Sciences major! You have gifted me with an even greater appreciation and understanding of our planet, and I am truly grateful. Your drive, energy, and love of teaching are really inspiring to me, and I hope to emulate that in my own life.

This past weekend, I was at a waterfall in northeastern PA, and I saw some beautiful shale layers. In between the perfectly horizontal layers, there was a section of layers that were at a 45 degree angle, and it made me think of you, knowing that you would've been instantly able to explain the \_phenomena. Without you, I don't think I would have noticed or even been curious about the formation, and I certainly wouldn't have had the drive or the foundational knowledge to go home later and look up why it would've occurred (I think it was cross-bedding?). I'm so glad I, and so many Brunonians, had the opportunity to learn from you. Wishing you a speedy recovery!

Warmest wishes,

Brianna (Bri) McFadden, 2020

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Dear Jan,

Your enthusiasm and passion for teaching and geology has had an impact on every student who had the chance to take GEO220 or pass through the DEEPS department. Coming from the chemistry department into the geology department was the best choice I made at Brown - the community and joy for learning that you fostered with each individual student was felt throughout the entire department. Even after pivoting from geology to veterinary medicine, I never fail to do a deep dive into the geology of every location I travel to, and to always pay attention to rock formations and the stories they tell when I'm hiking.

Your support after Class of 2020 meant so much to me - your emails inquiring for updates and cheering me on as I navigated finding a career during COVID and then planned to apply to vet school helped me stay excited about the path forward, even with the pandemic made that way forward ambiguous. Every time I had an email from you in my inbox, it really would make my day. You're an incredible educator, scientist, and friend to many. Wishing you a speedy recovery and thinking of you.

Veronica Gordon, 2020

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Dear Jan,

For Labor Day weekend, I went to Shenandoah National Park with a friend. I convinced her to go on a specific hike because at the end of it there was an absolutely stunning display of columnar jointing. It was awesome!! I take every opportunity I can get to share my love of geology with my friends and family with the same enthusiasm you showed me (and many others) since day one.

I think about my experience at Brown often and you continue to be such an integral part of my growth. After graduation, you always made a point to check in, offer support and guidance, and celebrate my successes. The dedication and care that you show to all of your students is profound. I heard several times throughout my tenure at Brown that you are the backbone and heartbeat of the Department. It's true. I can't thank you enough for your guidance, leadership, and thoughtfulness.

I am wishing you a swift recovery so that you may enjoy the beginning of the new school year with new students and so you may spend some more time in your garden before the winter. I'll be in Providence at the end of September and will stop by to see you. I hope you'll be able to hear the Band play from GeoChem :)

Sending Hugs,  
Gaby Usabal '19

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Dear Jan,

I just wanted to say thank you for your relentless welcoming of me into Geology! I can truly say that your guidance during my first year of college helped me find the path in science that I am on today! It meant so much to have a strong, woman role model in science and that encouraged me to join the field. I often think of the moment that I first emailed you that I was thinking about taking the intro geology class and your response was to meet with me and excitedly discuss the options I could pursue. That helped me find a community that has meant so much to me. I will always remember our class field trips both as a student and undergraduate teaching assistant (and we actually took family members on the Geology-version of Cliff Walk during our wedding weekend! Everyone was impressed) Thank you so much for being the inspiring instructor and mentor for me that has made me brave enough to pursue a path in academia!

Thinking of you,

Lena Champlin '16

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Dear Jan,

Talking to you at ADOCH convinced me to study geology, and you had such a profound impact on the way I approached learning throughout my time at Brown. You taught me how to think critically, write concisely, and ask articulate questions. I appreciate all the support you gave me as I decided to attend veterinary school. I will forever be in awe of your authenticity, drive, and capabilities. I hope you know the impact you have had on so many lives.

Elizabeth Clifton '21

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Hi Jan!

I am grateful for your presence in my life and appreciate how honestly you shared your life story at our Rurality in the Ivy event last year. You impacted so many rural students by sharing your experience and I will forever treasure the life lessons you shared that evening. I'll miss seeing you walking down Brook Street most mornings and am so glad our paths crossed at Brown. Sending you lots of love and wishes for peace.

Love, Eliana Hornbuckle ('25, chair of Rural Students @ Brown)

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Dear Jan,

I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to have been one of your CAP students and to have applied to college as a geology major. Your warm welcome and kindness left a lasting impression on me. Even as I shifted my focus to medicine, your support and thoughtfulness never faded from my memory.

Thank you for being such a remarkable source of inspiration. Wishing you all the best and sending positive thoughts your way!

Warm regards,

Jeremy Wortzel '16

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Hi Jan,

Today I submitted my final report for my Ford Fellowship. You were one of my letter writers when I was submitting my application. How quickly time flies. Thank you for your genuine care. Your words were always what I needed to hear even when it wasn't what I wanted to hear. Your check-in emails always arrive at the perfect times. Thank you for always believing in me. You know that I will continue moving forward and you will always be a huge part of my success. It has been an honor to be a part of the Brown Geology community mostly because of the community you helped create. I plan to visit Boston at the end of this month and will come to Providence to meet you!

- Maria D Hernandez Limon 2014

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Dearest Jan,

I am so sad to hear of your ill health, but so glad to read such a loud chorus of voices, from 1972 to 2026, all saying one thing loud and clear: Jan Tullis is the kindest, most caring, most wonderful mentor and teacher we could ever have asked for. I too feel so lucky to have been touched by your generous spirit. I think of you often now as I am starting to teach, too, here at Berkeley (even though my field, Rhetoric, is seemingly about as far from geology as can be!). The essentials of being a great teacher are the same, no matter what you teach: an interest in others, genuine care, and above all a good heart. What a privilege it was to have you as a role model in all of these.

With love,

Aliosha Bielenberg '20

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Dear Jan,

I am immensely grateful for the impact you have had on me and so many other students over the years. From taking my first ever geology class as a GEO220 CAP advisee to having you as my advisor through my time at Brown I've learned so much from you. Your passion for teaching, effective science communication and advising motivates and guides me to this day.

Best Wishes,

Eashan Das '21

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Dear Jan,

Thank you for encouraging me (and so many others) when I wavered, and supporting me when I stumbled. If I can have 1% of the positive impact you have had on other people over my life I will feel incredibly lucky.

With affection,

Patrick Orenstein '19

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Dear Jan,

I just want you to know what an incredible inspiration you have been to me, from the first moment I met you when I was a master's student in 1980. You took the time to sit down and talk with me about my research and showed an enthusiasm that my own committee members lacked. From that moment on, you were one of my most important role models. I always tried to emulate you in my interactions with students over the years. I have such wonderful memories of the time I spent with you when I was on sabbatical at Brown — not just in the lab, but sharing ideas over many Indian dinners together. You were so generous with your time, and so open to potential reinterpretations of old data. Once again, a role model for the ages. Right now, I just want you to know that I am thinking of you, hoping that you are pain free and peaceful. Sending love and a big hug.

Jane Selverstone

Dear Jan,

I thought of you while gardening this summer. My tomato plants have put out many many branches and fruits, but they haven't focused on ripening the fruit; a bit like an over-eager first-year piling too many courses on their plate! It's funny how I'm reminded of you not just through our common interests of rocks and birds, but from squirrels, bowls of grapes, fallen leaves, and the brave warmth of people in my life who choose to inquire and care for others without feeling self-conscious. I will continue to find you in all those places and more. I love and miss you.

Ian Lyle '22

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Dear Jan, Thanks for being the first welcoming person to me at Brown...before my arrival even! I will never forget getting into my dream school and then getting what felt like an invitation from you to join the coolest concentration ever: geologists! Making the decision to join your first year advising group was a transformative experience for me. This semester I am teaching intro for the first time at Wes and so I think of you often! Thank you for being a role model, motivator, reality-checker, and advocate for me through the years. I will be in Providence later this fall to give a talk in the department - Mara invited me! I am very much looking forward to the visit and to be in community with the people and places that shaped my first geology experiences. One more thing, I remember you came to my a capella performances, and that really meant a lot to me! I'm still singing. Thank you Jan, see you again soon! Peace, love and take care, Raquel '15

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Dear Jan, I hope by the time you read this (on page fifty-something of incredible tributes!), that you are back at home enjoying a healthy and peaceful recovery. What an amazing chronicle of positive influence this card is! I'm just one of so many people whose lives you touched and careers you launched, with your welcoming embrace of new students who went on to find a supportive and fertile home in Earth sciences. I have always looked back with awe and respect on how you engaged new students with such warmth and energy. Your influence is felt strongly here in Ann Arbor with several Brown alums among our faculty and grad students.

Wishing you a speedy recovery!

Warmly,

Julie Cole '84/5

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Dear Jan,

Reading through 53 pages of messages which now precede mine on this card, I'm moved by the depth and breadth of your impact on generations of scientists, communicators, educators, and other former students. Our first meeting was a significant turning point in my own trajectory as well. I was just back from a semester off, backpacking on the Appalachian Trail, and looking for a new concentration. I had met with someone in the environmental science department, but figured I'd go see what the geology department was like. When we met, you immediately made me feel like the geo department was where I'd belong, and you told me that geology was the real environmental science anyway. Since that meeting, taking on a geology concentration (and a career in environmental science afterwards) has been one of the best decisions I've ever made.

You have been the core of the geology department and you have made such a positive impact on everyone who takes part. Your classes provide students with rigorous yet creative approaches to understanding complex problems. Your enthusiasm for field trips (both near and far) impress on students not only field skills, but also an appreciation of the beauty of the natural world that we are so fortunate to work with. Your advising and support provides students with the confidence that they're on the right path. Reading the comments from my fellow alumni, the paths your students have taken have been far-reaching and impactful in their own rights. And now those paths lead back, in thought at least, to our shared home in Providence and the influence you have had on all of us.

Wishing you the best, and sending my love, gratitude, and support.  
Mike Demanche, '17.5

Hi Jan – Just looking at this e-card brings back all sorts of positive emotions and memories of my time at Brown, but more so of the impact you had on so many. You made Brown Geosciences unusually special, and your legacy of scholarship, kindness and warmth clearly meant so much to so many. I can only smile, say thanks, and wish you the best.  
Your friend, Peck ('85)

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Dear Jan,  
What a wonderful colleague and friend that you have been for me for over 54 years. We shared a love of teaching and advising on top of our love of geology and environmental science. You were a guide to me in my teaching and provided me with valuable feedback. So good that you had your ear to the undergraduates. I also enjoyed joining forces with you in advising our concentrators. I remember at your retirement party how many former undergrads returned with stories to tell about all the ways that you were helpful to them. And it has been fun to share with you news from the few former undergrads who are now and again in touch with me. Most recently Anna Henderson, whose niece had her Bat Mitzvah at our synagogue. Know that you have moved mountains just by your presence and loyalty to the students and the department. And look at how the number of women have grown in the faculty, graduate students and undergrads. We have lived through an era of positive change. And it has made a difference that will last.  
You have my thoughts, good memories, and prayers.  
A big hug,  
Tom

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Dear Jan,

I am thinking of you and I am wishing you all the comfort in the world. I will never forget the day you welcomed me into your office at the end of my first year at Brown to answer my questions about a concentration called

“Geology-Chemistry.” In the decade that has passed since that meeting, I have not regretted pursuing the geosciences for a single moment. You steered me onto the right path again at the start of my senior year when you summoned all of us to go through your Life After Brown handout – it led me to formally pursue science writing. Now, I am working on what I hope are my last sets of experiments for my PhD in geochemistry. While I think about how to tackle this last year of my PhD, I can't help but think about the immense role you've played in getting me onto this track – the right track for me. I feel so fortunate to have you as an advisor, mentor, and friend, and it is your kindness and tenacity which motivate me to do the best I can when I have the opportunity to mentor and teach others – as well as when I have the opportunity to learn — in particular when I am learning about something I find challenging. I am forever grateful for all of your support since my freshman year spring – from your office hours, to our check-in meetings, to our meals together, to our email exchanges, and to our in-person reunions in the years since I graduated. I am just wholly grateful to have you in my life and miss you immensely.

- With Love, Fatima Husain, '17

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Dear Jan,

You are one of the most formidable, passionate, caring, and generous people I have ever had the pleasure to learn from. I truly believe a large part of how I navigate this world was molded by our time together - for that I am forever grateful. DEEPS made my time at Brown so special and I consistently use the skills I've learned throughout my life even as I veered away from geo! And thank you for making the department a home for so many before and after me. I don't think these notes begin to capture the impact you've had and the community you helped forge. And lastly, thank you for being the one to introduce me to Three Sisters' ginger ice cream. I still think about it time to time!

Sending you all the comfort and care,

Hannah Yi '18

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Dear Jan,

*To see a world in a grain of sand, and heaven in a wild flower, hold  
infinity in the palm of your hand, and eternity in an hour.*

I have carried the verse you printed for me on my hand lens in my backpack for the past 5 years and plan to keep it there. The poem is a little frayed now but that's okay, because the poem is part of my heart. I think about the words often, when I am caught by a birdsong or notice a new flower. These beautiful, wondrous things make me think of you. Jan, I see the world the way I do because of you. You have given me the gifts of perspective, confidence, curiosity, and community. I know that I was raised by a village of teachers and friends, but when I think about the figures who have shaped my life, I think of you first. Thank you for all that you have done to raise me.

Through hours of conversation in your GC033 office, emails (I looked back through them - there are thousands!!!) about GeoDUG and books and everything in between, and finally "teas" when I've been back in Providence, you have supported me with absolute presence and care. Your endlessly patient listening, perceptive questioning, and above all, tenacious conviction in my possibilities gave me the courage to grow. Thank you for giving me the chance to be an undergrad TA for the best class in the universe, Geo 22, and teaching me about teaching. Thank you for being the most caring Meik partner/CAP advisor, creating a little family on campus, and the most fun partner-in-crime leading events for the GeoDUG! Your expansive vision for an inclusive undergrad community gave me and so many students a home and a place where we felt safe and loved; where we had so much FUN and experienced such profound JOY. Our friendships with each other will continue forever. My heart bursts with pride in and love for the Brown geology community that you have nurtured. This community is the biggest blessing.

Thank you for being my teacher and also my dear friend. When I see things in the world that awe, surprise, or confuse me, you are the first person I want to write about them. You have modeled for me how to approach each day with openness to change and also commitment to

what is important to you. I know I can only imagine a fraction of the courage it took for you to chart your path through geoscience, from Carleton to UCLA to Brown, but your bravery inspires me to keep taking steps into the unknown and opening doors for others. I will forever look to you for advice, courage, and love.

Now it's back to school for me! There is so much to learn and explore. I have my hand lens in my backpack and the DEEPS community behind me. I will always have more to learn from you, and you've given me the tools to keep learning no matter where life takes me — and thanks to you, it is taking us geology students beautiful places on our beautiful planet. I love you, Jan — to Cliffwalk and Purgatory Chasm and Beavertail State Park and back, one million times — and I'll always be your TA, Meiklejohn, student, and friend.

Love always,  
Rachel Gold '19

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Dear Jan,  
Words cannot describe the impact you've had on my life and so many others (but I also know that you'd tell me that if I can't write it than I don't understand it!). So much of my college experience was shaped by having a warm, welcoming academic environment within the geology department full of peers and mentors willing to support each other. DEEPS was so much a vibrant community because of your influence. The time and attention you gave to your students and their courses drew a fabulous group of dedicated people to the department and built life-long relationships and nurtured folks curiosity and love for learning. Some of my favorite memories from Brown include posting up in the geo building with friends and using the chalk boards to prepare for exams or taking a break from studying for a geochem exam by playing hot lava monster in the student lounge.

You have always made time for your students, whether it's opening your office door or replying to my annual life update emails with your support and an update of the ongoing in Providence. Thank you for everything you've done, Jan. You are truly a force of nature and I'm so grateful for your presence in my life.

Much love,  
Rachel Gottlieb 2015

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Dear Jan,

I cannot thank you enough for your support and words of encouragement throughout all these years. Your mentorship as a student made a significant impact which guided me through the most difficult years at Brown. Then, after graduating, you continued to provide an honest dialogue that helped get into grad school and make the best career decisions. I am incredibly lucky and grateful to have been and continue to be your student. You are truly the reason I look forward to visiting Brown whenever there is an opportunity, and I hope to see you again soon.

With much love,  
Angel Mojarro '11

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Dear Jan,

I still remember my first advising meeting with you. I was so overwhelmed that week and recall initially backing out of the Fall trip. You sensed how much I would be missing out and encouraged me to go, even lending me your own camping equipment which was so kind of you. That trip became one of my most memorable college experiences, and some of the people I met on it became among my closest lifelong friends.

I would not be where I am today in my studies, work, and life without all the endless advice, support, and encouragement you've given me since then. I truly appreciate the guidance you gave me as I was navigating my interests and taking the leap to pursue grad school. I always think of our conversations in your office when seeing the countless people around me figuring out their path. I think about your dedication to teaching every time I TA here at Michigan, including this week as I teach undergrad evolution – the first class you recommended me to take at Brown – for the fifth time. And I think about your passion for science every time I research or go outside. Just this summer I was at Switzerland and could not stop thinking about your 22 and structure lectures while admiring the alps.

Thank you for everything. I and everyone in my family are so grateful and will never forget it. It's amazing just how many lives you've touched over the years. Thinking of you and sending you best wishes for a speedy recovery! :)

Warmest wishes,  
Avinash (Avi) Subramanian, '18

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To Jan, One of my greatest heroes and friends. I'm thinking of you and wishing the absolute best and quickest recovery.

Mike Williams (UMass)

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Dear Jan,

I had my doubts and fears about coming to this big New England school after growing up in a friendly little town, but meeting you here reaffirmed my faith in this place. Thank you for being the most kind and caring professor I have ever met. I'll always be grateful for how you welcomed me into your office, and sent me away with delicious homemade cookies.

Warm regards,

Akshat Mehta '27

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Dear Jan,

I am grateful for the many things I learned from you while in Geosciences at Brown, and for your guidance and wisdom during those years. I draw upon those things even now in my life and career. You are in my thoughts and I wish you a strong and rapid recovery.

- Matthew Carrano '91

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Dear Jan

It's been 40 years since I wandered into Geochem excited but unsure what to do next. Like for so many others, your guidance through my journey was invaluable. In nearly every encounter I've had with a Brown Geology alum since I left, you inevitably come up as the heart of our fondest memories of Brown Geology. You are a phenomenal educator whom I still seek to emulate in the classroom today. I hope we are able to reflect a small portion of the energy you gave to us back to you towards your recovery.

- Jessica Sunshine

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Dear Jan,

Thank you for your teaching and most of all your kindness and caring all those years ago. I think every student in the department saw you as a guiding light and a source of inspiration and motivation - I know I did. Scrolling through all these letters, it is abundantly clear that the impact you have had on your students over the years is simply astounding. I wish you peace and ease during this time.

With love,

Justin Bandy, '04

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Dearest Jan,

Throughout my time at Brown and in life, you stand out as one of the most remarkable teachers I've ever had. Your passion for geology came through and has inspired so many young geologists (myself included). More than that, your attention and genuine care for students' interests, worries, and "big questions" during a confusing time in life completely changed my perspective on what mentorship and support can look like — you've shown us how supported we can feel. I'm currently in a moment of questioning what I'm doing, where to go next, and what it all means... I've lately found myself looking back a lot on past inflection points and how I've found my way through them. You were a crucial, steady figure through a big one — you are the reason I joined the Geo department, and I feel so lucky I had the distinct joy of learning about earth systems from you. Thank you for shaping my path with such care and interest in who I am. Sending so much love and hoping you find some peace in this challenging time. I'll keep looking for glimpses of you in the rocks all around us — any time I come across some nice cross-bedding, I think of you, and always will. - Maya Glicksman, 2020

Jan, I am so grateful that you are a part of my life. You have not only given me formative advice and support, but you have set things in motion that will continue to shape me for years to come. I know this is not only true for me, but also for so many others that I am connected to because of you. You are the reason I studied geology at Brown and continue to study community disaster impacts now at the University of Michigan. Graduating college into quarantine, your ongoing check in emails telling me about the changing seasons in Providence, describing your gardens, and asking about my family brought (and still bring me) so much joy. You are in my thoughts during this time.

Sending you lots of love and care — Isa Lovelace '20

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Dear Jan,

You are, par none, the strongest and fiercest advocate for students I have ever had the pleasure of meeting, knowing, and learning from, and I cannot properly express my gratitude for your efforts and how they have affected my path for the better.

Thank you for everything - for teaching me so many foundational truths in geology (which I now recite every time I travel), for patiently teaching me the art of scientific writing, and for believing in me when I did not believe in myself. But most of all, thank you for doing this not just for me, but for every student to knock on your door, and in so doing creating a welcoming, supportive, and passionate community of young scholars. Brown Geology is what it is because of you, and so many lives are all the richer for it. You set an example we can only aspire to meet, and I draw on what you taught me in my teaching, mentorship, and research daily. Thank you.

- James Napoli '17

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Dear Jan,

I was so sorry to hear about your hospitalization, and now being in hospice. I hope you are comfortable, and if these notes are any indication you are surrounded by love and appreciation for sure. Like so many others, I am grateful to you for inspiring my shift from physics to geology. You also played a role in my staying in science at all; I encountered some tough sexism in my first year, and seeing you being your brilliant and personable self in science was so helpful. I ended up veering more into biology than geology career-wise, but the geologic perspective and the sense of curiosity and kindness you modeled have continued to play a role in my work. I am sending so much appreciation in your direction. You made a difference.

Jennie Hoffman '89

Dear Jan,

You are the sole reason I found what I wanted to study at Brown. I only ever considered taking geology because you had inspired my sister so much 12 years before I came to school, and the moment I stepped foot into Geo22, I was blown away. In all my years of being a student, I have never taken a class that has matched up to Geo22 and Structural Geo in how creative, experiential, rigorous and yet rewarding they were. Your style of teaching was nothing short of inspiring - it made me want to show up and learn and become a better scientist. But more than anything else, I remember you as an advisor who shaped me through very important decisions in my undergraduate that had implications for my life. You encouraged me to keep up my beloved extracurricular activities (like acting and teaching sex ed) even if it meant I got a couple of Bs on my transcript... and those extra-curriculars have now become the reason why I am pursuing a Masters in Public Health. You helped Brown feel like a home, with your advisee dinners, GeoDUG events, hosting us at your house. As your advisee and as your Meiklejohn, I wanted to be part of your efforts to welcome first year students every year. Jan, you were an institution in yourself - you somehow managed to keep in touch with all of us alums, connect us with each other, forward relevant opportunities to us even long after we had graduated. I really sincerely hope you are able to recover soon, I have been eagerly waiting to visit you in Providence this fall! For the memories, I'm sharing a photo here of me (class of 2019) and my sister Devina (class of 2007) who both attribute our Geo-Bio degrees to having taken Geo22.



Lots and lots of love,  
Karishma Swarup, Class of '19.

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Dear Jan,

I am deeply saddened to hear about your condition, and my thoughts are with you during this challenging time. Your incredible impact and commitment as a teacher and mentor has left a lasting mark on so many of us, and we are all better for having known you. I wish you comfort and peace, and please know that you are in my heart.

With warmest regards,

Yifan '15

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Dearest Jan,

I'm one of the thousands of students who became a geo major because of you. Everything here has been said and I echo it all. Know that I'm sending deep affection and love to you during these days of rest. You'll be with all of us always.

Love, Allegra Hosford '95

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Dear Jan,

Sending warmest thoughts. I have since strayed from geology to chemistry/biochem, but still have geology and my experience at Brown fondly in my heart. (And I still have my rock hammer – passed along to my kids so they can similarly be inspired!)

Cleo Salisbury '97

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Dear Jan

Your career has been a source of inspiration to me and so many others. The critical thinking and fundamental science approaches you applied to your field of specialization was a roadmap for anyone in the field of science.

Your passion for education and empathy for the experiences of students is unparalleled.

And you have been the absolute best faculty colleague.

My most sincere gratitude for the opportunity to have had you as a colleague

Jack Mustard

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Dear Jan,

I have had only a few regrets through the years since Brown, and not keeping in better contact (more constant, perhaps) with you is one of them. And yet the deep, abiding lessons I learned under your mentorship remain a foundation in my life, allowing me to recognize that part of moving forward often leads to changes in scenery of all kinds - including the regularity of email correspondence. Knowing you, I believe you also remember the first day we met, when you guided me to your office to have a chat about changing my concentration to geological sciences. That day, I entered your office despondent, so deeply unhappy, and within such a short time, your encouragement and frank dissection of what needed to happen changed everything. You are the reason I am a geologist, because you encouraged me to follow my dreams even though I was already nearly completed with two years of university and days before the deadline to declare a concentration. In the Acknowledgements to my PhD dissertation (completed at ASU), I wrote, "I would also like to thank the wonderful professors and mentors at Brown University. In particular I thank Jan Tullis, who welcomed me into the Geology Department and provided unceasing academic support and motivation." In 2017, I was incredibly honored you asked me to be the keynote speaker at the Sigma Xi induction ceremony, and I not only treasured that experience and the brief time we were able to spend together that day - the first in nine years since my second Brown graduation, but also the enthusiastic thank you email I received from you a few weeks later, in which you shared some of your thoughts on my speech. I have thought of some of what you wrote in that email often, "Sometimes when we hold celebrations like that [the Sigma Xi induction ceremony], we sort of imply that the academic and research achievements just naturally 'happened' - and we do not acknowledge that in many many cases it was not easy or straightforward, so actually there is a lot more to celebrate. One word I really like for that is 'grit'." Goodness, Jan, have I developed a lot of grit that may be fundamentally attributed to you - both in my scientific career and also more personally. You touched so many, and I count myself lucky to have been one of them. Your hugs were always the best, and I am sending my best hug to you right now.

Ever True and all my love,

Lillian R. Ostrach, Sc.B. '07, Sc.M. '08

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Dear Jan,

I can't overstate how much your mentorship and support positively impacted my time at Brown, and has continued to shape my life since graduating. I came to Brown thinking of concentrating in Engineering, but after taking 220 sophomore year and switching to you as my advisor, I was sold on geology and the DEEPS community as a whole. Your love for teaching and commitment to your students is inspiring, and your passion for Earth Science continues to motivate me in navigating life after graduation. In a few months, I'll be moving to Alaska for an internship with the NPS to study tidewater glaciers and coastal erosion, and I couldn't be more excited! Thank you for helping set me on this path.

Thank you also for always taking an interest in my extracurricular activities, namely ultimate frisbee. Thank you for setting up an informal tutoring opportunity for me during my last semester. Thank you for the countless references over the years, and for always making time to meet and chat about geology and life in general. Most of all, thank you for believing in me and for creating a welcoming and supportive academic community that has shaped so many lives. There are too many things to thank you for. In sum, thank you for everything.

I feel incredibly lucky to be a part of the community of students whose lives have been touched by your generosity, mentorship, and spirit. I'm thinking of you and sending love and appreciation.

Dan Wexler '22.5

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Dear Jan,

Sending you love and strength... Although it has been many years since we've met in person, I think of you often and will always cherish the wide-ranging conversations we had when I was your advisee. You remain my role model as a scientist—passionate about your chosen field but also curious and excited about an eclectic array of other subjects, and a superb communicator with an infectious sense of joy and humor. This lengthy document filled with well-wishes is a testament to the impact you've had on so many of us—academically, professionally, personally. I'll always be grateful you were the one who answered the phone on that day in my freshman year when I, on something of a whim, called to find out about Brown's geology offerings. Your bubbling enthusiasm fairly sparked across the telephone lines! Little did I know how important that conversation would be, changing both the trajectory of my studies at Brown and my career choices thereafter. I feel truly grateful and blessed to have had you as an advisor, teacher, and role model.

With love and appreciation,

Narissa Willever, Class of 1994

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Dear Jan,

The very first time I told someone I was thinking about maybe studying Geochemistry, the very first piece of advice I received was “talk to Jan”. And I did! I was nervous, I didn’t know what you looked like even, and I went to the EEPS picnic my friend had told me about. I found you, and we met. After our meeting, you said you wanted to be my advisor. I had never had a Professor here so interested in my personal academic success before. You helped me find my first ever research opportunity, you told me about terrestrial biogeochem before it even dropped in CAB, you helped me with my EEPS 0220 homework while we ate the cookies you baked together. You have a gift of transferring and radiating your passion for geology, onto anyone you talk to. I study Biology, I have loved biology all my life, ever since I can remember. But around you, and thanks to the EEPS department here at Brown, I study and care about Geology just as much. Anytime I stress about my class schedule, or my academic trajectory, I see myself in your office as you sit down with a pencil saying “alright partner” before we got down to business. I never understood the impact a professor and a friend could have on so many people until I met you. Thank you for being a wonderful advisor, friend, and a mentor.

Rocky Mattos-Canedo, class of ‘26

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Dear Jan,

The luckiest thing that ever happened to me was being assigned you as my adviser, so that from my very first day of college you were there to help and guide me. You welcomed a group of uncertain freshmen into the best and most loving academic community at Brown, a true home to so many that you built. I’ll never forget Geo220, the field trips, the joint homework sessions in that little room in Geochem where you would bring cookies, the conversations in your cozy office, the beautifully structured exam questions, and your everlasting love, guidance, and support in all things even after I left the department. Brown DEEPS represents how I think about warmth and acceptance, and thank you for being the best part of it.

I miss you and love you,

Martin Trouilloud ‘22

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Dear Jan,

You were the very first professor I met at Brown, during a pre-orientation program where you taught us about subduction zones in 029. From day one, you tirelessly supported me through my experience at Brown, from taking me on a make-up field trip for GEOL 220 after I missed the bus, to attending wind symphony concerts, to writing letters of recommendation and even joining my and Emma's graduation dinner after midyear completion. You make everyone who walks through your door feel special, and I can only hope that all these letters can convey how special you are to me, and everyone. Thank you to the core and back!

Be well,

Shaw Miller '23.5

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Jan,

So sorry to hear about your hospitalization. Your guidance and inspiration to concentrate in Geology laid the foundation for my career trajectory and shaped the way I think about professional and personal problems. Additionally, the connection to the Department profoundly impacted my life as Meredith Townsend who was a post doc in the Dept and I married and now have two kids together. Thinking of you and sending wishes for health and a speedy recovery.

Best,

Danny Musher, 2010 and Meredith Townsend (post doc with Chris Huber 2017-2019)

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Dear Jan,

I don't know if you remember me since I graduated almost fifty years ago ('71 - '75), but I remember you well. Your intelligence, your inquisitiveness, and your total commitment to helping your students in any way that you could has always inspired me, and I consider you to be my friend. Over the years, you have been an outstanding constant at Brown.

I hope your recovery is swift and complete, and that these notes show you in some small way just how much you have meant to so many of us who have been so fortunate to know you!

May God bless and keep you.

John B. Copenhaver

1975 Sc.B. Planetary Geology

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Dear Jan,

At this point, it must sound like a broken record, but you, more than anyone, have had the most profoundly positive impact on my life, and most of it was outside of the classroom. Before I even got to Brown, you emailed me when I didn't apply to the CAPS program, and swiftly convinced me to join, giving me my first community to be a part of at college.

Your constant support made it much easier for me to get through some very difficult times from my Smithsonian REU being canceled due to COVID to my mother's passing the fall after graduation. Our socially-distanced meetings outside Geochem during the summer of 2020 made my stay infinitely more enjoyable. Those were the only social interactions I had for months, and telling you about my family, learning about your sisters, and most importantly, exchanging baked goods and recipes, made my stay far less lonely and gave me something to look forward to.

Your support and belief in me has helped keep me going and retain the resolve to never give up on pursuing paleobiology. If I ever doubt myself, I hear an exasperated, incredulous "Oh partner" to keep me on track.

I will be eternally grateful for all the care, guidance, and homemade cookies you have given me. You have drastically changed my life for the better, and I cannot imagine where I'd be if I never met you. You are so important to me. I miss and love you, Jan.

Payton Netherland, 2022

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Dear Jan,

It's remarkable reading through this document of 50+ years of lives shaped by your dedication and kindness. You created a model of mentorship and community that I aspire to carry forward in my life. Every course you taught was a tour de force, but knowing you has been an equally impactful education; it astonishes me sometimes to think back to the support I had as I navigated cancer during undergrad, shifting priorities and career goals, and how much you helped me continue to find opportunities I was passionate to pursue.

Like some of your other well-wishers, my path has wandered from geology over the years — but really it hasn't, because as I learned from you, geology underpins everything. (In my case, very literally, since I'm now a botanist!)

Shane and I are sending you all our love from North Carolina,  
Maria Dunlavey '12 (and Shane Schoepfer '09)

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Dear Jan,

Reading through this document, it is immensely clear how many lives you have touched. I have always been in awe of your dedication to the Brown geology department, and it is impossible to imagine DEEPS without you. While I wasn't a geology concentrator, I felt it was a second home at Brown, and I know it would not have been such a robust community without your influence. As I write this, I am in China, and the geology here is incredible. I have you in part to thank for introducing me to this subject and helping me throughout 220.

With love and gratitude,

Lara '24.5

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Dear Jan,

I met you in 1977 when I was a freshman, and it was your enthusiasm that convinced me to get my degree in geology. You urged that I get the BS instead of the BA, and you were right to do so. From there I went to law school, and became an energy lawyer. Then I morphed from oil & gas law to wind and solar power law. I consider that my professional success is due entirely to your intervention, and have been forever grateful for how you shaped my life. I was so proud to host your retirement party at the Faculty Club, and will always remember that evening. I brought you a fossil oyster shell from our ranch here in Texas, I had cleaned it up with muriatic acid to make it shiny, and I told you that you created in me professionally a pearl where there had before only been an oyster. We have stayed in touch ever since, and I was so glad to get to take you out for supper last year.

Thank you so much, for everything you did for me, and for the many other students you brought under your wing.

With much gratitude, eternal remembrance, and a long-abiding love,

William Osborn '81

Austin, Texas

[www.texasenergylaw.com](http://www.texasenergylaw.com)

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Dear Jan,

The fact that I had to scroll through 68 pages of loving messages to write this is a testament to how many lives you have positively impacted. I am so grateful to have had you as my Freshman advisor. You helped me navigate my confusion over whether I should continue in Geology as an undergrad, and I am so happy that I did! You were also a wonderful female role model at a time when there still were few female professors in the department. I am so glad we stayed in touch over the years as I transitioned from environmental geochemistry to planetary science. I feel particularly grateful that Angel Mojarro and I were able to have lunch with you last Spring (I am still so sorry we were late because we were waiting for you outside and didn't realize you had gone in already!) I loved catching up and hearing about how the department has changed since I had been there, and I was so inspired and impressed by how involved you still were in your day-to-day interactions with students.

You have been a mentor and friend to so many of us, and I miss you. Words seem inadequate right now, but know you are loved by many, and have made such a difference in so many lives.

With love,  
Jen Stern, Class of '98

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Dear Jan,  
It has been over a decade since I took your geo 22 class, but I still think of you often as one of my favorite professors at Brown. As a professor now myself, I continue to be inspired by how much joy you brought to your subject and your students. Wishing you all the best – and yes, I did finally complete my homework and make it to the Grand Canyon (it's as amazing as you said!)  
Kate Alexander, class of '12

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Jan, I am so sorry to hear of your hospitalization. I have been thinking of you often and sending healing vibes your way. Thank you for all that you did for me and for others at Brown. Your passion for teaching led me into informal science education, and I cannot imagine my life any differently.  
-Carla '07, ScM '08

Dear Jan,

I'm saddened to hear about your hospitalization, and moreover, that it's proving to be a truly serious situation for you. There is little I can say that will be new from what others here have said, but I can add just one more voice in affirming the immeasurable impact you've had on so many individuals. While no doubt that has shaped me as a scientist, your impact and encouragement has extended beyond the realms of geology. Your steadfast support and interest in my artistic endeavors gently reaffirmed the value of diverse pursuits. It's a lesson I carry forward with me to this day. Above all, I am grateful for your sincerity and kindness all these years. And for that I am eternally grateful.

With love,

Sargon '07, Sc.M '08

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Dear Jan,

Sending you love and gratitude from Buffalo! I'm overcome with emotion reading some of the messages in this card. I am so grateful to have had you as a mentor, grateful to be one small part of the incredible impact you had on so many lives. Thank you for being a support and an inspiration! Wishing you comfort and even some small moments of joy.

Elizabeth Thomas, PhD '14

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Dear Jan,

Although I'm too late writing this for you to see this message I hope you know how remarkable your guidance and impact was on me as a student and person. You are missed.

With love, Whit, BA '24

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Jan,

I cannot overstate (like everyone here) how much your support, enthusiasm, and care for all of the Geology department meant to me as an undergraduate student. Your love of the content and joy in transferring that love to students was infectious. I am grateful for the time I got to spend with you as a student, an advisee, and a friend.

Josh Bearman, BSc, '00

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Jan,

As ever, I am sending you my writing later than planned (I never did get over that bad habit, I am sorry to report). I was hoping to let you know under better circumstances, but I am currently in the final semester of my PhD program, and I know I would not have made it to this place without your staunch support through my years at Brown, and afterwards. I often think back to our meetings during my sophomore and junior years when I was dealing with health issues and you helped me feel empowered to advocate for myself when it came to getting academic accommodations through talking with other professors, CAPS, and even a dean (and, I believe, you even took it upon yourself to yell at someone at CAPS for me— thank you, again, for that). To me, you have always been the golden standard of what an academic advisor should be towards their students, and I have tried my best to emulate your style in my positions as a TA and mentor to undergraduate students. I am extremely lucky and grateful to have learned from the best. I hope that I am doing you justice, and will continue to endeavor to do so in the future.

Wishing you the best and— at the risk of being too mushy— sending all my love.

Oliver McLellan (ScB '16)

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Dear Jan,

I still remember meeting you when I first started school in 2019. During the pandemic in 2020, I was taking a walk around campus one day and happened to run into you, and we had a chat. In 2022, when I was about to graduate with my master's and feeling completely lost about the future, it was you who encouraged me and offered guidance. You've helped so many people, and I'm sure you will continue to be a happy soul in the next life. I'm praying for you. May you rest in peace and have a peaceful journey onward.

Xiaoyu Fan 22'

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Dear Jan,

It was hard to find the right words to express all the gratitude I feel for your kindness and constant support since our arrival to DEEPS, and the feeling of loss at not seeing you in the department... Your genuine interest and enthusiasm helped me shape my work tremendously. I will miss speaking to you, being able to ask for your advice, and seeing you take care of the flowers in the department and the neighborhood.

Thank you for everything.

Olga

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Jan was the most important mentor I've ever had. Starting when I first stepped foot into her office as a freshman, she guided me through the fundamentals of geosciences, college academics, as well as broader aspects of life, how to be a good scientist and person, and importantly, how to harness my love of our planet for good. I would not be where I am if it was not for her, and I will continue on my academic and life journey on a path whose origins were forged by her guidance. I will miss her, and always remember all that she taught me.

Gabriel Traietti, Sc.B Geochemistry '25

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**A note to everyone reading this now that we've learned the sad news today:**

I love you all. I love that we are connected through the incredible force of nature that is/was Jan Tullis. And I send you hugs as you now grapple with the cavernous void that Jan leaves behind.

Reading all of these messages has been a balm for my heart. I still find it hard to believe that one human could contain as much love and provide as much support as she did for all of us. She made you feel like you were the most important student in the world to her, and you also knew that it was absolutely true for every single one of the thousands of people whose lives she shaped.

I'm rambling through tears, but just wanting to send these hugs out into the ether. We are forever better people because of Jan, and we now have the responsibility to carry that light out into the rest of the world.

-Shauna Edson, Sc.B '05

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Jan,

I met you once, extremely briefly, at my wedding, but I feel like I've known you for years through Shauna's many, many stories and random "I love Jan!"s. I don't know if you read scifi, but Terry Pratchett talked about a principle from a number of cultures that is someone lives on while their name is still spoken. I'm sad that I can't meet you in person, but I am looking forward to getting to know you more and more through the imprints you've left on the hearts of those who love you. GNU Jan.

Thank you for all you did for my wife,  
Laura (Shauna's wife)

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We are both so grateful for the amazing impact of Jan Tullis on both of our lives. One of us as an Environmental Science concentrator and one of us a Geological Sciences major. Jan was always an inspiration and huge support. She introduced us to geology, teaching one of our first classes and setting an example as an amazing female scientist. Jan was always so generous with her time and advice, even writing years after graduating to answer a question about a Cambrian sandstone. We miss Jan and hope to pass forward her compassion, curiosity, and support.

-Bob and Ailene (Kane) Ettinger, 2001

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I have had the privilege of sharing a corner of the GeoChem basement corridor with Jan the last 3 years. From day one she was a welcoming colleague and enthusiastic supporter. I'll never forget the first time I received handwritten comments from her on a draft syllabus for a new class! She truly had an extraordinary impact on so many students and the field of geoscience. I'm honored to have been her colleague and am inspired by her legacy. Warmly,  
Dan Ibarra (DEEPS Assistant Prof.)

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Jan,

I always wondered what I did to deserve such an amazing advisor from my first year of college. You made me a better writer, person, and leader both

in and out of the classroom, and were the most selfless advisor, professor, and woman I have ever known. Every time I see the Grand Canyon, or some fluvial plains at sunrise, I will think of you. While it breaks my heart that you will not see us graduate, I will make you proud in my next steps and always remember what you taught me.

Anjali Shah, B.A. Geology-Biology '25

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It is with such a sad heart to hear of the passing of my favorite teacher. There is no other mentor that has had a more profound impact on my life. Taking Geo22 back in 1991 changed my trajectory at Brown. I ended up working in Jan's lab the next summer. I had found my academic home. I couldn't count how many times we talked in her office, maybe a hundred, and never by appointment. I would just walk by her office, and the door would be open. Without fail, she had time for me. I never could figure out how. With teaching, writing, mentoring, and running a lab, how did she do it all? All I can say is that I will always cherish that time we had and the wisdom she imparted. Rest in peace.

-Teddy Keizer, Class of 1994

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I am so sad to hear of Jan's passing and can't overstate how important she was in shaping my time in DEEPS. I first met Jan when, as an undeclared sophomore, I inadvertently registered for Sed Strat. Noticing this, Jan reached out before the semester started to tell me that I should switch to her class, Geo 220—and to convince me to become a Geo concentrator. She encouraged me to go on the Spring Break Field Trip, even though I barely knew anyone in the department. She encouraged me to seek out research opportunities, even though I couldn't imagine myself as a scientist. She was a force of nature. Jan, thank you for everything, and rest in peace.

Grace Berg, Class of 2021

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Dear Jan,

Thank you for everything. I am so lucky to have been one of the many whom you guided into the sciences. I think about you and your influence so often. There are so many strong impressions:

The beautiful quotes you wrote on the board for each class.  
The rapidly constructed roadmap for courses that would catch me up to speed and allow me to become a geology major despite my late start.  
All the red writing and capital "NO!"s written on our essays.  
You speed walking ahead of us undergrads on field trips, on to the next geological feature that would help us see the world with new eyes.  
Personal gatherings on your patio, and hearing about the squirrel coming after your bird seed.  
Your vigilante gardening of neglected land by the road.

You were vibrant, tenacious, compassionate, and quick as a whip.

I think of the sheer force of the shifting earth, and I think of Jan Tullis--and all of the edits she would make to this letter.

With love,  
Elizabeth MacDougal, Class of 2016.5

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As a parent, I applaud all of Jan's support over the years into my daughter's successful career. Thank you, Jan!  
-Jan Denis, Parent '10

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Dear Jan,  
What can I add that hasn't been said before? You were a force and an exemplar. I was an unmoored sophomore wandering through McMillan Hall when your open door somehow ended up with me being a GeoBio concentrator. Your support through the years and through a couple of career changes will never be forgotten.  
Your legacy is unmatched.  
Linda Fan '98

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Oh, Jan,

What a life you led and what impact you had! I'm in tears after reading the many, many pages of love notes to you from students you supported over five decades. I feel so lucky to have known you and to be part of this multigenerational tribe of students who benefitted from your encouragement. I will remember you so fondly, with your warm "partner!" greetings and open door and smile and smarts. You were one heck of a role model and one of a kind.

Sarah Kirn, '94.5

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Jan,

You renewed my love of learning and fostered a fascination with the science of the natural world – values I have kept with me even across the passage of years and a career that has drifted far away from Geology. I can't imagine what my Brown experience would have been if I hadn't walked into the introductory Geology class, on a lark, to find you speaking about Earth history with such expertise and enthusiasm. It's been such an inspiration to read the other comments here; what an immense legacy you had!

Mark Fraioli '95

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There are a few people that you meet in the course of your life who meaningfully and substantially change its trajectory. Jan was one of these few for me. Simply put, Jan was a fierce advocate for students like me. Someone who both opened our eyes to a world of possibilities and held us to account to learn with rigor, thought, and substance. My life would not have taken its same path without her in it. I mourn her passing, and her loss for the generations(!) of Brown students and community members touched by her.

PS: I am kicking myself for not getting a note out earlier upon receiving Meredith's first note while Jan was still with us. This was an example that we should not wait to tell the people that matter in our lives how much they matter.

David Kowweek '09

Jan,

I find myself on page 70 of countless notes from just a fraction of the lives you touched. You gave so much to me and to so many people. I remember being very intimidated by you in Geo22, but when I came to speak to you about my concentration I realized that you oozed tough love. I am eternally grateful that you took me in as an advisee, and you shepherded me to complete my concentration. I am also grateful for our emails we wrote over the years, and I'll always have them to return to your stern but nurturing voice. When I last saw you, I was walking through the campus during my 10- year reunion in May 2023; you were sitting on the steps of GeoChem deep in discussion with people, impassioned as always. Remembering you always, with love and admiration.

Hannah Rose Schonwald '13

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Jan was such an incredible force for good in the geosciences community, and a major reason why Brown undergrads are highly sought after in top-tier graduate schools. My heart is heavy for Terry and her family, for fellow alumni for which Jan *was* family, and also for the upcoming generations of DEEPS undergraduates who won't get to benefit from Jan's unrivaled compassion and dedication to student success and well being. It says everything about Jan that her passing leads one to think of the loss for people she had never met.

I spent the last few days trying to formulate a note to share with Jan, hoping that she was hospitalized over something minor, which would give me more time to try and (succinctly) describe her impact. The words didn't fail me, but the succinctness did. So, here's a tribute to Jan in longer form.

I've been incredibly lucky to have stayed in touch with Jan after graduating and as I somehow ended up in academia (to my surprise, but never to Jan, who had a preternatural ability to see the future). Looking back over my emails with Jan tells the story of our relationship, one she shared with so many students over the years:

- Twenty-five email chains in the last two weeks of senior year spring semester, covering everything from printing geologic cross sections, a Geo ping pong tournament, to an ice cream-enabled Sunday discussion of senior research projects;

- A one year gap, followed by much needed critical feedback on PhD applications, provided on tight timelines (her record response was 42 minutes after my initial email, during the semester no less!);
- A smattering of “great to see you!” emails, all started by Jan, all arising from her legendary reunion Saturday office hours. Knocking on her ground floor window to be let in the GeoChem door will be an indelible memory for many Geo grads;
- The wonderful celebration of Jan’s career in May, 2013 (“don’t call it a retirement, partner!”);
- A series of exchanges from my various .edu email addresses, seeking increasingly complex advice on postdoctoral research, faculty positions, and building lab groups.

My last interaction with Jan was facilitated by her, of course: On the second day of my assistant professorship, an email subject line "Hello neighbor! :)" arrived in my new inbox from none other. It was a wonderfully touching action from her, with the usual sense of magic behind it (how did she know the start date??). The email chain led to a visit to Brown later that year. Jan's office had moved, and she no longer had the window to knock on, but the setup was the same - even down to the chair, right next to the door, where I had first sat half a lifetime ago as an unsure GEO22 student. For the next hour, we talked about how to center undergraduates in the research process. Jan had the same fire as always; she took my half-baked plans for undergraduate interns into a full-fledged summer internship program. In that hour, she created a playbook I use to this day, and will continue to use for years to come.

I think we all know that there's no replacing Jan. It's impossible. People with that depth of scientific and emotional intelligence come around maybe once a generation, likely less. But Jan was a top-flight educator, and has been training us all for years in the art and science of inspiring students in the Earth Sciences. Everyone is partner, our doors are always open, and our time for students is never limited to regular business hours. Her approaches to teaching, relating, and knowing are now divided up and put into practice by the hundreds of alumni who were so fortunate to call Jan their professor, and their friend.

I just wish I could have had one more chance to sit in her office chair.

Jesse Farmer '09

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Jan,

What an incredible loss the world has sustained from your passing. I sincerely thank you so much for everything you contributed to DEEPS and just to life in general. You welcomed me into the geo department with open arms and a “Welcome, partner!” and were truly pivotal to my time at Brown. You never failed to cheer me up or offer words of encouragement whenever I felt like I didn’t belong at Brown or in the sciences, or when I didn’t know how to balance school with life— the list goes on, and you were always there.

The lessons you taught both in and out of the classroom will stay with me for a lifetime and I know for a fact that I’m not the only one who feels this way—just look at everything everyone else on this card has written! You touched the lives of countless students at Brown with your vibrancy, vigorous and infectious energy, passion for the Earth and by just simply being **present** when people needed it most. Whether it was to talk about academics, career, or just how to navigate life’s ups and downs in general, your doors were always open and you were always there to listen, which is not something most people can say about their professors/advisors.

I will never forget the beautiful, somehow-always-applicable-to-life quotes you’d write on the board or all the sage wisdom you somehow managed to intertwine with our academic lessons. You were an absolute force to be reckoned with and remain a complete legacy, this letter barely holds a candle to anything and everything you have done for us. It is an absolute privilege and pleasure to have gotten to be one of your students and advisees. Thank you so much for everything, rest in peace. <3

Rainey Zimmermann ‘19

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Even though I am not a geologist and came relatively recently to Brown (2012), I have regularly met Jan somewhere on campus over the years. I was sad to read the news about Jan’s passing - but good to read the moving obituary on the DEEPS website and most of all the many tributes on this page.

I was reminded of some stories that Jen told me about Rhode Island Hall, where the Joukowsky Institute is now housed and that was occupied by Geology a long time ago, well before the building was renovated and archaeologists moved in. At that time

(2009), several archaeologists did a project about the history of the building and as part of that recorded Jen's memories about working and teaching in Rhode Island Hall. I think they make a fitting addition to these memories left on this page:

[https://brown.edu/Departments/Joukowsky\\_Institute/about/rihall/6875.html](https://brown.edu/Departments/Joukowsky_Institute/about/rihall/6875.html)

Peter van Dommelen, Joukowsky Family Professor of Archaeology and the Ancient World

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Jan's dedication to her students and to geoscience had a profound and lasting impact on my life. I decided to be a Geoscience concentrator in November 1979, and Jan guided me all the way through Brown. Now, in July 2025, I stand months away from retiring after a fulfilling career as a Geoscientist. Everything I have done in my career I owe to her. Thank you Jan. Peter Wang '83 Sc.B. Geo-Physics/Math