

Ms. Laura needed our kids as much as they kids needed her. She taught some of them every school year since they were in kindergarten and for a lot of our seniors, this year it's going to be hard for them. She loved her "Tribalz" and all her students. My mind is taken back to the last day that I saw her it was the Thursday before she went to the hospital & left this world. Over the course of possibly two weeks my mom became really lonely and although she had my older brother and his girlfriend and their two kids there with her, it wasn't that kind of lonely. She had company at her home; it was deeper. When my mom came to Pojoaque she came divorced and with my youngest brother, her baby. She began working at Pojoaque, well now my brothers been in Call 18 years so she's been teaching about that long in Pojoaque. I imagine my mother as a go-getter. She was a structured, organized, headstrong individual that brought so much life to PVS, but mostly she brought back Tribal pride! She called them her "Tribalz" and her advocacy for them wasn't about favoritism or individual tribal pride, it was about all Tribes and all cultures. For those 17+ years she had children in her life everyday, even some summers she had kids for summer school; and she helped the language programs in the Pueblo's or wherever they needed her. MS Laura loved to teach and be around kids, they became her source of strength and truth. They made her young and happy; all in all they made my mom who she was and that's why she protected them, advocated for them, and she pushed them to want better for themselves. These students she was building up were going to be the future leaders of our Tribes. She dedicated her life to our future by way of our students. So when I close my eyes, I would think, this is what my mother would say:

"My dear Tribalz, some of you I have known since you were in kindergarten I know your brothers and sisters, I know your parents, I know your sayas and your taytays, and for some of you I even your great grandparents. Now I may have rode your butts more than others, but it's because I care about you and your Pueblos. I want you kids to try your best, don't settle for less, keep your head up and most importantly, remember where you come. Learn your language, take what I have shown you and move it forward. Don't look back. There's nothing for you back there. I've taught you the basics of what you need to know, now it's time to take a step up and do more, say more, and ask for more! I am proud of all of you & I will always be proud of all of you. Be proud of who you are and where you come from, stand tall my Tribal Children! Don't ever let anybody tell you that you can't do it, or you're crazy for wanting to go there, or do this, or do that. That's what life is about; taking risks! You should always live your best life and be remembered in the next life. Now don't be sad Anymore; you cry, that's OK then you wash your face and keep moving forward. Don't let my leaving drag you down. Don't let my leaving hurt your heart so bad that you stop wanting to do what's best for you or your family. I'm still watching over you, I'm still going to guide you and I know you can do it. So with that, try your best, stay strong in your prayers and your beliefs, keep our traditions alive, take care of one another, and remember to always be thankful for everything you are blessed with."

She might have said that.

Tree Kaydaso (Ms. Laura's daughter)