



Ryan Donovan

January 3, 2023

On Sunday, January 1, 2023, the Lord welcomed Ryan Matthew Donovan, age 40, of Fort Collins, Colorado, into his heavenly home. He was born on August 26, 1982, in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, to Terry and Nancy (Vian) Donovan. A lifelong follower of Jesus, he was baptized as an infant and later confirmed in the Christian faith. He attended Hudson High School, received his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin – LaCrosse, and his master’s degree from Colorado State University.

Ryan was married to Rachel Kunz on October 1, 2005, in Holmen, Wisconsin. They were blessed with one son, Kale, on June 18, 2009, and one daughter, Clover, on November 27, 2010. For the past fifteen years, he has taught at Colorado State University, where he received numerous awards for his teaching, including Outstanding Teacher and Outstanding Advisor Awards, Excellence in Education Award, and, as voted by his students, Favorite Teacher for five consecutive years. An incredibly gifted athlete, Ryan was an “elite class” marathoner and won the Colorado Marathon four times. He served on the Board of Directors of The Antioch Foundation for the past ten years, the past two, as its executive director. Ryan enjoyed running, hiking, family vacationing, carpentry, and woodworking, as well as weekly date nights with Clover. He always wanted to learn more and acquire new skills.

Ryan was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, his maternal

grandfather, and his infant son, Kale. He is survived by his wife, Rachel (Kunz) Donovan, their daughter, Clover, his mother, Nancy Donovan, of Hudson, Wisconsin, his father, Terry Donovan, of LaCrosse, his maternal grandmother, Betty Graack, of Waunakee, Wisconsin, mother-in-law and father-in-law, Vicky and Dan Kunz, of Holmen, Wisconsin, sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Jessie and Sam Renneburg and their son, Ezra, of Minneapolis, sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Emily and Carl Rick, and their children, Calvin, Finn, and Mabel of LaCrosse, sister-in-law, Hannah Kunz and her friend Scott Savala, of Fort Collins, and numerous other aunts, uncles, and cousins.

A memorial service will be held at 1:00 PM, on Saturday, January 14, 2023, at St. Peter Lutheran Church, 4610 Hogan Dr., Fort Collins, Pastor Joel Spaude officiating. Visitation will be held Saturday from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM at the church. (Live streaming will be available on the church website.) Ryan was a kind, compassionate, and amazing person who will be sorely missed, but we know we will see him again. Revelation 7:17 “For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd. He will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Gifts and memorials may be given to: St. Peter Lutheran Church, Fort Collins, or the Ryan Donovan Memorial at Colorado State University’s Department of Health and Exercise Science (link provided below).
<http://www.advancing.colostate.edu/RyanDonovan>

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 14. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (MT)

St. Peter Lutheran Church
4610 Hogan Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Memorial Service

JAN 14. 1:00 PM (MT)

St. Peter Lutheran Church
4610 Hogan Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Tribute Wall



“ *I graduated from CSU in 2022, and never dreamt of running marathons. Ryan Donovan was one of my favorite professors at CSU and continues to be an inspiration for me in my journey as a runner and in my work in Higher Ed. I will be praying for him and his family.*



Sean Moran - September 09, 2025 at 01:59 PM



“ *My favorite professor, my condolences to the family*

John Svoboda-James - November 04, 2024 at 11:48 AM



“ *My deep condolences to Ryan's family. Not sure why it took so long for me to see this but I have a 40 yo son and this grieves me deeply. At this late date I pray to God to bless his family with many joyful years.*

Lars Faus - July 25, 2023 at 08:28 PM

UH

“ Please accept my sincere condolences for your loss. May his soul rest in peace. I met Ryan 2 years ago thru the Antioch Foundation that has been supporting our outreach cleft programs for over a decade. We connected very quickly and had many humanitarian visions in common. I am very sorry for losing a friend. On behalf of Global Smile Foundation and the thousands of patients & their respective families whom Ryan and Antioch Foundation have helped us support, we are forever grateful.



Usama S Hamdan - February 27, 2023 at 12:54 PM

SA

“ May God bless and keep the family of Ryan during this time, and may He comfort them with the promise of the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting.

Sam - January 20, 2023 at 09:21 AM



“ Ryan Donovan was my all time favorite teacher I had in all of my schooling years. He was such a good teacher and cared so much for each student. His ability to help us learn in a fun and educational way was so unique. His obvious passion for what he taught was amazing. I enjoyed every class I had with him. I appreciated his honest and upfront truths about his life and his faith. He was one of a kind. Thank you Ryan for all you taught me and the passion for health and exercise science you instilled. Prayers for your family. - Elizabeth Hornung Free

Elizabeth Hornung-Free - January 14, 2023 at 11:07 PM



“ Ryan is one of the biggest reasons I am where I am today- I truly do not believe I would be where I am without him. I served as a wellness club officer from 2018-2019 and Ryan was a pillar of support for me starting then. The information I learned in his classes has taken me very far, to the point that some topics we discussed were the center of my masters capstone in the OT program here at csu (topic: exercise for children with ADHD.) Ryan wrote a letter of recommendation for me when I was applying for OT school, and I know that his support is a large reason for my admission to the program. Ryan will always be an integral part of me reaching my goals and achieving my dreams. Thank you for all that you did, and now, rest easy.

Lexi Brozovich - January 14, 2023 at 04:26 PM

JL

“ I met Ryan when i timed the 2009 CSU Homecoming Race 5K. He was helping organize and stage the race. I immediately recognized him as someone who was very capable and who i could count on if any timing issues came up. From 2009 - 2022 Ryan helped put on the race with me timing it. As the years went on Ryan became more and more instrumental to the race, especially when it came to creating a new race course due to construction or other course altering issues. So Ryan would map out a course and then measure it with his measuring wheel and presto CSU Health and Exercise Science would have a new 5K course. Ryan was very good about keeping me informed about any changes and of course on race morning he would already be there before me at 5:00 a.m.

Out of this relationship grew another one through running. I was coaching some of my runners at the CSU track when Ryan was on the track at the same time keeping up with or passing my top runners. After the workout i asked him if he had a coach and if not would he like me to coach him. That began a relationship that lasted until 2012 when he went on his own.

One time he ran the 2010 Cinco Cinco 5K which i was chip timing for the first time. I told the lead cyclist that Ryan was probably going to be hard to keep up with. Well sure enough Ryan passed the lead cyclist and promptly went straight when he should have turned left. Ryan nonplussed ran down to the next block and turned left and realizing what he had done turned left at the next block and got back on the course still in the lead.

Meanwhile, i was sweating bullets hoping that my new timing system would work. So here came Ryan running around the CSU oval with the lead cyclist barely keeping up with him. When he crossed the finish line mats they beeped and i knew the system worked!

The other story i have about Ryan is about the time i helped him train for the 2010 Green Bay Marathon. Ryan was a coaches dream athlete because he would do each workout i prescribed exactly as i laid it out. We decided that based on his workouts that he could run a 2:28 marathon which is 5:40/mile pace. Tracking Ryan as he ran Green Bay i kept seeing every mile go by at or near 5:40 pace. So

*of course Ryan finished with a time of 2:28:57!
I have never met a better person than Ryan. He had in infectious smile and a grace about him that i will never forget. - John Lonsdale*

John Lonsdale - January 13, 2023 at 12:47 AM

MY

“ *Professor Ryan was the one who originally got me interested in Health and Exercise Science at CSU. From there, he always guided me and was willing to help at anytime. He helped me with building connections within the major, spreading positivity, and helping me with my own confidence in the field. Even in the small time I knew Ryan, he impacted my life immensely. I will truly miss him and I send my prayers to his family.*

Myah - January 12, 2023 at 08:21 PM

ML

“ *I met Ryan when I started the Master's program in Health and Exercise Science at CSU. Ryan and I would frequently encounter each other on the race course. One time, a friend and I were working out on the CSU track and Ryan comes flying past us, making it look easy. Humble, hardworking, and always, always with a smile on his face, he left an indelible impression on those around him and will be greatly missed for his passion & energy. Deepest condolences to his family - please reach out if we can help in any way. - Mark Lonac*

Mark Lonac - January 10, 2023 at 11:50 PM

MA

“ *Ryan was always kind, thoughtful, positive, and very intelligent. He loved his family and was just a good human being. We are very sorry for his early passing, and our thoughts and prayers are with the entire family. Ancius family.*

mike ancius - January 10, 2023 at 07:46 PM

DT

“ I want to send my sympathy and love to Ryan and his family. I didn't know Ryan well, met him several times at family gatherings. His wife Rachel and daughter Clover and the whole Kunz family are close and dear friends of mine. We met through Church and school when our youngest daughters became best friends in preschool. Their friendship still remains very strong. Hannah is like another daughter to me. The gift this family has to share is their strong love of God and their entire family. I know they will help one another deal with this sad loss. I also know they will be with Ryan again one day in heaven. Rachel and Clover, hang on to the love Ryan has given you and will continue to give you. That love will never leave you, and as you know God is watching over you, He will always be with you holding your hearts and hands every day. His love will guide you forever. Prayers and Gods blessing to you always, love you,
Diane and Randy Thorsen

Diane. Thorsen - January 10, 2023 at 07:31 PM