



Erika Christine Hovland-Bahij

June 7, 2025

Erika Christine Hovland-Bahij, 52, of Bryn Mawr, PA, passed away on June 6, 2025, surrounded by her loving family and friends. Born on July 24, 1972 to Keith and Karen (Newell) Hovland. Erika lived a life that was a testament to kindness, curiosity, her faith and a deep commitment to those she loved.

Erika was married to Abdelaziz Bahij and was a devoted and nurturing mother to Matsson and Alex (Alexander) Bahij, whose lives she enriched with her warmth, wisdom, and unwavering support.

She is survived by her brother Matt, niece and nephew, Iris and Jaid, many cousins, her husband's relatives in France, Canada and Morocco and a wide circle of cherished friends. She was preceded in death by her paternal grandparents, Laurence and Esther Hovland, and her maternal grandparents, Ray and Elsie Newell.

Raised in St. Paul, MN, Erika graduated from Central High School in 1990. She earned a BS in Economics at the University of Minnesota, where she was a member of the Delta Delta Delta Sorority and served a six month internship with U.S. Congressman Martin Sabo in Washington, DC.

Erika earned her MBA with Honors from Temple University, where she later returned to teach as an adjunct professor. She also became a Certified Forest

Therapy guide, sharing her love of nature and mindfulness with others.

Erika was a Marketing Director at GSK Pharmaceutical and a Vice President at Tri-State Imaging before founding her own consulting firm, Iolite Global, and launching Rose & Redwood, a nonprofit organization dedicated to teaching leadership skills to children.

Erika was baptized on August 27, 1972 and was confirmed in her faith in the 9th grade. She attended the Church of the Saviour in Wayne, PA, where she found a community of friends.

Erika found joy in the outdoors, hiking in the forests and in tending her garden. She was an avid reader, a gifted writer, a creative cook, and a world traveler who embraced new cultures and experiences. Above all, Erika treasured time spent with her family and friends, whose lives are forever touched by her compassion, humor, and grace. It has been a privilege to have Erika in our lives, and she will be deeply missed.

A memorial service will be held at Church of the Saviour, 651 N Wayne Ave, Wayne, PA 19087 on Saturday, June 14, 2025. Visitation will be from 10am to 11am with a service at 11am.

On Saturday, July 12, 2025, additional memorial service will be held at St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church, 2323 Como Ave, St. Paul, MN 55108. Visitation will be from 10am to 11am with a service at 11am.

Erika loved nature and spent literally hundreds of hours spinning stories of polar bear adventures for her son, Matsson. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the college fund account that has been set up for Matsson Bahij or to The Nature Conservancy (Polar Bear Conservation Fund).

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 12. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St Anthony Park Lutheran Church
2323 Como Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108

Service

JUL 12. 11:00 AM (CT)

St Anthony Park Lutheran Church
2323 Como Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55108

Tribute Wall



“ Julie Hally purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Erika Christine Hovland-Bahij.



Julie Hally - July 10, 2025 at 01:40 PM



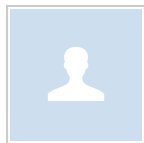
“ Erika and I were teammates at GSK where we formed a close professional relationship and worked together for many years. Please accept my heartfelt condolences for your loss.

John Hendrick - June 15, 2025 at 07:27 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Erika Christine Hovland-Bahij.

June 13, 2025 at 07:47 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Erika Christine Hovland-Bahij.

June 13, 2025 at 01:21 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Erika Christine Hovland-Bahij.*



June 13, 2025 at 01:21 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Erika Christine Hovland-Bahij.*



June 12, 2025 at 01:46 PM



“ *Leah Maurer and Tamara Pratt planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Erika Christine Hovland-Bahij.*

Leah Maurer and Tamara Pratt - June 12, 2025 at 01:28 PM



“ *Leah Maurer and Tamara Pratt purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Erika Christine Hovland-Bahij.*



Leah Maurer and Tamara Pratt - June 12, 2025 at 01:28 PM

MB

“ I am heartbroken to learn about Erika’s passing. What a kind, sensitive soul. I will miss her invitations to nature walks around Wayne, especially our outings to the local arboretum. One of my last memories of her is hugging trees together and listening to her speaking passionately about the healing powers of nature. Sending sincere condolences to her beloved son and husband. May we meet again.

monika borkowska - June 12, 2025 at 11:22 AM

PM

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall

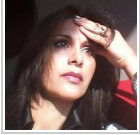


Pardo Mustillo - June 12, 2025 at 10:21 AM

PM

“ I met Erika and had the privilege of working with her about 12 years ago. She was a wonderful, kind, and respectful human being. I am saddened by her passing, and send my heartfelt condolences to her family at this time of mourning and remembering.

Pardo Mustillo - June 12, 2025 at 10:18 AM



“ Erika,
you came into our family like a flower that brings joy and serenity.
Your magnificent smile lit up our lives and your presence was a gift
to us all.
You embody kindness and goodness, and to my family and me, you
are more than a sister-in-law, you are a sister who will remain
forever in our hearts.
You passed on your DNA of kindness and generosity to your
wonderful little boy, who will continue to radiate your love and light. I
love you infinitely and wish you eternal rest in peace.

*My heart goes out to my brother, his son, his parents, and all the
family and friends who loved Erika so dearly. May you find strength,
peace, and comfort in this difficult time. Erika, you will be deeply
missed, but your memory will live on in our hearts. Rest in peace,
dear angel.*

BAHIJ LATIFA

Latifa Bahij - June 12, 2025 at 08:37 AM



*MY HEART GO to Her father and mother Keith and Karen (Newell)
Hovland, brother ,niece and friends*

God bless you

Latifa Bahij - June 12, 2025 at 08:51 AM

ST

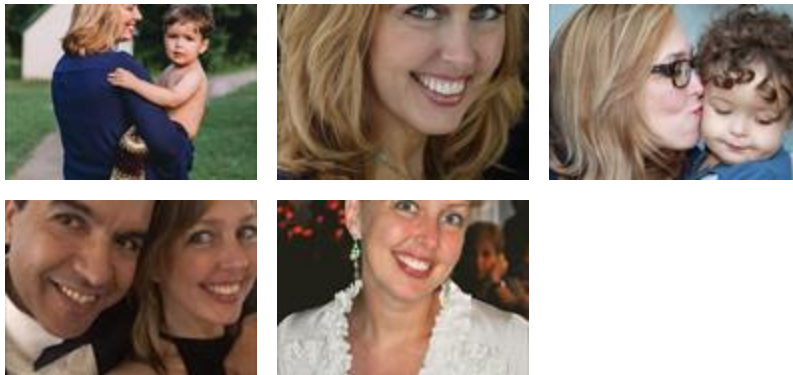
“ love you so much my dear and beautiful friend.
I will miss you so much, but I know you are finally healed.
I'm filled with gratitude to have been blessed by the depth of your
friendship.
Thank you, my sweet friend.



Stacey - June 11, 2025 at 09:38 PM

ST

“ 24 files added to the album Erika so beautiful



Stacey - June 11, 2025 at 09:23 PM

“ We lost a beautiful soul yesterday. My friend, Erika battled cancer on and off for 16 years. She was the strongest and most positive person I’ve come across in my life. She researched every possible way to overcome pain, stay optimistic and move forward in life. She has a 9 year old son, Matsson. Even through the treatments and tests and daily struggles she always found ways to engage him with nature, socialize, learn new things and filled his days with love and kindness. Every week she managed to bring him - or have someone get him to me for his piano lessons. He is quite a kid and my heart hurts for him 💔

Erika came to me for voice lessons more than 20 years ago. She was trying to improve her projection for speeches related to her career in pharmaceuticals through vocal exercises, It wasn’t long before she decided to incorporate songs in her lessons. Her favorite to sing was “A Tisket - A Tasket” ..the Ella Fitzgerald classic, and it brought joy to both of us to sing it together.

When she was diagnosed with breast cancer she found ways to overcome the process of treatment with grace and humor and came out in remission with a goal.

What she wished for most out of life was a family, a home and some pets. She worked hard and was able to find the life she always dreamed of... a husband, child, dog and cat and a lovely home to keep them all safe and warm.

I remember her calling me one day to say she had won a cooking class (one that you did from home) and asked me to join her in making some of the recipes. Her son was very young then and I enjoyed going to her home to cook delicious food.

It wasn’t long before her cancer returned...in her bones...and she struggled to walk and was in a significant amount of pain, but managed to get places and take care of her family all while researching and being treated for the cancer. She started 2 groups... Rose and Redwood and Rose and Lion to help people and children commune with nature. In her words: “Why? Because I want kids to feel like they can be themselves and still belong - I want them to know they are special and brilliant and have a special gift to give the world. Because they do.” That was Erika...always

trying to make the world brighter for everyone.

In 2022 I was diagnosed with breast cancer and although she was still fighting her own battle, she help me navigate the system, get a good oncology team and came with me to my first appointment as well a my first day of infusions. Her support was constant, and although she continued to struggle with more bad news and more experimental treatments she never lost hope and pushed herself to be there for her son and everyone in her world.

This last battle was just too much for her broken little body as the cancer had spread to her brain and other areas. After a month of daily radiation, there was nothing to be done but try to keep her pain at bay. I am grateful that her time in hospice was short and that she was surrounded by family and friends when she moved on to the next dimension last night. I will miss you, Erika...my beautiful and caring friend. I know you will continue to be with me and all of us, as your spirit is so so strong. May you be at peace now, without pain or worry. You are loved ~♥~



Kathy Gravina-Cavell - June 11, 2025 at 09:01 PM

BW

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Beth Walter - June 11, 2025 at 04:22 PM

DS

“ 2 files added to the album Erika so beautiful



Denean Suie - June 11, 2025 at 02:03 PM