

East Boston students mourn 'great teacher'

By Christine MacDonald, Globe Correspondent | March 1, 2005

Andrea Harvey, an East Boston High School math teacher found strangled in her Cambridge home last week, was a dedicated teacher who often expressed concern for her sister, who is serving in Iraq, her students said yesterday.

"Ms. Harvey was a very high-quality person and always worried about the safety of the students and her sister. Her sister is serving in the military in Iraq and all her attention was focused on her," said Brando Colon Jr., an 11th grader.

Colon and other students, who held a moment of silence in Harvey's honor yesterday morning, described the 27-year-old teacher as a warm person who used drawings, humor, and an affinity for "Hello Kitty" to make math fun.

Harvey's husband, Damion Linton, 25, was arraigned yesterday on a fugitive warrant at a hearing in North Carolina, where he was arrested Saturday. He waived rendition and is expected to return to the Commonwealth sometime today, weather permitting. He could be arraigned in Cambridge District Court on a charge of murder as early as tomorrow, according to the Middlesex district attorney's office.

He and Harvey had been married for 13 months and there was no known history of domestic violence, authorities said. Harvey's parents discovered her body at the couple's Cambridge condominium Feb. 24.

Alma Mendoza, 16, an 11th grader, said she formed a bond with Harvey last year after getting a failing grade in algebra.

"She was willing to do anything to help her students," said Mendoza, whom Harvey tutored after school. "I actually failed first term but raised my grade up to an A second term."

Mendoza said Harvey had a lighter side as well. She wore a "Hello Kitty" bracelet and would decorate her classroom windows with stencils of the cartoon character. When Mendoza did well on the girl's soccer team, Harvey gave her "Hello Kitty" candies in a container shaped like a soccer ball.

"After a person goes away we realize what they mean to us," said Thiago Rosa, 17, a 10th grader, who said Harvey helped him learn the importance of completing homework assignments in her math class last year. "She was a fun person and a great teacher." ■