In Memoriam: Guillermo 'Bill' Felix

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Guillermo "Bill" Felix, a supervisor in Facilities Management known for his passion for the UA, his colleagues and his family, died unexpectedly on Feb. 20 at the age of 45.

Felix worked in FM's HVAC/mechanical shop, a position he had held since 2010. He began at the UA in December of 2000 as a general maintenance mechanic before becoming a general maintenance lead several years later, then shop supervisor.

Chris Kopach, assistant vice president for facilities management, promoted Felix to his shop supervisor role. He described Felix as having the traits of good mechanics - "diligent, educated, hardworking, persistent." Felix, he said, was willing to work overtime whenever necessary to resolve issues with campus heating and cooling systems.

"And then you add that to Bill's personality of just a really friendly man," Kopach said. "He was just a really open, genuine and honest person, and wanted to do well for the UA and Facilities Management."

Felix had a close relationship with the mechanics he supervised, which likely was a result of having worked as one himself, said Bruce Overland, assistant director of maintenance shops and Felix's direct supervisor.

"He was just one of those supervisors that cared about people," Overland said. "He listened to his guys and treated them right."

Richard Sandoval, a lead mechanic in the HVAC/mechanical shop, had known Felix since he began working at the UA 11 years ago. He remembered Felix as a leader whose strong work ethic never faltered as he rose through the ranks in FM.

"Work is work, but having a good supervisor makes it a lot easier for you to contribute," Sandoval said. "Bill was the kind of guy that did that."

Felix spent much of his time outside of work as a basketball coach for his son and daughter and their teammates. He also traveled with the teams, taking players to practices and out-of-town games.

A funeral service was held on March 1 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Sandoval said about 40 players who received coaching from Felix were in attendance. A reception was held later that day in the Sands Club at Arizona Stadium.
Felix is survived by his wife, Belinda Gamboa-Felix; his children, Benjamin and Gabrielle; his mother, Susan Lee; his sisters, Bella Cuneo, Cathi Felix-Eislage, Ramona Jones, Dianne Sanchez, Sylvia Gonzales, Dora Chavez, Sandra Gamboa, Corinda Gamboa and Caroline Vargas; as well as many aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces and cousins.

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