Steel Magnolia
She parked farther out than the rest of us
The early hour yielding spaces galore
Her poise and gentle air of authority
Made more distinct by the refinement she wore.

Our own Jackie O, steel magnolia
Her strength cloaked in compassion and grace
“Keep calm, carry on,” her enduring refrain
Such a leader cannot be replaced.

She always went to bat for our students,
Went the distance for staff, faculty, friends
Bestowing on us, the priceless gift of trust
Knowing this is where friendship begins.

She had no use for pomp and pretention;
She’d let others go first every time.
But if the last are first in heaven,
We know she’s at the front of the line.

How indebted we are for her tireless toil,
Which so suddenly has come to an end.
Opportunity lost, and this is the cost:
We’ll never on earth see her again.

Now there’s no more time to say thank you,
But God knows any price we would pay
For one last goodbye, one chance to say:
Dear lady, you took our breath away!

No need to leave a candle in the window
Knowing this is our way of healing:
You’ll be forever a part of GHC—in our hearts.
Dean Hamrick has not left the building.