



Michael Anthony Ortega

June 9, 1961 - February 11, 2026

Michael (Mike) A. Ortega, of Fort Collins, Colorado, passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his wife and children on February 11, 2026.

Mike was born on June 9, 1961, in Denver, Colorado, to A. Paul and Charlotte (Nelson) Ortega. Mike grew up in Fort Collins and graduated from Poudre High School. He married Jayme Brown in 1980, who preceded him in death, and had one son, Michael L. Ortega. Mike worked for Woodward Governor for a time and then returned to school to earn a bachelor's degree in political science in 1992 from Colorado State University. Mike spent most of his career as an administrative law judge for the Colorado Department of Labor. After retiring in 2016, Mike worked as a drive instructor and tester for Mountain States Drive School, where he enjoyed sharing both driving and life wisdom with his students. Mike was a member of the Mescalero Apache Tribe in New Mexico.

Mike and his wife, Betsy, met at CSU and married in 1992. Together, they raised three children—Michael, Alexandria (Allea), and John (Jack) Ortega. Mike was an adoring and loving husband and father. He shared his passion for movies, books, humor, and knowledge with his family.

Mike and Betsy enjoyed many years camping and traveling together with their children and as empty-nesters.

Mike will be most remembered for his kindness, gentleness, humor, and intelligence. He connected easily with everyone, whether at the drive-thru, in the drive car, or sitting across from him in a labor hearing. His humor and easy-going manner made everyone feel accepted and at ease in his presence.

Mike is survived by his wife of 33 years, Betsy Ortega, and their children, Michael L. Ortega of Arvada, CO, Alexandria Ortega of Denver, CO, and John Ortega of Thornton, CO. Mike had one grandchild, Samantha Ortega of Arvada, CO.

Services will be held at the Martin Cemetery in Rinconada, NM, on a date to be determined, and at a celebration of life gathering in Nederland, CO, this summer.

Tribute Wall

CR

“ Mike was one of a kind, he was easy to talk with and one to enjoy a nice conversation with, Mike always one who had a smile and a wonderful story. May you RIP and Betsy and family be comforted by condolences and prayers.
God Bless.

Charles Robles - March 04 at 01:37 PM

EO

Thank you so much! We had some wonderful times back at St. Joes!

Elizabeth Ann Ortega - March 06 at 02:53 PM

TE

“ Mike was a kind, gentle and friendly person. We worked together at the Larimer County Workforce Center, where he did treat our clients with compassion and wisdom. Later I got to meet with him again at Unity. Such a nice and pleasant surprise. Mike was certainly a light in this world. Thanks for coming in and showing the World we could be a kinder place.

Terra Eyl - February 22 at 03:09 PM

MG

“ Worked with Mike at MSDE he was full of life, great person to talk with and so funny. His jokes were the best and his practical jokes. He was supportive in his knowledge, just a joy to be around. He will be greatly missed.

Mindy Gebauer - February 18 at 05:17 PM

DK

“ We met Mike when we moved into Wild Wood Farm in the summer of 1999. It was so easy to like him. I worked downtown for Larimer County and Mike worked for the State of Colorado in the same building. It was nice to see him most weeks. Fun to talk to. I'll miss those conversations. May time heal for his family and friends. Dan Kunis and family.



Dan, Theresa and Gena Kunis - February 16 at 07:43 PM