

# Independent Spirit On Wall Street

By Nedra Rhone

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In kindergarten, when all the little boys would try to kiss her, Brooke Jackman would spit at them. Years later, when classmates voted her "most beautiful" and "best-dressed," Jackman tried to divert the attention from her appearance.

"Those weren't important things to her," said her mother, Barbara Jackman, what was important was "what she could do to help people." And while she eventually came to enjoy kisses from boys, she remained fiercely independent, determined and compassionate.

The night before she was lost in the Sept. 11 attack, Jackman, 23, told her mother she was applying to the University of California at Berkeley School of Social Welfare. Jackman had already enrolled in a review course to prepare for the Graduate Record Examination. "She said 'There is more to life than making money,'" Barbara Jackman recalled.

Jackman had just started working as an assistant bond trader at Cantor Fitzgerald, one of two positions for which 70 candidates had applied. It was a departure for a young woman who had spent her high school and college career volunteering in soup kitchens and working as a teacher's assistant. But after a disappointing stint in publishing, Jackman, a graduate of Columbia University, decided to give Wall Street a try.

And even Wall Street couldn't break her independent spirit. Co-workers remembered Jackman's distinctive earrings — a barbell shape in one ear and three



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tiny hoops in the other ear. "Brooke was totally independent and she had her own mind," said her mother. "You could talk until you were blue in the face. She would listen," and then she would do her own thing, and it was usually the right decision, Barbara Jackman said.

Doing her own thing included making daily visits to a bookstore near her Manhattan apartment on the way home from work. She would read almost a book a day, said her mother, and she'd jot down passages or quotations she particularly enjoyed. Jackman also loved to walk, covering miles at a time with her water bottle, backpack and sneakers.

But mostly she enjoyed helping people. At her memorial service held last month, a crowd of 1,500 attended. Strangers told stories of how Jackman had befriended them when everyone else had ignored them. "Brooke sought everybody out," said Barbara Jackman. "She measured people by the size of their hearts."

In Brooke Jackman's memory, the family started a foundation to benefit children: The Brooke Jackman Foundation for Children in Need, P.O. Box 354, Mill Neck, N.Y. 11765.