



Margaret Jackson Williams

SEP 25, 1929 - JAN 16, 2016



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With deep sadness and eternal love, the family of Margaret J. Williams announces her peaceful passing on January 16, 2016. We invite those who knew and loved her to express fond memories and condolences on the “Share a Memory” page here on Greenwood’s website. Just click on this link to do so. <https://www.greenwoodmemorial.com/obituaries/Margaret-Williams-30/> For those who wish to say a final farewell to Margaret, there will be a viewing at Greenwood Mortuary in the Garden Chapel from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 26, 2016. The family is honoring Margaret’s wish to have a small private homegoing service. We appreciate your support and understanding in this show of respect. Please feel free to make a donation in Margaret’s name to the United Negro College Fund in lieu of sending flowers. Click on the following link to donate. <http://www.uncf.org/>-The Williams and McQuater family

OBITUARY: Margaret Helen Jackson (McQuater) Williams was born on September 25, 1929 in Washington, D.C. to Othello Linwood and Mabel Bridgeforth Jackson of Richmond, Virginia. She was the 7th of their seven children, reared in a close-knit family of five boys and two girls in LeDroit Park near the prestigious Howard University campus. Margaret attended the historic Dunbar High School: America’s first Black public high school. Its list of graduates touts many ‘first black person to ...’ including Senator Edward Brooke, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, Dr. Charles Drew, Congressional Delegate Walter E. Fauntroy, and Lt. Cmdr. Wesley A Brown. Margaret graduated cum laude from Dunbar in 1946. Like others in her family, she had a beautiful voice and was a member of the glee club and her church choir. She enjoyed playing chess, tennis and attending Washington Senators baseball games at the old Griffith Stadium where several of her brothers worked concessions. After graduating from Dunbar, she entered DC Teachers College (now the University of the District of Columbia) to fulfill her dream of becoming a teacher. Shortly after entering college, she met and married Matthew



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McQuater, then a student at Howard University and later, a member of the Clovers, a successful recording group for Atlantic Records that was extremely popular in the early 1950's. Although this union eventually ended, it produced three children: Lindsay Tyrone McQuater in 1949, Gregory Vaughn McQuater in 1950, and Patricia Ann McQuater in 1951. With three toddlers in tow and a full time job at the U.S. Government Accounting Office, Margaret eagerly returned to DC Teachers College part time, and persevered until she received her B.A. in elementary education in 1958. Margaret was a natural born teacher who taught her students as if they were her own children. Her devotion to them did not end when the bell rang and she often reached out, above and beyond, to ensure their home situations did not interfere with their ability to focus on learning. Margaret said, "When I see the problems some families have, I'm so grateful for my own good fortune that I want to help other people's children even more." And that she did – with grace, charm, and gentle professionalism. During her 30+ years in the DC Public School System, as a teacher and administrator, she touched many lives and her students loved her dearly. Every day of her life she lived the words of her father, a 32nd degree Mason, who always told his children to "...be the best you can be!" Margaret's biggest joy and greatest reward came from being a fearlessly devoted single mother. As soon as they could walk and talk she began to give Lindsay, Gregory, and Patricia constant exposure to all the cultural treasures in the Nation's Capital. They toured all the national monuments and were regulars at the changing exhibits of the Smithsonian Institutes and the DC Public Libraries. She encouraged them to excel in their academic studies and to participate in extra-curricular activities at school and in the community. She set the expectation for them to be well-informed, participating citizens of the world. Margaret had a huge heart and was always willing to share her limited resources with friends or family in need. Yet, on the salary of a public school teacher, she purchased a lovely home in Northwest Washington within walking distance of the Jr. High, High School and the church where her family learned and actively worshiped. Margaret was proud and delighted that after graduating from Theodore Roosevelt High School, her children earned undergraduate scholarships, their Bachelor's degrees, and several advanced degrees among them. She was a shining example for every



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success they achieved. Margaret was not only mother to her three children and to all those she encountered as a teacher, she also impacted her children's friends and inspired every young person she met. For sure, 1134 Buchanan Street was where all the kid's friends and neighbors wanted to hang out. A well-read, strong, beautiful, classy, caring woman, Margaret was everyone's biggest cheerleader. Her favorite gift to each aspiring teen or young adult was a book chosen especially for them. One friend said, "She even made me feel special in the way she said my name". And to all of this, Margaret said, "I've had a marvelous experience as a mother!" Since her only sister, Louise Herbert, lived in Los Angeles and Patricia had settled in San Diego, Margaret made regular trips to California. While visiting family she eventually met the Honorable Leon L. Williams, a much loved and admired pillar of the San Diego community. He was the first African American elected to the San Diego City Council, and was at that time serving his last term as a member of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. Leon totally swept Margaret off her feet and they married in May of 1993. She embraced her new family and immediately extended her heart to their blended family of 9 children, and Leon's many brothers, sisters, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins, etc. who reciprocated with love and acceptance. Her marriage to Leon began a life of dedication and commitment to the people of her new-found home in Southern California. That same quiet, loving manner endeared her to the people of San Diego and her kind and gentle spirit was always evident in her interactions with others. Margaret and Leon were always "in the know and on the go" in support of local and national causes and their shared vision of "inclusion" and "justice for all". They were quite the couple and brought joy to all who knew them. He stood just a little bit taller when she was by his side and he referred to her as "Lady Margaret." He was the love of her life and she told everyone that he was her "hero!" Total strangers would approach them and say "You two are the cutest couple I've ever seen! How long have you been married?" Margaret would always smile and respond, "I can't tell you because my husband is only 39." She was totally devoted to her hero to the very end. Lady Margaret peacefully passed away on January 16, 2016. She had a ready smile and a kind, encouraging word for everyone. Her loving spirit will endure forever with all who knew her. Margaret was preceded in death by her mother



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and father, her sister, Louise J. Herbert and her husband Adam, her brothers, Othello L. Jackson, Jr., Lewellyn Jackson, Benjamin Jackson and Arthur L. Jackson. Margaret leaves behind, her husband, Leon L. Williams, her brother, Reginald B. Jackson, II, her sisters and brothers-in-law, Jewel Lee, Leurell Barnes, Harold Williams, Mary Lou Attaway, Cecil Williams, Leona Williams, and Johnny Williams, her son, Lindsay McQuater and daughter-in-law Cynthia McQuater, her son Gregory McQuater and daughter-in-law Lorna Fitzgerald, her daughter, Patricia McQuater, her chosen sons and daughters, Karen and Henning Peterson, Susan Rogers, Sandra and Leon Williams, Jr., Penny & Sherman McNeil, Jeffery Anderson, Alisa Williams, her nieces and nephews, Deborah and Robert Cheeks, Michael and Cynthia Herbert, Tracey and Kenneth McGhee, Trina and Robert Ford, her granddaughter LaToya N. McQuater her grandson, Ryan F. McQuater, her chosen granddaughters Dyani Rogers, Darshana Rogers, Ramani Rogers, Jharae Anderson, Zoe McNeil, her great granddaughter, Morgan Sloan, her great grandson, Nicholas Sloan, and a village of many other chosen relatives and dear friends.



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Nancy Kwaselow posted:

(continued from previous page) How much fun we had together at the APTA Conferences we attended. In Las Vegas, San Francisco and even in San Diego. Margaret met my Mother at one APTA event and from that day forward she always asked about her and told me how much she admired her. I was honored to have Margaret and Leon attend my wedding in Del Mar. And at least once or twice a year, Margaret and I would enjoy a special lunch at Anthony's Harborside. Margaret was so generous with me, always giving me a special book or game she thought I would enjoy. These books were about expanding consciousness, spirituality, growing, learning, "transforming our lives to a new experience of freedom, happiness and love." ("The Four Agreements," "The Fifth Agreement", "The Secret" and more.) And that was Margaret, always learning, sharing, reaching, inspiring. Her last gift to me was "Together We Can Do More, The Leon Williams Story" by Lynne Carrier. It was Margaret's great desire to have Leon's story well told and the recent publication of this book gave her such joy and satisfaction. Mostly she inspired me with love. With her signature pet name for others, "Sugar", she could make my day with a five minute phone call. She would build me up and encourage me the way no one else could. I could share anything with her and she responded in complete acceptance, understanding and expression of hope. Love, mercy, justice, equality, Margaret espoused it and lived it. Margaret was the truest of friends. I loved her so and always will. Nancy Irwin Kwaselow January 27, 2016

January 27 at 9:05 AM



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NK

Nancy Kwaselow posted:

As Margaret Williams' funeral takes place right this minute, and I am so far away in Detroit, I wanted to meditate on what this great woman meant to me and all of you who were blessed to know her. One of the greatest benefits of my career at MTS was meeting, getting to know and growing to love Margaret Williams. She had married the love of her life, our Board Chair Leon Williams, not long after I started with San Diego Transit. Turns out that we were both about the same age when we married for the second time. But this was only one of the things that Margaret and I learned we had in common. Early on in our acquaintance, Margaret would call me at the office to thank me for some promotion I had arranged, or compliment me on something I had written for the company. We would spend a wonderful afternoon each year at KUSI-TV recording a Happy Holidays message with her, Leon and their adorable granddaughters smiling beautifully at the camera. She got such a kick out of those promos and her enthusiasm was such fun. I remember taking an inaugural ride or two with Margaret and Leon on a newly opened Trolley line. She was so delighted by the experience and what it meant to the community and San Diego as a whole. All of our employees' excitement was expressed in her bright eyes and smiles those days. Margaret was very fond and close to San Diego Trolley president Langley Powell and his wife Ruby. She was heartbroken when he left San Diego for retirement and even more so when he died. It would take a very special lady to be the partner and equal to the universally esteemed, the Honorable Leon L. Williams and Margaret was that lady. In fact, many of those closest to her called her Lady Margaret. And what a lady she was! Her professional background as a teacher and her chosen calling as a Mother, gave her the credentials, and more importantly the soul and spirit to teach others, to help others, to guide and inspire others. She did all of this for me. As our friendship grew stronger, I could always count on Margaret for good counsel, be it in parenting, relationships, or professionally. I remember walking towards a building in Ann Arbor, where I was about to interview for a new job at Michigan Public Broadcasting. She called and I told her where I was going and she assured me that they would be lucky to hire me and that the job was mine for the taking. I walked into that interview with such confidence, thanks to Margaret, and sure enough, I got the job. Whenever I returned to San Diego, a visit to the Williams' beautiful historic house on E Street had to be on my itinerary. We would sit in the parlor and catch up on all the news I knew of our MTS colleagues. She was so interested in the good welfare of all those she had gotten to know there. Margaret would show me the latest awards, certificates and accolades that Leon had received, and she was so very proud of every one of them. The autographed picture of President Obama hung on the wall, and I enjoyed hearing about her marvelous experience at his inauguration. A retirement poster made for Leon filled with signatures from all of us at MTS was displayed prominently in the front room. The coffee mug created for the MTS 25th anniversary and signed by Leon was also lovingly displayed in the kitchen. Each and every one of Leon's civic accomplishments, large and small, was an enormous source of pride for Margaret, and I'm sure Leon would say, that he couldn't have done it without her. I would be amazed at their social calendar, far more crowded and demanding than those half their age. Everyone wanted Leon and Margaret to be at their event. Their couple magic truly lit up every room they walked in. Not only their good looks, but their vibe was so good, so strong and so appealing. You couldn't help but love them.

(continued on next page)

January 25 at 4:49 AM



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RB

Regina Buckley posted:

I met Miss Margaret 15 years ago at the beginning of my friendship with her beautiful daughter, Patricia. I'll never forget her elegance, warmth and generous spirit – how she always greeted me with a smile and kind words, making me feel like one of her family; how she reached out to me during one of my darkest moments, simply to let me know that I wasn't alone. Margaret Williams was the best kind of person, someone who gave of herself freely, humbly, and sincerely because she truly loved people – a great lady who will be greatly missed.

January 26 at 7:36 AM

CN

Cydne Nash posted:

Patricia and family, please accept my heartfelt condolences on the loss of Margaret. She could always be counted on for her loving and caring manner. She meant so much to our family and will be greatly missed! -Cydne

January 26 at 5:03 AM

JA

J W August posted:

I met Ms. Williams while arranging a TV interview for her husband. We talked on the phone a number of times, and I had the chance to meet her when I came to drive Leon to the television interview. While our connections were brief, they made a strong impression on me. I would later tell my wife and my colleagues how taken I was with her sweet nature, welcoming me into her home like an old friend. It's all amplified now after I found out the struggle she was having with her health. What a class act. J W August

January 25 at 4:49 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Margaret by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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