



## Wendell Joseph Louis Gorum

April 2, 1941 - February 21, 2020

Dr. Wendell J. Gorum, was born on April 2, 1941, in Norfolk, Virginia, to Alexander Gorum and Alethia Cuffee Gorum. Dr. Gorum was a very special child, as he began reading at the age of 3, forming his long-lasting love for learning. He graduated from Crestwood High-school in 1958, in Chesapeake, Virginia. In high-school, Wendell was a very active participant in sports, he was a member of the track and wrestling teams and earned the nickname “the Professor”. He then moved on to complete his Bachelors' degree in Business and English from Norfolk State University graduating in 1962. That same year he became a brother in Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., and continued his life time commitment to excellence in all that he did.

After college, Wendell and a group of his friends decided to give back and applied to the Peace Corps. While the plan was for all of them to participate together as a group and to serve in Africa, God had other plans, as Wendell was the only one from his group of friends sent to Chile instead of Africa. Wendell had no idea that this trip was where he was destined to meet his forever partner, Jacquelyne Wallace. After this Peace Corps Tour was over, Wendell entered graduate school at Syracuse University, but soon realized that he needed to be by his love's side and moved to Denver. Jacquelyne and Wendell were married on November 24, 1964, in Denver, Colorado. Now a responsible husband, Wendell entered the work force as a Systems Analyst at AT&T. He also continued his educational pursuit by taking classes at

University Colorado Center in Denver returning to finish his Masters in TV and Radio from Syracuse University in 1966. Wendell's thirst for knowledge continued as he studied speech at Pennsylvania State University, he received a PhD from University of Mississippi, and was awarded a post doctorate fellowship at Stanford University.

Over the next few years Wendell and his family moved to many different places giving him opportunities to teach at many Universities. He was a former professor at Moorhead State University, Dartmouth College, Jackson State University, University of Maryland of College Park, Morgan State University, Norfolk University and retired at Delaware State University. He went on to be the chair of Mass Communications at Claflin University before fully hanging up his professorship. At each of these fine institutions, Dr. Gorum left an impression on his students. Most of his former students refer to him as 'Doc' a gentle giant, whose presence demanded respect. Dr. Gorum had given his students not only the knowledge that they sought, but many life lessons and unwavering support and encouragement.

Over a period of time, the couple welcomed three sons into their home, Jay (Joseph), Guy, and Marc. His children remember him as a kind, gentle, patient and driven father who encouraged them to pursue their goals and to be a servant to their community.

Wendell was a generous individual who loved cooking and who was famous for his pies. Every family gathering, we all looked forward to eating his delicious pies. Whenever he had the opportunity, Wendell looked forward to getting away and spending quality time with family on their many cruises all over the world. He was also very passionate about educating students. He was an active and dedicated member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. and often volunteered as Undergraduate Chapter Advisor. In this position it allowed him the opportunity to make a difference in many young men's lives.

He loved his fraternity and encouraged these men to be the best that they could be at all times, through good and bad times.

Dr. Wendell J. Gorum was called home to be with the Lord and his son Guy, surrounded by his loving family at Bayhealth Medical Center on Friday, February 21, 2020, in Dover, Delaware, at the age of 78.

Dr. Wendell J. Gorum leaves to cherish his memory: his beloved wife, Jacquelyne W. Gorum; sons, W. Joseph Gorum II (Marie) and Marc E. Gorum (Renita); grandchildren, Marc II, Victoria, Olivia, and Joseph Gorum, Ronald Benjamin, Skye and Caden Minors, and Naeem Ibrahim; sisters, Diane Smith, Cathy Austin (Richard) and Rita Bond (Edward); sisters-in-law, Shirley Slayton and E. Sylvia Richardson; brother-in-law, John Wallace, Jr. (Barbara); and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins too numerous to mention.

Wendell was preceded in death by his parents, Alethea Gorum-Smith and Alexander Gorum; siblings, Brutus, Emmitt and Everett Gorum and Eva Robertson; brothers-in-law, Charles Slayton and Harry Richardson; and son, Guy A. Gorum.

# Tribute Wall

DM

“ I was a student of Wendell's at Dartmouth College in 1974-75 and took a Black Studies course from him. He gave me 2 books to read that term that I have to dozens of others and including my sons - *The Man Who Cried I Am* and *The Spook Who Sat By The Door*. When I read the later book I couldn't put it down and showed up at his office at 7:30am only an hour or so after finishing it. He was a great listener - which made him a great teacher and mentor. We spent a long time talking that morning (and many after that); and he helped restore a sense of confidence in myself as a Black man, that was badly battered by incidents at the College. I can hear his voice to this day - always pushing you and reassuring you at the same time. I am sorry to only now be learning of his passing. I'm sure there are generations of students who not only survived, but who are better people and whole today because he was part of their lives. My prayers go out to the family...it is hard to fill the hole left by the absence of a man such as him.

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**David Morgan** - October 17, 2020 at 01:26 PM

DB

“ Jackie - I was saddened to learn of Wendell's passing as I had expected he would one day come back to the pool to play cutthroat volleyball. His kind ways and thoughtfulness will be missed as will his great heart and smile. Know he is missed!

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**Diane Bean** - March 09, 2020 at 05:16 PM

DZ

“ Nice memories of my time spent with the gorums! My thoughts are on each of you. XO Deborah Zook

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**Deborah Zook** - March 07, 2020 at 06:54 PM

LR

“ *My prayers are with you and the family. May your love and faith provide peace and comfort as you celebrate his life. Thinking of you guys.*

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**Love, Joyce Fife Richardson** - March 05, 2020 at 02:05 PM