



Dr. Russell W. Irvine

August 18, 1944 - June 17, 2018

“I have tried to live my life in the service of something greater than myself.”

-Dr. Russell W. Irvine on receiving the Hall of Excellence Award in 2015 from his alma mater, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Dr. Russell W. Irvine, affectionately known as “Irvine,” was born on August 18, 1944, in Havre de Grace, Maryland to the late Laura Christy Irvine Greene and the late Russell W. Irvine, Sr. He is survived by his wife of 49 years, Dr. Jacqueline Jordan Irvine; his daughter Kelli Irvine Neptune (Lionel); his grandsons, Devin and Jalen; his sister, Joyce Clarke; his only surviving aunt, Mae James Piner; and a large family and group of friends who will miss him greatly.

A great believer in education, Irvine graduated in 1962 from Central Consolidated High School, in Bel Air, Maryland and received his B.A. from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (1966). He earned his M.A. at the University of Akron (1968) and his Ph.D. in the Sociology of Education at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio (1974). He taught Sociology of Education at Georgia State University for 44 years and enjoyed teaching both graduate and undergraduate students. His love of education was nurtured by his mother’s family. A free family long before the Civil War, they produced a long line of educators, doctors, and scientists, and Irvine was

very proud of this heritage.

Irvine was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He was fully supportive of his wife's career as a professor of Education at Emory University and was completely engaged in Kelli's upbringing. He and Jackie enjoyed healthy debates and co-authoring works. Irvine was a loving father who spent time nurturing and playing with his only child. He and Kelli had a lot of fun together! He bought Kelli three horses, taught her how to swim and snorkel (Irvine was a certified scuba diver) and instilled in her the value of hard work and a carefree spirit.

He was also a devoted grandfather and delighted in transferring his many skills, in life and in sports, to Devin and Jalen. His athleticism skipped over his daughter, so he was thrilled when it re-emerged in his two grandsons who thrived under his tutelage. He enjoyed giving them lessons in fishing, swimming, golf and basketball. He particularly loved to play with them. Even as he aged, and much to the dismay of his wife and daughter, he was willing to risk life and limb riding their scooters, skateboards, and hover boards and driving go-carts.

Irvine loved reading, golf, travel, and political debate. He was a great golfer who played a round of golf or went to the driving range almost every single day. In fact, Irvine had just left the driving range moments before he passed away. Golf provided bragging rights, exercise, and an opportunity to debate his golf buddies. For years Jackie, Irvine and Kelli traveled broadly and spent every summer in the Bahamas.

Irvine loved reading and intellectual discourse. Even after retirement, he would leave the golf course to spend the day researching and writing at the local library or the Library of Congress. A rare intellect who loved knowledge for its own sake, he was the author of many articles and books and continued

his scholarship. One of his greatest scholarly contributions was published after retirement – his book *The African American Quest for Institutions of Higher Education Before the Civil War* (a brilliant tome of over 700 pages). At the time of his passing, he was completing another book – a biography of Joseph Jenkins Roberts, the first president of Liberia.

Irvine was a loving son, husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, cousin, scholar, athlete and friend. His sudden death has left a void in his family, and he will be missed dearly.

The family has established a scholarship fund at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (Dr. Irvine's alma mater). Those who wish to donate to the fund in lieu of flowers may do so by sending a check or money order made payable to "The UMES Foundation" and mailing it to : The University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Department of Institutional Advancement, J. T. Williams Hall, Suite 2104, Princess Anne, MD 21804. "The Dr. Russell W. Irvine Scholarship Fund" should be noted in the memo line of the check or money order. Those who wish to donate online, should go to www.umes.edu and click on "Give to UMES." When the on-line giving page appears, type "Dr. Russell W. Irvine Scholarship Fund" in the search engine. Then click on the drop down menu to the left and click on "Where the need is greatest." Leave the name of the fund in the search engine and click it again. You will then see "Donate to the Dr. Russell W. Irvine Scholarship Fund."

Cemetery Details

Lakemont Memorial Gardens

Davidsonville, MD

Previous Events

Wake

JUN 23. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center, P.A. - Laurel
7601 Sandy Spring Road
Laurel, MD 20707
(301) 490-1550
<https://www.marchlifetributecenter.com>

Service

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Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. Russell W. Irvine*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM

“ I am just now learning of Dr. Irvine’s passing and I send my heart felt condolences to his wife, daughter, grandsons, and family. I met Dr. Irvine in 1990 while studying for my master’s at Georgia State University. I had completed the requirements for the M.A.T in Latin and was taking an educational sociology class with him. I am happy to say that I asked my foreign language advisor if I could add another degree with my Latin studies and I then spent another two years studying Social Foundations of Education with Dr. Irvine. He was the most interesting, professional, kind, and sincere professor whom I ever met and I so adored him. I would go to his office and we would walk to the public park near GSU and study the homeless people, engage with them on how they became homeless and then lessons far beyond any classroom would transpire.

I took his Sociology of the Inner City Child class and then he took me to Dr. Asa Hilliard and asked him to work with me as well. I took Asa’s Psychology of the Inner City Child class and would often compare the two of them in their teaching and scholarship with one another. Dr. Irvine was always humble and sincere and only wanted me to learn and understand more. At the time, I was a young white male in Cobb County, Georgia (home of Newt Gingrich) and trying to add African-American studies to the high school where I was teaching. Dr. Irvine was instrumental in allowing that to happen and gave me many counseling sessions on why people reacted the way they did and how I should respond.

After 4 years of working on two M.A. degrees, I graduated in 1992 much to my chagrin but my mother’s happiness of no more tuition payments for me. I wrote a thesis with Dr. Irvine and will remember him sitting in his office and going over it line by line, word by word before I submitted it for review. It took us several meetings to review that thesis which was typed on a typewriter with ribbon correction fluid and I so dreaded having to retype the entire thesis but it was worth every ounce of energy because I added his ever so slight thoughts to produce a work that was identified with distinction.

I will also remember visiting his office and him showing me his wife's books and us reading passages together. One time, I remember reading to him her own hand written words inscribed in the book she gave him and he said, "I didn't even know she thought that about me" and we both laughed. I knew at that moment he was the same father and husband as professor I had learned to adore and respect.

Years have passed and I have now retired after 34 years of teaching in public education and even earned a PhD after that master's with Dr. Irvine. I used his knowledge and lectures in countless classes I taught (and still teach part-time).

Rest In Peace My Beloved Professor!

*Greg Ewing
New Mexico & Atlanta, Georgia*

Greg Ewing - September 13, 2020 at 10:35 PM

BC

“ *Dr. Irvine and Family,*

I am sorry for your loss. May God bless you as you grieve.

Sincerely,

*Barbara S. Coble
Emory University*

Barbara S. Coble - July 09, 2018 at 12:39 PM

RR

“ Dr. Russell W. Irvine was an avid golfer whom I met where he often practiced at the Night Hawk Golf Range on Route 3 in Crofton, Maryland. We had many conversations when we ran into each other at the range. That is where I found out that he had passed, from a make shift memorial at the golf range on the mat where he usually practiced. He befriended other golfers and the staff who knew him from his almost daily practices. He was an intelligent and personable man. My deepest condolences.

Ronald Rowland
The Rowland Law Firm

Ronald L Rowland - July 05, 2018 at 06:37 PM

JW

“ Dr. Irvine was a colleague of mine at Georgia State University. He and I also worked together on a research study for the Decatur City Schools. During that project, his skills as a researcher and facilitator of conversations enhanced the work. Both he and his wife, Jackie, were inspirational leaders in the Atlanta/Decatur community. My deep condolences to Jackie and all of his family. Joan T. Wynne

Joan T. Wynne - June 29, 2018 at 05:01 PM

DW

“ To the Irvine Family,
Please accept our sincere condolences for your loss.

-The Howard University School of Education Family

Dawn Williams - June 28, 2018 at 11:06 AM

BW

“ I had the honor and pleasure of knowing Dr. Irvine. He possessed a genius intellect, a loving spirit, and an infectious passion for life. I am deeply saddened to learn about his passing. I pray that his family and friends are blessed with the memories of his amazing life and comfort during this very difficult time. You are all in my thoughts and prayers. Love, Brian Williams

Brian Williams - June 26, 2018 at 05:09 PM

KC

“ I am so very sorry to hear about the passing of Irvine. The love that was so strong in your family was so very evident. I pray God's peace and comfort. Much love to the beautiful Irvine family!...Kezia McNeal Curry

Kezia McNeal Curry - June 24, 2018 at 11:05 PM

PG

“ Dr. Irvine was on my dissertation committee and I enjoyed our discourse on a range of topics. He loved learning and research and indeed spent quite a bit of time at the Auburn Ave Research Library. I also ran into him several times on the golf course which was also a passion. My condolences to his lovely wife and family.

Sincerely,

Pat Guillory

Pat Guillory - June 24, 2018 at 09:40 PM

KF

“ My heartfelt and deepest condolences to my mentor and education leader, Dr. Jackie Irvine, and family. Dr. Russell Irvine’s memory and legacy will live forever!



Kassie Freeman - June 24, 2018 at 07:42 PM

LF

“ Russell was a consummate scholar and a good person. We will sorely miss his race-man ways, but we will never forget his generous heart and mind! With love, The Fenwick and Swygert Families

Leslie Fenwick - June 24, 2018 at 09:22 AM

CM

“ I remember seeing my cousin, Irvine, riding his horse around the streets of Decatur, GA! I remember hearing other people discussing this “brother” they just saw riding a horse down the street. I would always proudly proclaim: “Oh that’s just my cousin!” I am praying for you Jackie & Kelly. RIP Irvine. Connie Moore, Decatur, GA.

Connie Moore - June 23, 2018 at 05:25 PM

MK

Dearest Irvine family, you are in my heart and my deepest prayers. I love you Dr. Jackie Irvine. U are so precious.

Mary Elizabeth Kelly - June 24, 2018 at 06:38 PM

RT

Sincerest condolences to the Irvine family. Dr. Irvine was a more than a scholar, he was a gentleman.

Renarta Tompkins - June 24, 2018 at 08:50 PM

KA

*Jackie, Kelli, Devi, Jalen and all of the extended family my heart and prayers are with you always and especially at this very difficult time. You are loved and held close... Remembering Irvine fondly and with great respect,
Love always,
Kim N. Archung*

Kim Archung - June 24, 2018 at 09:47 PM



Dear Dr. Irvine and Family,

Sincere condolences to each of you. Praying you find hope in your faith during this time of sorrow.

*Much Love,
Cheryl Fields-Smith*

Cheryl Fields - June 24, 2018 at 11:28 PM

LD

Our hearts are saddened by your loss our thoughts and prayers are with you. Much love to the Irvine family.

Lorenzo and Paulette Dilworth - June 25, 2018 at 09:39 AM

DI

Dr. Irvine was truly first class; a dedicated educator. His class called "The Society of the Inner-City Child" was my favorite class at Georgia State University when I attended graduate school. His course meant a lot to me as a string orchestra teacher in Dekalb County where I am about to retire from after 36 years, all in the McNair Cluster of schools, then later creating some urban community youth orchestras (Sinfo-Nia is one of them).. I am just finding out today (4.29.2019) that he made his transition. My heartfelt condolences, thoughts, and prayers go out to his family. May he continue to rest in peace and power.

David E. Robinson III - April 29, 2019 at 10:27 PM

JF

“ We were so sad to learn of Russell’s passing. Our sincere condolences to Jackie and family. Please know we’re here to help with anything that is needed. Our family as neighbor’s to the Irvine’s have special memories of Russell and we’re very thankful to have known him. Our thoughts & prayers are with all. Sincerely, The Jacobsen Family-Torrey, Rita, Torrey, Kelly and Jessica



Jacobsen Family - June 23, 2018 at 08:59 AM

AD

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Angela J. DAvis - June 22, 2018 at 06:35 PM

LF

Thanks for sharing this special carefree moment between A Grandad and grandsons...beautiful!

Leslie Fenwick - June 27, 2018 at 12:01 AM

DJ

To my friend, Jackie...I am so sorry about your loss. I will be praying for you and your family.

Dr. Deneese L. Jones - June 27, 2018 at 02:17 PM

ER

Jackie, I just learned of Russell's passing on Sunday at the UMES Alumni feast. I just happened to ask Grace Matthews if she had seen Russell at the gathering when she shocked me with the news of his death. It is without question a case of "gone too soon". I will truly missed our discussions at Miss Shirley's, UMES Alumni events and any other place we met. It is certainly a reminder to us all that we live and love today as tomorrow is not promised to us. May God blesses and comfort you, your daughter and grand children as you try to adjust to your/our loss.

Earl Richardson

Earl S. Richardson - July 30, 2018 at 09:36 PM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Russell W. Irvine.*



June 22, 2018 at 04:06 PM



“ *i knew Dr. Irvine but for a short time but was instantly aware of his deep goodness and learned slowly (for this is a modest family) of his many accomplishments and fine mind, and his deep love of family. My heart and prayers are with his wonderful wife, daughter, grandsons, and extended family. Blessings be with all of you.*

Karen Branam - June 22, 2018 at 12:20 PM

BB

“ *Butch, Robin, Cameron, Cullen and Kendall Bilger purchased the Vivid Recollections for the family of Dr. Russell W. Irvine.*



Butch, Robin, Cameron, Cullen and Kendall Bilger - June 22, 2018 at 11:00 AM

PC

“ *Peace and Blessings, Melanie Carter purchased the Secret Garden Basket for the family of Dr. Russell W. Irvine.*



Peace and Blessings, Melanie Carter - June 22, 2018 at 09:22 AM

RH

“ *Deepest condolences to the Irvine family in their loss. May you all be comforted and guided by the protection of love and support during these difficult days.*

Rodney Hopson - June 22, 2018 at 07:13 AM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Russell W. Irvine.*



June 21, 2018 at 06:26 PM

CW

“ Our heart goes out to the family at this difficult time. Russell was intelligent, humorous and a good man who will be terribly missed. The Watson family sends our deepest sympathy and love, we pray that everyone in the Irvine family will have strength during the time of great loss.
“A great soul serves everyone all the time. A great soul never dies. It brings us together again and again.” ~Maya Angelou

Carole & Archie Watson - June 21, 2018 at 01:37 PM

FJ

“ Although I am broken-hearted due to Irvine's sudden demise, my deep love for his family remains. His was an intellect of the first-order, and he will be sorely missed. He's in a better place. May God continue to be with his beloved family.
Love,
Faustine Jones-Wilson

Faustine Jones-Wilson - June 21, 2018 at 12:48 PM

AO

“ Archie, Carole, Nyaa & Olivia purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Dr. Russell W. Irvine.



Archie, Carole, Nyaa & Olivia - June 21, 2018 at 12:42 PM

KS

“ Sincere condolences to the immediate and extended Irvine family. I met Russell shortly after he moved to this area from Georgia and invited him to join our group of golfers for regular play. He enthusiastically accepted and quickly became a popular addition, full of good natured humor. Conversations with him often turned to his family and I came to know many of them to some extent through him. Certainly his abiding love for them was palpable. Russell mattered as a man and he will be missed.

Keith A. Seay

Keith A Seay - June 21, 2018 at 09:35 AM

MS

“ God bless the family of Russell. I am sure he left behind the strength and courage it will take for his family to live without his earthly presence as they share the many memories he has left them. My prayers are to lift you up so you can feel the healing and consoling power of our Lord and Savior.

Marvyne L. Stewart

Marvyne L. Stewart - June 21, 2018 at 09:33 AM

GL

“ I offer sincere condolences to the Irvine Family. I pray that they feel the love and support of all of us who love them. May they be comforted in the days and months ahead.

Gloria Ladson-Billings - June 21, 2018 at 08:09 AM

JY

Russ and I became instant friends from the moment we met during his interview at Georgia State University. His family of Jackie and Kelli and my family spent many hours of family time together. You will be missed. Jim Young

James C. Young - June 21, 2018 at 06:14 PM

AF

Dr. Irvine was on my dissertation committee, and I valued his input, but more than that, I valued him as a teacher. He made me see events through the eyes of those most affected by them. I never knew that there had been a down side to integration for the black community until I read an article he and his wife coauthored. He helped me to understand the “economics of poverty,” and I still read and follow the works of Herbert J. Gans. We both believed that you have to use your political voice to facilitate change. He will be missed, but the knowledge he shared will be part of his legacy.

Angela Finn July 30, 2018

Angela Finn - July 30, 2018 at 05:37 AM

VW

“*He took the time to teach, when he did not have to do so. I learned about “unintended consequences” and to read the source. “Where is YOUR voice?” he queried of a rough draft. I didn’t know I needed one until he said so.*

Memories live in the details, and I am grateful for my memories of him—memories of laughter, of critical engagement, and of sharing his home and intellect.

With love from myself and my family, for we ALL benefitted from his generosity of spirit—Mel, Vanessa, and Sarah Walker

vanessa walker - June 21, 2018 at 07:59 AM

MW

“*The Winns send our love and prayers with you. Dr. Irvine was a beautiful human...so delightful to be around. We love you.*

Maisha Winn - June 20, 2018 at 08:50 PM

UC

“ Hi Jackie, Kelli and family: so sorry to hear about Irvine; even though I didn't talk or see him regularly, I have fond memories of him and you during family reunions in Alabama. May you find strength during this difficult time. Love, cousin Ursula

Ursula Carter - June 20, 2018 at 05:10 PM



“ We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.

March Funeral Homes - June 19, 2018 at 07:00 PM