



Theodore Roosevelt Laster

January 9, 1953 - September 6, 2020

THEODORE ROOSEVELT LASTER, JR., ESQ. died on September 6, 2020, in his home in Gwynn Oak, Maryland, after a battle with cancer surrounded by his children.

Ted was born in Baltimore, Maryland on January 9, 1953 to the late Theodore Roosevelt Laster Sr and Hannah Laster. He was the youngest of their children proceeding him in death were his older siblings Nellie Mae Thompson and Joseph Lineberger. Nellie Mae and Ted shared a special bond that greatly influenced him throughout his life.

Ted attended Baltimore City Public Schools, including Calverton Junior High School, and Baltimore Polytechnic Institute. He graduated in three years from the University of Maryland College Park with his degree in History. He was one of the first African American recipients of the H.C. Byrd award from the University of Maryland College Park. He went on to graduate from Harvard Law School where he became the president of the Harvard Black Law Students Association and earned his Juris Doctorate. In the spring of 1983 Ted became an Omega Man; he was #4 of "The Notorious Eight". Shortly after in the summer of 1983 he welcomed his first-born child, Velinda A. Taylor. He later met and married the mother of his only son and namesake Theodore R. Laster III and youngest daughter Tristyn R. Graham.

Mr. Laster was an A course graduate of Baltimore Polytechnic Institute in 1971 and attended the University of Maryland at College Park. He was in the institution's honors program when he formed the Black Honors Caucus. The caucus recruited black students to the program and pressured the Honors program to make its courses available to students not in the program. One of those classes, which he co-taught, was Institutional Racism in America. After graduating College Park, Ted went on to Harvard Law School where he became the president of the Harvard Black Law Students Association.

Central to his passion and resolve was fighting systemic racism. He spent many years as a member of Baltimore City Government as well as many years working with Northwest Baltimore Corporation (NWBC) and other non-profit organizations. His work was instrumental in the development of many projects throughout the City including early efforts with four churches to develop commercial properties in Johnston's Square currently known as Church Square Shopping Center. He was also instrumental in the revitalization of Highlandtown and Fells Point.

As he joins the love of his life, Paula Ashby. Ted leaves to cherish his memory: daughter, Velinda A. Taylor; son-in-law, Eugene Taylor, Jr.; grandsons, Antawn C. Evans and Javon A. Edmonds; son, Theodore R. Laster, III; daughter, Tristyn R. Graham; son-in-law, Terriel Graham, Jr.; granddaughters, Tessa R. Graham and Temari A. E. Graham

Cemetery Details

Arbutus Memorial Park Cemetery

1101 Sulphur Spring Road
Baltimore, MD 21227

Previous Events

viewing

SEP 11. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Homes - West Baltimore
4300 Wabash Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 542-2400
info@marchfh.com

Wake

SEP 12. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

March Funeral Homes - West Baltimore
4300 Wabash Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 542-2400
info@marchfh.com

Service

SEP **12.** 12:00 PM (ET)

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4300 Wabash Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21215
(410) 542-2400
info@marchfh.com

Tribute Wall



“ To View the Webcast of the Funeral for Theodore Roosevelt Laster, Please Click the Link below.



March Funeral Homes - September 10, 2020 at 12:05 PM

SR

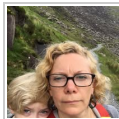
Dear Velinda & Family of Mr. Theodore Roosevelt,
My Heartfelt Condolences on the Passing of Your Dad 🙏 Stay Blessed
🙏 He Will Always be in Your Heart ❤️
Love Always,
Aunt Sheila/Uncle Charles/All The Family 🙏🙏🙏❤️❤️❤️

Sheila E. Cook, R.N.,BA. (Rt.) - September 11, 2020 at 10:16 AM

SR

Dear Velinda & Family of Mr. Theodore Laster, My Heartfelt
Condolences on the Passing of Your Dad 🙏 Stay Blessed 🙏 He Will
Always Be In Your Heart ❤️
Love Always,
Uncle Charles/ Aunt Sheila/All The Family 🙏🙏🙏❤️❤️❤️
Please Forgive Earlier Last Name Error 🙏
Again,
Our Sincere Condolences ❤️❤️❤️

Sheila E. Cook, R.N.,BA. (Rt.) - September 11, 2020 at 02:09 PM



Ted was one of the best people I ever worked with in the City. He was so sweet and so focused on cooperation and problem solving. I will miss him so much. Every Wednesday he was there with a smile and a kind word, and I always looked forward to talking to Ted. So much love and sympathy to his family.

Erin Smyth - September 11, 2020 at 08:55 PM



“ *Theodore Roosevelt Laster*

October 13, 2022 at 08:33 AM

“ I have lost a friend of 50 years.

In 1971 I joined the staff at University at College Park as a recruiter of minority students. At that time at least 25% of the students were from inner city Baltimore. They were enrolled in remedial courses. Most of them did not have the financial resources to participate in many elements of student life. The prevailing presumption on campus was--if you were a black student--you were in a remedial program and you were on the campus as part of some social experiment.

I went looking for students who would change that perception. My first recruit was a student named Theodore Laster as he was graduation Baltimore Polytechnic High School. Within 3 years Ted had become the first Black student to be admitted to the university Honors program. He founded and led the Black Honor Society. He graduated within 3 years as the outstanding scholastic student in 1974. While I served as Chairman of the Black Faculty and Staff, Ted represented the Black honor students on my board. He was appointed to the University's Commission on Minority Student Education.

When Ted found out that I had applied to law school, he decided that he would do likewise. He applied to the same schools that I applied to. Ted was admitted to the university of Michigan, Yale and Harvard. He asked my recommendation on which school to attend. I recommended Yale. He asked which admission I had accepted. When he found out that I was going to Harvard, he let me know that if Harvard was good enough for me, it was good enough for him.

We entered Harvard Law School the same year and graduated together. When we arrived, we found Kurt Schmoke and Stuart Simms one year ahead of us. In our third year, I was elected president of the student body and Ted was elected president of BALSAs, the Black student organization. We worked together at Harvard just as we had worked together at UMD. One of my best

memories is the closing the Law School down to prevent the appearance of a representative of the Rhodesian apartheid government from appearing on campus. We also worked together to get a national law firm banned from the campus because their recruiter had made racist remarks to a close friend.

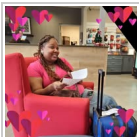
After law school we went in different directions. I later moved to Baltimore for 10 years so met on a regular basis. I moved away 25 years ago, but I stayed in touch with Ted. We travelled to HLS reunions together. We would have monthly conversations by telephone about the politics of Baltimore. Recently, these calls slowed and became further apart. Ted never mentioned cancer in all of those calls. So I was filled with sadness and surprise when I received the call from his daughter.

To his children I say, your father's name is found in the newspapers and records of Poly, University of Maryland and Harvard Law School where he left a mark that should make you proud. Ted was a good friend. You are proof that he was a good father.

God bless you and may many pleasant memories bring you comfort.

Meldon Hollis..

Meldon Hollis - September 19, 2020 at 12:40 PM



“*Mr. Laster touched my life through his daughter, my sister, Velinda. The strength and love he gave to her she gave to so many others including myself and my family. I love you all and I thank God for the impact that Mr. Laster had on so many lives. Love Lakia Fisher and the Fisher Family*”

Kia Fisher - September 12, 2020 at 01:15 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Theodore Roosevelt Laster.*



September 12, 2020 at 08:03 AM



“ *Sheila E. Cook, R.N.,BA. (Rt.) sent a virtual gift in memory of Theodore Roosevelt Laster*



Sheila E. Cook, R.N.,BA. (Rt.) - September 11, 2020 at 02:11 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Theodore Roosevelt Laster.*



September 11, 2020 at 10:18 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Theodore Roosevelt Laster.*



September 11, 2020 at 09:53 AM



“ *Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Theodore Roosevelt Laster.*



September 10, 2020 at 10:55 PM



“ *A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Theodore Roosevelt Laster.*



September 10, 2020 at 06:56 PM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Theodore Roosevelt Laster.*



September 10, 2020 at 04:30 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Theodore Roosevelt Laster.*



September 10, 2020 at 11:59 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Theodore Roosevelt Laster.



September 10, 2020 at 09:50 AM



“ I will always remember the first time I met Ted at a Harvard Law School Black Law Student Association meeting. He was brilliant, affable, magnetic, confident and committed. The connection formed in 1975 has lasted all of these years. I will miss him but will carry the memories in my heart . Deepest sympathies to his family. Rest In Peace Theodore

Fern Fisher - September 10, 2020 at 09:20 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Theodore Roosevelt Laster.



September 10, 2020 at 09:06 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Theodore Roosevelt Laster.



September 10, 2020 at 08:50 AM



“ 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 - September 08, 2020 at 01:52 PM