

DR. JEROME DENEAN WILLAMS

OBITUARY

Dr. Jerome Denean Williams born on January 11, 1947 in Philadelphia, PA died peacefully on January 29, 2021 at St. Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston, NJ.

From a young age Jerome has been a loving faithful and zealous dedicated servant of Jehovah. He studied the bible with his mother and father whose guidance and discipline helped fulfill the words of Proverbs 22:6 where it says "Train a boy in the way he should go; Even when he grows old, he will not depart from it." Jerome was moved by what the Bible teaches about Jehovah and his will and purpose and to symbolize his dedication to Jehovah, Jerome was baptized in April 1958 at age of 11. Jerome had the privilege to serve as a Congregation Elder for over 35 years in over 10 Congregations. He presided and officiated over 40 weddings, and also had the blessings to assist with numerous theocratic assignments on the Circuit and Regional level. The apostle Paul in Galatians 5:22-23 said "the fruitage of the spirit is love ..." Jerome had a very strong love for all sorts of people around the world and as a result was well loved and respected by so many people. Jerome helped many people to have a personal relationship with Jehovah and his son Jesus Christ. Jerome continued faithful to Jehovah until his last day on this earth.

After Graduating from Levittown High School, where he was an All-American in track inducted into the sports hall of fame, Jerome went on to attend the University of Pennsylvania earning a bachelor's degree in English. While attending the University of Pennsylvania he not only was on the track and cross country teams but was one of the multi-year captains. He set many university track records, ultimately making it to the 1968 U.S. Olympic Trials. Jerome and his teammates regularly attended the Penn Relays each year up until 2019. An avid runner, Jerome continued to run every day up until a few years ago. He successfully completed 39 marathons including qualifying for

Boston until age 61. He did not miss a single day of running rain, snow or shine for 50+ years.

After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania Jerome went on to earn a Master's degree in industrial administration from Union College and then a Doctoral degree from the University of Colorado. At the time of earning his Doctoral degree in 1986 he was the only African-American to receive a Ph.D. in marketing in the entire country. Along his life's journey he made 1,000's of colleagues, friends and friends that became family as he made his residences in New York, Colorado, Pennsylvania, Singapore, Hong Kong, Washington, D.C, Georgia, Texas, and finally New Jersey in 2010.

Although he was very involved in his spiritual organization, running and academic work, his true love was the apple of his eye, his partner in life, Lillian as well their five children. Jerome and Lillian never missed an opportunity for their weekly date-night Sunday movie, especially if it were a James Bond movie. Jerome loved the spotlight too. Whenever his children performed on stage, he was in the audience feeling proud or felt even better dancing and performing by their side. He performed countless dance routines, lip synch's, plays and talent shows for family reunions, work colleagues and his congregation. Jerome loved his Motown artists and any time he was in the car he would be belting along with them, off key.

At the time of his death Dr. Williams was the former Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor of Rutgers University-Newark. With a career in academia spanning over 30 years, Dr. Williams was a trailblazer in the field of marketing. He was also a Distinguished Professor and the Prudential Chair in Business (Marketing Department), and fellow of The Center for urban Entrepreneurship & Economic Development (Management and Global Business Department) in the Rutgers business school-Newark and New Brunswick.

Prior to joining Rutgers, he held Endowed Chair positions at four different universities, including the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Visiting Associate Professor in the Wharton Business School at the University of Pennsylvania, the Anheuser-Busch/John E. Jacob Professor at Howard University, the F. J. Heyne

Centennial Professor at the University of Texas at Austin, and the Wee Kim Wee Professor at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Prior to being on the Howard faculty, he was on the Penn State University Marketing Department faculty for 14 years.

Dr. Williams was the chair of the Board of Trustees of the American Marketing Association Foundation, where the Williams-Qualls-Spratlen Multicultural Mentoring Award of Excellence bears his name. He served on advisory committees for several Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-funded initiatives including an initiative to reduce childhood obesity and for *Let's Move!*, an effort spearheaded by former First Lady Michelle Obama.

Dr. Williams used every resource to encourage people of color to pursue a career in marketing, including being a pioneer for his visionary work at The PhD project. Dr. Williams used his research as an opportunity to transform the lives of consumers and young scholars. Dr. Williams and his work on racial profiling has been featured on many national outlets in addition to being studied in universities classrooms around the world. As the Rutgers University-Newark Chancellor wrote to the university system upon his passing, "Indeed, his impact on every level will reverberate for many years to come, as surely as his warmth, wisdom, care, and humor will reverberate among all who knew him".

Dr. Williams was a leader in his field of marketing and renowned across the universe of business schools as an innovator and advocate regarding the urgency of diversifying the profession. Dr. Williams has been published extensively in the areas of multicultural marketing, internet privacy, and public health communication. He was a member of an Institute of Medicine Committee that authored the landmark report *Food Marketing to Children and Youth: Threat or Opportunity?* and appointed by the US Census Bureau to Chair the 2010 Communications Contract Academic Assessment Team. He is co-author of *Diversity in Advertising: Broadening the Scope of Research Directions, Consumer Equality: Race and the American Marketplace* (forthcoming), *Advances in Communication Research to Reduce Childhood Obesity*, and two edited volumes on marketing and public policy issues.

Dr. Williams was predeceased by his parents, Jerome and Gloria (nee Dixon) Williams and brother Allen Price.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Lillian (nee Harrison) Williams; his loving children, Denean Williams (Alicia), Derek Williams (Allison), Daniel Williams (Amy), Dante Williams (Renee) and Dachia Williams-Oropeza (Mario); and his 12 cherished grandchildren, Breonna, Cameron, Natalia, Gaven, Orion, Joshua, Jayla, Nyla, Chloe, Jeremy-Lee, Jordyn, and Aiden.

He is also survived by his siblings, Aaron Williams (Valencia), Linda Chamberlain (Larry), Carol Williams, and Eric Walton.

The family wants to thank everyone for the thoughtful and loving calls, texts, and posts.