A CELEBRATION A LIFE WELL LIVED



LAWRENCE HENRY COLLINS

June 24, 1947 - July 29, 2020

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LAWRENCE HENRY COLLINS was born to Dorothy (Chennault) Collins and Stonewall Collins on June 24, 1947 in Detroit, Michigan. He was the third child of four and the first born son to this union. He made his transition to join Christ on Wednesday evening, July 29, 2020.

Larry grew up in Detroit attending public school and graduated from Central High School in 1965. He was Vice President of his senior class and graduated with honors. Larry participated on Central's track team, running the mile relay and the half-mile heat. He went on to get his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Michigan (U of M) with a major in Electrical Engineering, graduating in 1970. There he served as the Chair of the Black Action Movement for the College of Engineering during the 60's Civil Rights Movement. He pledged on the first Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity line at U of M, and was the "lead dog." Larry received his Master's in Management Supervision with an emphasis in business management from Central Michigan University in 1979. In addition, he was awarded the Certificate of Achievement in Marketing Research Methodology and Applications from the renowned and prestigious Burke Institute. He was the first Black and second person ever at Ford Motor Co. to receive a diploma in Marketing Research. Finally, to complete his formal education, within Ford Motor Company's Executive Continuing Education Program, he attended Duke University's Fuqua School of Business in Durham, NC for courses in both 1996 and 1997 and received diplomas in Marketing and Advertising.

Larry married his high school sweetheart, Shelia Hankins, on August 27, 1971. To this union they had 2 daughters, Lauren Hallie and Lisa Hillary Collins; and they raised their niece, Toya Hankins, who they recognized as their daughter as well. After 17 years, Larry and Shelia ended their marriage, yet they continued their broader family relationship as they co-parented and supported their children and each other. Larry relayed to a few people that he thought he was a "...good father and a great grandfather."

Larry briefly held a position as an engineer at Babcock and Wilcox in Alliance, Ohio before going to work for Ford Motor Company in Dearborn, Michigan for over 32 years. He received numerous promotions while at Ford; was the Taurus Brand Manager and then the International Markets Marketing Research Manager. Before retiring Larry headed Marketing Research in Asia-Pacific, the Middle-East, South Africa, South America and Mexico. He traveled all over the world; including Southeast Asia, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, Europe, and Brazil. He retired as an Executive in 2005.



Larry did everything to the fullest extent, thinking through every detail, and organizing complex plans to accomplish his goals. Nothing was halfway. Whether it was his hobby of going from two goldfish in a bowl to a 100-gallon built in aquarium of salt water fish; having collectible items of Black Art, special edition Santa Bears and Beanie Babies, and statues and figurines, to in more recent years having a gun collection; Larry was all in. He was respected in the dog training world as for over ten years he bred and trained dogs. Larry personally had six dogs – German Shepard (Tuco), Dobermans (Angie, Scarlet, Mickey and Keke), Terriers (Colby and Brenna). He and Toya became avid citizen band (CB) radio operators; installing a 25-foot antenna on their small ranch home in Detroit to get broader distance reception. He studied the martial art of Karate and competed locally and regionally. As an adult he learned to roller skate – including all the fancy turns and moves.

After he retired early from Ford Motor Company, Larry pursued his love of dance and created the Steady Steppers Institute in Detroit, MI. For 14 years he taught many different urban dances, but he really loved and specialized in the Chicago Step. Larry traveled internationally, going to many states and on cruise ships teaching dance. His Vegas Jam National Dance Convention hosted up to 1,200 people each year in Las Vegas annually since 2007 and sold out for twelve consecutive years straight. The "Vegas Jam" is a geographically and dance diverse fun filled weekend. People came from almost every state and as well as internationally. Although the convention is cancelled for this year, over 50 people were registered to attend from the United Kingdom (UK). His life was full. He ran in many circles and he was loved and respected by many.

Larry made friends everywhere he went. He had personal relationships with everyone from the local banker, the folks at the post office, staff at hotels in Las Vegas, and after burying his parents, he continued to stay in contact with the cemetery representative. He made life long lasting impressions on everyone.

Family: Preceding him in death were his parents, Stonewall and Dorothy Collins, and his oldest brother, Dawsie Collins. He leaves to survive him his daughters – Lauren Hallie Collins, Lisa Hillary (Collins) Johnson and Toya Hankins; his siblings-Betty Jean Brown, Gwendolyn Bennett and Stephen Collins; grandchildren: Daemon and Sydney Johnson, Ashton Martin, Madison and Collin Smith, Conner Smith, Kiara and El Melik Martin I; his former wife-Shelia Hankins; Mother-in-law-Jimmie Mae Hankins; nephews and niece-Rodney, Marcus and Christopher Carr, Laura and Kenyen Brown; Son-in-law- Carl Smith Jr. and a host of cousins and great nieces and nephews.







Daddy,

There just aren't enough words and too many emotions to fit, so, we'll just say...Thank you...for EVERYTHING! All that We are, believe in and possess thrives because YOU fathered and loved us the way you did/do. You touched so many. We could NEVER thank you enough. We're sure your busier now than ever trying to look out for everyone you loved, but, be at peace. Job well done Daddy.

WE LOVE YOU BEYOND INFINITY.

~ Lauren and Lisa

Pop — Thank you for everything!!

I wonder if I told you that enough when you were here... Thank you for adding SO MUCH to my life — from, the father stuff we take for granted like, not missing a softball or basketball game and teaching me to drive a stick shift and how to change a tire to exposing me to a plethora of music, instilling in me the importance of being true to your work, following through on a commitment, exercising discipline and being a person of integrity ... and so much more! You didn't think I was paying attention — did you... Most importantly, thank you for Loving us all so deeply!!! I love you pop, from the bottom of my heart today and forever!

~ Toy Toy

Lawrence Henry, as I would call you when you referred to me as Shelia Valane, you saw life in black and white, but you lived life and dressed in full color. My 25 year dating and marriage to you helped me to evolve from a 9th grader to the woman I am today. Together, you and I created and raised our children, the most important gift that we could have ever given to each other. I jokingly refer to you as my babies' daddy. My life will never be the same. Larry: Continue to dance in Heaven and I will always carry you in my heart as you are my first and forever love.

~ Umi - Shelia Hankins

Father-In-Law

I came into your family Not knowing what I would find But I was put at ease by you

You made me feel right at home From the first day that we met You welcomed me with open arms And that I WILL NOT FORGET!!!!

You always encouraged me with kind words and firm words without any filter when needed.

I knew that I could depend on you on any given day "A true gentleman, sophisticated, and wise with invaluable adv Who I respected and welcomed me into his heart and family You stood above the rest ... I thank GOD for bringing you into

REST AND CONTINUE STEPPING!!!!

~ Carl



I love you. Thank you.

making sure all of us were ok, no matter what.

Papa,

You will be missed. Greatest!

How do I love you?

Let me count the ways, I love you with a love I seem to lose with my lost saints. I love you with the breath, smiles, tears, of all my life,

Thessalonians 4:16 - "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead In Christ will rise first"

He will do his stepping all over the golden floors of heaven.

~ Love, Baby-sister

My Papa ...

Thank you for the knowledge and all of the love. You took on more of the father role when I lost mine and I appreciate you being there more than you know. I will carry the things you taught me for the rest of my life. I love you.

Big Pappaaaa.

Your spirit is unmatched & I'm going to miss your smile so much. Through everything you've been right there with me, right or wrong. I hold you so dear to my heart. Fly high papa, I love you so

It is hard for me to accept that my Big Brother is gone. I know he is Resting in the Arms of Jesus, with our Mom and Dad, and other Loved Ones.

I will always miss him. Until we are reunited,

"Rest in Love Bro Bro".

Stephen Stonewall

I love you Larry

Mama Jimmie (Sweetbaby)

