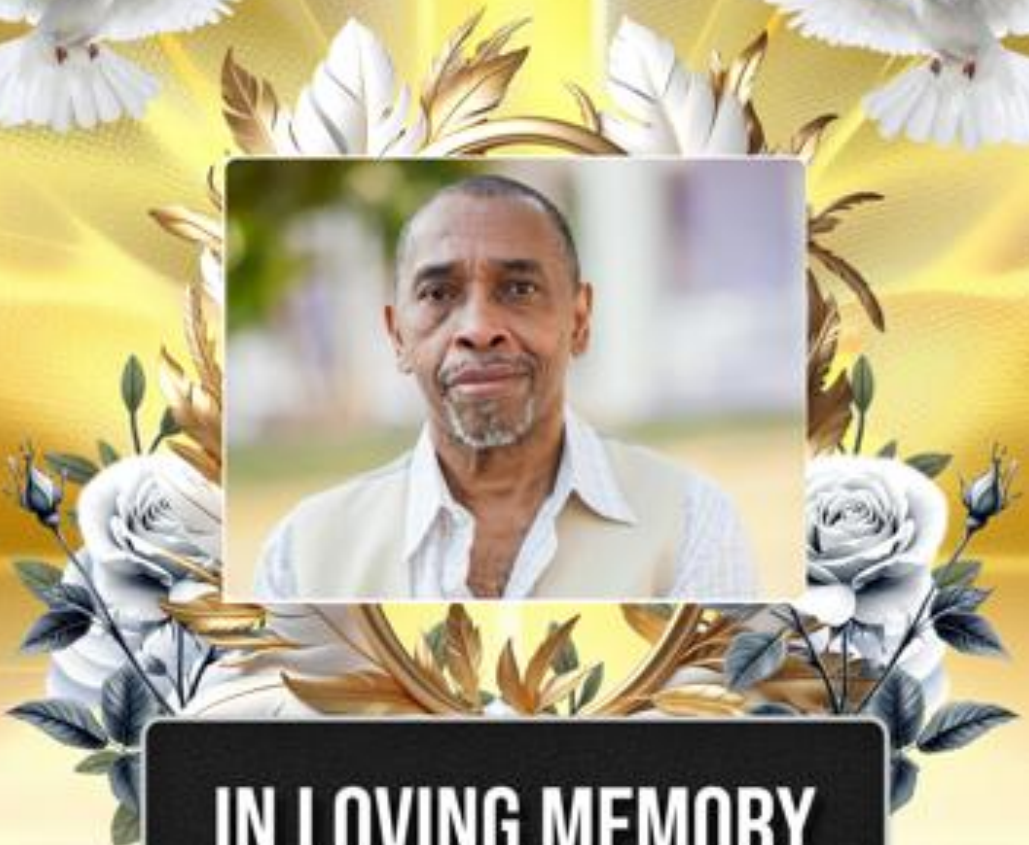


Celebration of Life



IN LOVING MEMORY

Michael Rodney Brown

September 18, 1947 - May 24, 2025

The Citron

815 Pershing Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Saturday, June 14, 2025 3:30-5:30 PM




Michael Rodney Brown's Obituary: Sunrise 9/18/47 – Sunset 5/24/25

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved patriarch, mentor, protector, and friend, Michael Rodney Brown. He left this world surrounded by love and family - in his home in Washington, DC - leaving behind an extraordinary legacy of strength, wisdom, warmth, and resilience.

Born in Harlem, “Mike” was raised in a vibrant, close-knit family that included his grandparents, mother and father, hordes of aunts and uncles, what felt like a million first cousins, and a village of extended family and friends. His sharp intellect was evident early on - starting at P.S. 170 - and he quickly advanced to a program for the intellectually gifted at C.S. 57. He continued his education at Wadleigh Junior High School before moving on to Brandeis High School. His talents extended beyond academics, earning him a basketball scholarship to Bishop College in Texas. From an early age, his neighbors recognized his special connection with animals, deeming him a dog whisperer of sorts. This deep affinity carried through to his adult life, where his home was always filled with the presence of loyal, thick Rottweilers - each one a testament to his gentle yet commanding nature.

Mike was a lifelong coach, counselor, and public servant - dedicating himself to uplifting others through sports, mentorship, and community service. These were some of his primary passions and core values. His tenure with the Upward Fund exemplifies his commitment to helping inner-city youth achieve greatness in education, athletics, and life. Above all, Mike Brown was a dutiful son, brother, father, and friend. He was a protector and a steady hand for everyone he loved. He taught the women how to own their beauty, intelligence, and self-worth. He taught the men how to make good decisions, have integrity, and be upstanding. Though he is no longer physically with us, the lessons he imparted and the love he shared will continue to shape the lives of those who were fortunate enough to know him.

Michael was a man of remarkable depth. He was creative, artistic, adventurous, athletic, and fiercely passionate. He passed down his love of basketball, tennis, baseball, swimming, and football to all his children. There are generations of New York Knicks, Yankees, and Giants fans because of his infectious





enthusiasm for his hometown teams. A “Harlem guy” through and through, he was sharp, well-dressed, resourceful, and woke. He took tremendous pride in his 111th street roots and his Creole heritage. His cues came from Malcolm X, among many others, on those streets as a boy, and Mike paid those lessons forward several times with his teachings about *Black excellence, Black power, and Black beauty*. Mike had a zest for life, and he encouraged his children to explore the world while staying true to who they were and where they came from.

Our father loved music and the sounds of artists like *Luther Vandross, Take 6, Anita Baker, Sade, Will Downing, Rachelle Ferrell, Alexander O’Neal, and Bobby McFerrin* comprised the soundtrack of his soulful life. Similarly, he loved a good laugh. “*Saturday Night Live*”, “*In Loving Color*”, “*Martin*”, “*Mad TV*”, “*The Chappelle Show*”, and stand-ups by Eddie Murphy and Richard Pryor were some of his favorite shows. Beyond sports, family, and entertainment, Mike found solace in nature. He could just as easily be found feeding ducks at Van Courtlandt Park as well as whipping behind-the-back passes at Milbank. He loved to watch rabbits disappear into the woods, chipmunks scurry, and geese flock. His appreciation for the outdoors, pets, and simple joys was a testament to his balanced and thoughtful approach to life.

Michael was preceded in death by his parents, Ruby E. Hansen and Anthony Brown Jr., his grandparents John and Oralee Johnson, Anthony Brown Sr., and Beulah Mundle, his brother, Kevin Brown and all his beloved aunts and uncles. While he mourned the loss of these loved ones and many others, he carried their spirits with him every day. Michael is survived by his children: Dionne Michele Brown Ferrette, Danelle Brown, Michaela Ruby Brown, Michael Rasheed Brown, Isaiah Malik Collins-Brown, Ikiel Muhammad-Ali Collins-Brown, and his niece, Pamela Yvette Williams-Ortiz [to whom he was a surrogate father]. His legacy continues through his cherished grandchildren, Tiffany Jane Ferrette, Alexis Jacqueline Ferrette, Celeste Jasmine Ferrette-Davis, Ivan Jerald Ferrette, Jr., Niara Makalapua Brown, Theodore Alphonzo Jones, IV, Michael Patrick Jones, Aaran Yahannas Brown-Berrios, and Maliyah Marjani Perkins; and his great-grandchildren: Colby Michael Davis, Camille Elyse Davis, and Calvin Anthony Davis. He is also survived by his sister, Marcia Stephanie Williams, with whom he shared a lifelong and unbreakable bond





until the very end. His siblings, Beverly Brown, Barbara “Bobbi” Salters, and Kendall Brown, are also left to mourn this loss, along with his cousins, Joan Johnson and Sheryl Winn, nephew, Khyrei Ortiz and niece, Kianah Ortiz, as well as a host of extended family. His sons-in-law and sons-by-choice: Daniel Ortiz, Ivan Ferrette Sr., Theodore Jones, and Romairo Mabry also held a special place in his life.

We extend special thanks to his dedicated care team, including Dr. Andrew Lee, his Howard University Hospital team, Dr. Anthony Akinlolu, Nurse David Friedman, Chaplain Roberta Sonsaray White, Olumuyiwa Sogbesan, Muma, Abraham, and the entire VITAS and Heartland Hospice teams, who provided him with compassionate care and support in his final phase of life.

Mike touched countless lives, and his absence will be deeply felt by his many family members, colleagues, and dear friends. While he may no longer walk beside us, his humor, love, and wisdom will remain in our hearts forever.





In Memory of Michael Rodney Brown

- Welcome and Opening remarks:
 - Daughters: Dionne and Michaela

- Eulogy:
 - Daughters: Dionne and Michaela

- Poem Reading: “*Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night*” (Dylan Thomas, 1951)
 - **Grandchildren:** Michael Patrick Jones and Ivan Jerald Ferrette, Jr.

- Photos and Music:
 - Daughter: Michaela

- Poem Reading: “*If . . .*” (Rudyard Kipling, 1910)
 - **Grandchildren:** Theodore Alphonzo Jones, IV and Tiffany Janee Ferrette

- Memory and Story Sharing:
 - Daughter: Dionne will invite family and guests to offer special moments shared with Mike

- Closing remarks:
 - Daughter: Michaela

- Release of Butterflies:
 - We invite you to join the family of Michael Rodney Brown in the garden to release butterflies in his honor.





“Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night”

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

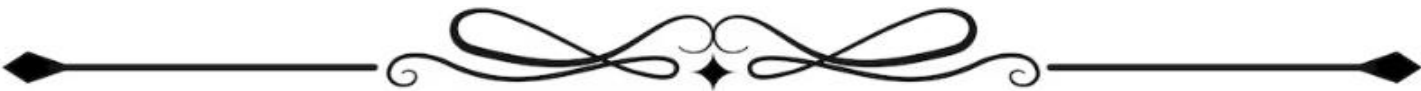
Poet: *Dylan Thomas (1951)*





“If . . .”

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;
If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;
If you can make one heap of all your winnings





And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on";
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings - nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run -
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!

Poet: [Rudyard Kipling \(1910\)](#)





“Take a walk down memory lane
And see where the path might lead you
Familiar things do change
But in our minds they stay the same
I can hear the voice of my mama
Calling out her children's names
She says, come on in, it's dinner time
Let me help my babies fix their plates
We all have memories, we should not forget
Times that become part of our lives
A person so heartfelt
When I think of you, instantly, I get sentimental thoughts
When I think of you, woman, ooh, ooh
I get sentimental . . .

Sentimental thoughts of moments
Captured in our mind as we grow up (As we grow)
Things in life do change for us
But memories stay the same (The same, the same)
Loved ones in our lives are a part of
Never take for granted someone
Spend some time while they're around
Spend some time, share sentimental . . . ”

Artist: Alexander O'Neal

Songwriters: Terry Steven Lewis / James Samuel Harris III





"Black butterfly, sailed across the waters
Tell your sons and daughters
What the struggle brings
Black Butterfly, set the skies on fire
Rise up even higher
So the ageless winds of time can catch your wings!

Fly
Butterfly
Yeah, yeah, yes
Fly"!

Artist: Deniece Williams
Songwriters: Barry Mann / Cynthia Weil