



*Chanel
Ward
Richardson*

February 23, 1969 - July 2, 2024



ORDER OF SERVICE

VIEWING 9:00-11:00

Music by John "Sax" Williams

OPENING SELECTION

"My Love IS Your Love" • Whitney Houston

ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY INC.

Ivy Beyond the Wall ceremony

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Alfonso Cannon Funeral Home

READING

Old Testament: Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

Robert V. Ward Jr

New Testament: John 14:1-7

Taihra Jones

EULOGY

Father Ed Hallinan

OBITUARY

Marlo Ricketts Green

LIFE TRIBUTES

HSES Class of 87

Raquel Stewart / Ollie L. Tucker Jr

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc.

Amy Thomas Pittman

Northeastern University

J. Keith Motley, Ph.D read by Andrea Knight

Message from Zeta Phi Beta Sorority inc.

Dr. Stacie NC Grant read by Judy Morgan

SOLO

"She's Always In My Hair" • Prince

Perf'ormed by Nayo Jones

MOMENT OF SILENCE

WORDS FROM THE FAMILY

CLOSING PRAYER

Father Ed Hallinan

RECESSIONAL

"Lets go Crazy" • Prince



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Chanel Maria Ward-Richardson, a beloved wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend, and professional, passed away peacefully from cancer on July 2, 2024, at the age of 55, surrounded by her loving family.

She was born on February 23, 1969, to Yvette Ward and Lamont Ricketts. Chanel married the love of her life Joseph Richardson, Sr. on July 29, 1994 and from that union came Gabrielle, Moriah, and Joseph.

Chanel's journey of excellence began at Engineering & Science High School in Philadelphia, where she graduated in 1987. She went on to earn her degree from Northeastern University, where she also pledged Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., forming bonds of sisterhood that would last a lifetime.

Her professional career was marked by significant contributions to education and technology. Chanel worked at Lesley College and Microsoft before finding her home at Drexel University in the Academic Information & Systems department for over twenty years. She began as a Systems Analyst for Financial Aid and was promoted to Student Systems Analyst Manager, leading her team in supporting the software applications used across the student lifecycle. Chanel excelled in this position, utilizing her strong analytical skills to implement new technology, improve the efficiency of processes and maximize the use of applications. She coupled this with demonstrated expertise in mentoring her team, supporting colleagues and building lasting friendships.

Chanel was not only accomplished in her professional life but was also a woman of diverse interests and passions. She was an avid reader, sharing her love for Nebula Award-winning books with her children. Family television nights often featured spirited discussions about the latest episodes of Dr. Who. Her love for music, particularly her adoration for Prince, was well-known among friends and family.

Those who knew Chanel will remember her for her warmth, her wisdom, and her ability to light up any room with her presence. Her legacy of love, learning, and laughter will continue to inspire all whose lives she touched. Chanel lived a life characterized by these traits, and an infectious smile that touched all who knew her. She is survived by her devoted husband, Joseph Richardson, Sr., and their cherished children: Gabrielle, Moriah, and Joseph, Jr. "JJ". She also leaves behind her loving mother Yvette; treasured Mother-in-Law Catherine; Father-in-Law Marius; her beloved Uncle Bobby (Ele); cherished cousins Marlo (Leslie, III) and Tyra (Jamal); siblings Marty, Lilliana, LaVonna, Lamar, Osiris, Emmanuel, Rosetta, Sheeba, Ma'at, Shaniyah, Malaysia, Nakira, and LaMont; sister-in-law Leicha (Chance and Chase); nieces, nephews, cousins, friends, and sorority sisters. She is predeceased by her father Lamont Ricketts, grandfathers Robert Ward & Lawrence Ricketts; and grandmothers Aquila Ward & Anna Ricketts.





Ward/James Family Tribute

Chanel Ward Richardson was blessed to be part of the James, Richardson, Ricketts, and Ward families. The James, Ricketts and Wards all have deep ties to the City of Philadelphia which go back to the late 1800's.

Although the only child of Yvette Ward, Chanel was rarely alone. A loving extended family surrounded her: grandparents, aunts, uncles, and bushels of cousins. Chanel spent a great deal of her formative years with grandmother Acquilla née, James Ward. She loved her grandma and vice versa. Acquilla James was one of Elsie and Richard James' nine children (Ernestine, Chiquitta, Blanche, Dorthea, Patricia, Laurence, William, and Roland). A close family, Chanel spent many hours with members of the "James Clan." Family Reunions were one of her favorite events. An amateur genealogist, Chanel would trace the James family tree back to 1782 and Malala James, her fourth great grandmother.

Chanel also loved her grandfather, Robert V. Ward Sr. A particularly favorite moment of her's was when at sixteen, he was her escort for Philadelphia's Cotillion Ball.

Chanel was equally fond of the Ward and Smith side of her family. She loved visiting with her great grandparents, Eleanor née Smith (one of 13 siblings), and Wendell Ward (one of 8), and great great uncles Albert and Frederick Smith. Wendell's brother Vaughn also played a role in Chanel's life. His daughter Valarie would play a small role in Chanel becoming an Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA).

On the James side of the family, Chanel was loved and will be missed by her great aunts Peggy and Pat James. She enjoyed hanging out with her many aunts, uncles, and cousins: Richard, Miguel, and Tai Tucker-Jones (Maryland), Greer Ava Smith (New York), Andrea (Wash. DC), and Maida Edmonds, Jamie Brewster (Philadelphia), Robert V. Ward Jr, and Eleanor Jaynes (of Boston), Derek Ward (deceased NJ), Derek and Nadine Fleming (NJ) and their son Derek Fleming Jr, Nina, Gina, Darren, Kiani and Shawn James, Stephanie Johnson (Philadelphia), Leatrice Abbott (Maryland), Phyllis Williams née Abbott (Philadelphia), Vincent Williams (Florida), Carol Abbott (Philadelphia), Selette, Mychelle, Myrna, Merritt, Byron, Gabriella, Reggie, Rea, Kenyatta James, Tracey Jackson, Shelton James-Rabich and Danaah McCallum.

Ricketts Family Tribute

Chanel was truly an Angel, a Sister, and a Friend who touched the lives of all who knew her. She possessed an extraordinary gift for nurturing deep, personal connections with every member of the family. Whether through daily conversations or less frequent interactions, she had a unique way of making each person feel valued and understood. This rare ability wove her presence intricately into the fabric of the Ricketts family, creating an irreplaceable thread in their shared tapestry of love and kinship.

Daughter of Lamont Ricketts, Chanel was a loving sister to Lamar, Lillianna, Osiris, Emmanuel, Rosetta, Sheeba, Ma'at, Shaniyah, Malaysia, Nakira, and LaMont Jr.

Chanel shared a special bond with her close cousin Marlo Ricketts Green. Their grandparents, Anna and Lawrence Ricketts, held a cherished place in her heart and she spent many summer days in Delaware with them. These summers in Delaware were a time of joy and connection, made even more special by the company of her cousins, Malika, Luciana, Carnethia, and Joe.

Chanel was the heart of family traditions, lovingly gathering everyone for annual Thanksgiving celebrations at her and Joe's home, sharing the warmth of Christmas in Brooklyn, and spending joyous Easters with Marlo and Les' family, other Ricketts cousins, and friends in Delaware.

Her legacy lives on in the blueprint she left on our minds, the handprint on our hearts, and the imprint on our souls. Our love for Chanel is eternal, unaltered by her passing. No one can ever take her place in our lives and hearts.

Chanel, you will be forever missed and always loved by your Ricketts family.



SHE'S ALWAYS IN MY HAIR Whenever I feel like givin' up I Whenever my sunshine turns to rain I Whenever my hopes and dreams I Are aimed in the wrong direction I She's always there I Tellin' me how much she cares I She's always in my hair I She's always in my hair I My hair I Whenever I feel like not too great at all I Whenever I'm all alone I And even if I hit the wrong notes I She's always in my boat I She's always there I Tellin' me how much she cares I She's always in my hair I She's always in my hair I My hair I Maybe I'll marry her (Maybe I'll marry her) I Maybe I won't (Maybe I won't) I Maybe I will not (Maybe I will not) I Lemme tell ya (Even if I was a gigolo) I If I was a gigolo all my life (All my life) I She'd still be there (She'd still be there) I Tellin' me just how much she really cares (She cares) I She's always in my hair She's always in my hair I My hair I Listen I Whenever I feel like givin' up I Whenever my sunshine turns to rain I Whenever my hopes and dreams I Are aimed in the wrong direction I She's always there I Tellin' me just how much she cares (Tellin' me how much she cares) I Tellin' me... she's always in my hair I My hair I She's always in my hair

LET'S GO CRAZY Dearly gathered here today I To called life I Electric forever and that's a I'm here to tell you else The afterworld I A happiness I You sun, day or night I So shrink in Beverly Hills i Everything'll Be Alright how much of your time is left mind, baby I Cause in this life I the afterworld I In this life I You're on bring you down I Go crazy - punch a higher floor i If you don't like the world you're living in I Take a look around you I At least you got friends I You see I called my old lady I For a friendly word I She picked up the phone I Dropped it on the floor I "Uh uh" was all I heard I Are we gonna let the elevator I Bring us down I Oh, no let's go! I Let's go crazy I Let's get nuts I Let's look for the purple banana I 'Til they put us in the truck, let's go! I We're all excited I But we don't know why Maybe it's 'cause I We're all gonna die I And when we do (when we do) I What's it all for (what's it all for) I You better live now I Before the grim reaper come knocking on your door I Tell me, are we gonna let the elevator bring us down I Oh, no let's go! I Let's go crazy I Let's get nuts I Look for the purple banana I Til they put us in the truck, let's go! I C'mon baby I Let's get nuts I Yeah I Are we gonna let the elevator bring us down I Oh, no let's go! I Go crazy I said let's go crazy (go crazy) i Let's go, let's go I Go Let's go I Dr. Everything'll Be Alright I Will make everything go wrong I Pills and thrills and daffodils will kill I Hang tough, children I He's coming I He's coming I Coming I Take me away!



beloved I We are get through this thing word life It means mighty long time I But I There's something world of never-ending can always see the when you call up that I You know the one Dr. I Instead of asking him I Ask him how much of your Things are much harder than in your own I And if the elevator tries to



On March 14, 1989, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated was gifted a woman ... and her name is Chanel.

Chanel's journey through Alpha Kappa Alpha had a profound impact on our Sorors and the chapters through which she served. From the many positions she officially held, to the multiple hats she unofficially wore, Chanel was always willing to serve in whatever role and capacity she could, with love in her heart, a smile, grace, dignity and class.

The reach of Chanel's ivy vine was powerful, strong and stretched far. Her desire and capacity to assist, guide and cover not just her Sorors, but all women, was as steadfast and fervent, as when ivy is set free to cover new ground. Her unapologetic love for her people was infectious, compelling and inspiring.

Chanel's personal constitution and internal resolve was ivy hardy and titanium tough! And every once in a while, she'd push over that smooth pearl persona for whomever needed reminding that she still had that "Philly Grit".

And that is why Sorors from all walks of life were drawn to her and Sorors from different areas of the country are here today. The bar that Chanel set in the Sorority didn't stop at sisterhood. Just like the ivy vine, HER bar expanded, traveled over, under and around into this beautifully rich concept called solidarity.

Chanel Maria Ward-Richardson left an indelible mark within the circles of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated. Knowing her and loving her made us better Sorors, better women and better people. May we all carry the spirit of the ivy vine in our hearts, words and deeds, so that we honor Chanel and the life she lived.

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Rest In Power "Nellie Nell" . We Love You! See you on the other side!



As I think about your life I am overwhelmed to know all the things that brought you joy. You were so connected to this life even in your final days, to your home in Francisville, to watching Dr. Who, and using your energy to speak to the many friends and family who were with you. Line sisters, cousins, nieces and nephews, decade old friends, and several decade old friends came to laugh, share stories, pray, and hold space with you. As I continue to learn more about your life through the people who knew you, I continue to be inspired by the far reaches of your love, friendship, and spirit on those who experienced you.

One of the things you always told me about was your garden. You told me about what you had planted, the configuration among the pots, and the carefully calculated depths of the seeds. And nearly every year for the last several years you've remarked how the weather was different than you expected, how something bloomed earlier than you planned or you think you lost some bulbs in a cold snap. But regardless of the unplanned, you loved the garden and the life they held all the same. I now am faced with the same frustration, feeling that I lost you far too soon.

I miss you already Mom. I know you've had many names in this lifetime but I hold that name closest to me. I miss your wisdom, and ability to see people and their truths, their wisdoms. You always loved drawing lines and connections between family, past and present, like stars in a constellation. You delighted in hosting loved ones, and loved ones of loved ones, gathering them, feeding them, and connecting them.

But most of all, Mom, I miss watching the life you chose for yourself. I miss knowing how you would brave each passing day that you haven't seen. I miss hearing your dreams, and the ways you'd imagine spending your time in the near future. New seeds, the season ahead. You never stopped being excited to grow. I don't think I could ever be tired watching you.

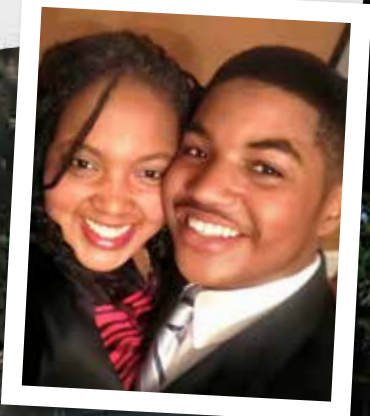
Love you always Moriah



To my Mom

Thank you. Thank you for being the kind-hearted, compassionate, and empathetic woman I had the honor of calling my mother. Thank you for having my back through the storms, and making it so that I never felt unloved. Thank you for raising your boy to be a man, and instilling in me the qualities that make me who I am today. Your sunshine will always love and cherish your memory, and continue to make you proud. I love you Mom, and continue to look down upon us with a smile.

Joseph Jr.



Dear Mommy

You are the person I have known the longest in my life, the first person I loved and the first person who loved me. The kindness, empathy and nurturing you brought into the world is the blueprint for how I want to imagine every person can be. You were never too shy to open up your home, and extend a hand, your ear, or a hug. You were a mother to me and my siblings, but it wouldn't be too much to say that you were a mother to all.

I will always remember you as laughing, singing, dreaming, and thinking of a new way to create something beautiful. Everytime I sit in your garden it's a testament to those dreams. I remember you wanted to start a non-profit to bring little gardens to everyone's homes, to give everyone a little bit of the beauty you see in the world. I love you and I miss you, I will probably never miss anyone more. I know that anytime I want to feel closer to you I can just sit among the flowers.

Gabrielle





POEM TO MY WIFE CHANEL

30 years went in the blink of an eye
And I was ready to blink again
So another 30 would go by

And in that time we danced to our beat
Sometimes me with two left feet
But with compassion and love
We never left the floor
Until God announced
He needed you more

Its hard to fathom that you are gone
And the music of life
Is just a plain ole song
That's when I realized
That all along
You were my music
You were my song

Joe Richardson

SPECIAL THANKS FROM THE FAMILY

Alfonso Cannon Funeral Home
Marlo Ricketts Green
Amy Thomas Pittman
Reginald Cummings
Holy Ghost Headquarters
The MET
Greer Smith
Nayo Jones

PALLBEARERS

Reginald Cummings
Leslie Green III
Chance Holness
Shawn James
Gregory Johnson
John D. Stratton



<https://everloved.com/life-of/chanel-ward-richardson>