



Mr. Marvin Robinson

April 15, 1957 - August 22, 2024

Marvin S. Robinson, II passed away on August 22, 2024, at 8:10pm with his family lovingly by his side. Born on April 15, 1957, in Kansas City, Kansas to Verdis J. and Marvin S. Robinson, Sr., both preceded him in death.

Marvin was the fourth of five children: Tyzsu 'Tody', Harold 'Sonny', Carmen, DeLisa 'Pizza'. They grew up in the family home lovingly referred to as 'Lafayette'. Alongside their mother, grandmother, aunt and daily visits from their cousins, 'The Hendersons'. This was his first community.

Marvin gave his life to Christ at an early age. He was a lifelong member of Young Memorial Church of God In Christ, always working at whatever his hands found to do. Always ready to lend a helping hand ensuring the church was in tip top shape and volunteered in the food pantry weekly.

Marvin was strong-willed and stubborn at times, but he also had an enormous heart, a warrior, an historian and an advocate for his community, where he remained humbled throughout his life and career. Following in the footsteps of his mother, Marvin was a respected voice in his community and was committed to public service.

Marvin was educated in the KCK School District #500 and graduated from Sumner High School in 1975. He attended Emporia State University from

1975-1978 where he pledged Omega Psi Phi fraternity. In 1978, he enlisted in the United States Navy, where he was assigned to the U.S. Navy Training Command Operation as a Specialist. Upon completion of active duty, he attended Temple University of Pennsylvania to study Journalism.

In May 1987, this U.S. Navy veteran embarked on a journey that would be his focus for 37 years, his crowned jewel known as the Quindaro Ruins/Underground Railroad. This journey has contributed to the interception of the Kansas State Supreme Court ruling to authorize and approve the Quindaro Ruins/Townsite on the National Registry of Historic Places. It was Marvin's dedication, passion, persistence, hard work, showing up at weekly city council meetings to not only save the ruins but to prevent the area from becoming a toxic waste landfill, poisoning the surrounding communities. His love and dedication to Quindaro earned him a community title affectionally known as the 'Mayor of Quindaro'. When you heard the name Marvin Robinson in the state of Kansas, the first thing that came to mind was the Quindaro Ruins.

Marvin was elected to serve his community in 2022 as Kansas State Representative, to the 35th District, where he served until his death. During his tenure he served on the Legislative Modernization Committee, General Government Budget Committee and a member of the African American State Caucus. While some of his votes may have been seen as controversial, he sponsored criminal justice bills in the 2024 session, including one that proposed abolishing the death penalty and another that would commute the sentences of people convicted of marijuana-related offenses. In 2023, he secured funding from the GOP leadership for the Quindaro Ruins and supported the bill to make Juneteenth a state holiday. Marvin did not believe in voting down party lines, he voted in the interest of his community and sometimes that meant reaching across the aisle to best serve his community. Marvin also served as a member on the Board of Economic Opportunity

Foundation.

Marvin will be remembered for the love he shared with his family and friends. He truly loved each of them and if you knew Marvin you knew that. His love and admiration for his nieces and nephews; Tiffany Estell, Theodore Coggs, Daron Fowler, Krystin Betts, Farryn Dickson and Savanna Frierson, were more precious than rubies and diamonds. He often expressed how proud he was of them, their accomplishments, careers and choices that they have made as adults.

Marvin carried himself with dignity, strength and integrity. He relished and respected those that came before him. He will be remembered for his kindness and courage in adversity. He was bold and unashamed to stand up for his faith and beliefs, no matter the situation.

Marvin leaves to mourn one brother, Harold (Peggy) Dwight; three sisters, Tyzsu Coggs, Carmen (Henry) Frierson, DeLisa Fowler-Nunley; seven nieces and nephews, Tiffany, Ted (Tamecia), Daron (James), Krystin, Henry Jr, Farryn (Charles) and Savanna; one aunt, Barbara Young; two uncles, Samuel Young and Eddie Robinson (Debbie); a host of grandnieces, grandnephews, cousins and friends.

Marvin, Rest Well In Christ.

Matthew 25:23

“His Lord said unto him, well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things,

I will make thee ruler of many things: enter thou into the joy of the Lord.”

Funeral Services will be held on Saturday, September 7, 2024, 11:00am at Young Memorial COGIC. Interment Chapel Hill Memorial Gardens, KS.

Visitation from 9am-11 am at the church. Services conducted by Lawrence A.

Jones & Sons Funeral Chapel. Condolences may be shared on our website.

Previous Events

Visitation

SEP 7. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Young Memorial COGIC
2401 North 9th Street
Kansas City
Kansas City, KS 66101

Funeral

SEP 7. 11:00 AM (CT)

Young Memorial COGIC
2401 North 9th Street
Kansas City
Kansas City, KS 66101

Tribute Wall

ES

“*Marvin was my favorite friend! I met him when he was in a baby stroller watching my mother Martha Burks prepare in her restaurant their food as they were on the way to the capital for her to serve as state representative. That speaks to how long he was in the state capital before he became a representative. I was in my early twenties and today I am 85 years old. I can testify that Marvin fell in love with the site called Quandary Ruins. He began to full feel his dream to make it to be the world famous site! He became an expert on the history and restoration of the site. A national treasure is well known for his works! I moved out of Kansas City due to severe health problems affected by the weather. Marvin and my husband remain friends from a long distance! Marvin will always be my families friend. To Marvin, you are God's favorite angel and have a special place in heaven. I am certainly praying you will see all that have gone to heaven and are waiting to see you! I love you Marvin and you and Andre will really have lots to talk about. He knows how much we love him. 🥰🙏*

Evelyn Swancy

evelyn swancy - September 15, 2024 at 04:06 PM

AB

“ *It was a meeting I will never forget. We were put together while I was attending Donnelly College in 1984. Periodically, we sat on various community boards and events and you approached me to work on the Quindaro. That ask became an over 40 year friendship, too numerous to list meetings, setbacks, triumphs and hope for our heritage and future. I am devastated by your passing. There was still so much left to do my friend! I only pray that your spirit guides our future and the road we started 400 years ago now has its latest champion to assist us in the heavens! Until we meet again my warrior buddy!*

*Anita Dixon-Brown
Executive Director
Unesco Creative City of Music/USA*

Anita Dixon Brown - September 07, 2024 at 09:34 AM

FU

“ *Friends of Shawn Young from Rice U. purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Mr. Marvin Robinson.*



Friends of Shawn Young from Rice U. - September 05, 2024 at 04:51 PM

DJ

“ Dear Robinson/Dwight and extended Family Members,

My heart is deeply saddened by the news of Marvin's passing. He was such a kind and generous soul, always eager to help others and shared resources much like his beloved mother. I have such fond memories of her, especially when she graciously planned my wedding and working with her for the county. I admired both. Their warmth and kindness have always been a guiding light, and I will forever cherish the love and support your family has shown me over the years.

Carmen and Delisa, I love you. Please know that you are all in my thoughts and prayers during this incredibly difficult time. If there is anything I can do to help, please don't hesitate to reach out.

With deepest sympathy,

Debra K

Dkgatson@gmail.com

Debra K. Jones - August 30, 2024 at 08:44 AM

KA

“ My life was greatly enriched by knowing Marvin Robinson. I want to share his story so we will never forget the personal sacrifices he made for his community. So I hope you will forgive the length of this tribute.

Over 30 years ago, Marvin Robinson, writing for the CALL, called out the AME Church for leasing its land to Browning-Ferris to put a landfill on what the residents of the area referred to as sacred land--sacred to the families of the freedom seekers that fled there on the Underground Railroad and to the Wyandot tribe who purchased the land and turned it into an abolitionist settlement where all faiths, races, and genders would live in harmony well before the Civil War. It became the only free port on the Missouri. KCK agreed to grant the necessary permits. These three powerful entities conspired to bulldoze the ruins with a promise to return it to a "public park" in honor of the town they would destroy once it had served its purpose as a landfill. And the Mid-America Regional Council had done the same thing a few years earlier...also in the historic and predominantly Black neighborhood of Rattlebone Hollow--just a few miles away. It was an area where Exodusters streamed into Kansas by the thousands seeking freedom after federal troops were removed from the South during Reconstruction. Within two years of the commencement of dumping, toxic waste started to seep from the landfill into the water table and it had to be closed. The John Garland Park was built on top of it. The park had to be closed in 1990-an EPA Super Fund site.

Marvin had no idea how to fight these entities and he had long been a member of the very church he felt had betrayed its parishioners. He wrote to the Pope (who wrote back), and to Sen. Bob Dole. He stood in line to see the Governor. He wrote countless letters, made countless phone calls, went to Washington, D.C. Gordon Parks sent money for "the cause." State officials finally listened and ordered an archeological dig be initiated before any further destruction of the premises. They were shocked when over 100 foundations and a wealth of artifacts were uncovered. It took over 6 years, but the

residents eventually had a majority of the City Council opposing the landfill and KCK filed suit against Browning-Ferris (the residents had done so long before that). Due to the advocacy of Marvin, Anita Dixon, Fred Whitehead, Luther Smith, Cedric Patton, Orin Murray, Jesse Hope, John Adams, Chester Owens, Ernst Gayde, Theresa Williamson, Boston Daniels, Emmanuel Northern, Grover Hankins, Accie Taylor, Willa McKinney, Learned LeTell Jennings, and MANY others, the landfill was stopped. But it resulted in deep divisions between the community and the church. The AME church has continued to do nothing of import to preserve the ruins. In 1997 it tried to sell them again for a golf course, shopping and homes. The current Unified Government has made some progress, but much more is needed. The ruins, the cemetery, the John Brown statute, the ferry site, the Nancy Brown Quindaro home, the Walker House, ALL of them, sit, further decaying. Marvin tried to change that and fought for 30 years to restore the area. He continued to visit Washington, talk to our congressional delegation, the Veteran's Administration, the Army Corp of Engineers, and many historic preservations groups to keep Quindaro in the conversation in hopes those in power would see the jewel that is Quindaro...all on his own dime. He never stopped, regardless of his frustration.

I hope those who he has inspired, who are continuing the battle to recognize this sacred area, will be able to achieve after his death, what he was not able to achieve in his life. We owe it to Marvin and others who died before seeing their visions of a preserved Quindaro realized, to convince those in power who can make it happen to do so. I will miss Marvin's counsel and his passion. Kansas has lost a true warrior. Rest in peace, dear friend.

Karen Arnold-Burger

Karen Arnold-Burger - August 28, 2024 at 12:04 AM

MP

“ I will remember Mr. Robinson as a faithful statesmen who modeled compassionate service throughout the Northeast district of Wyandotte County, and beyond. Not only was he a statesmen, but he was a scholar of history with a heart that exemplified consistent dedication to Quindaro. He lived and breathed Quindaro, and as many of us already know, he helped to get Quindaro noticed on a international stage, and was one of the major figures in helping to preserve Quindaro when it was going to be turned into a landfill. In addition to that, he was a major figure with helping to get Quindaro recognized as a national commentative landmark site. Beyond that, he was caring, thoughtful, and gentle servant. I can never forget how he gave my students through the kids on campus summer program through Kansas City, Kansas Community college a tour throughout the Underground Railroad during the summer of 2019 on Monday, July 13th. The students shared that they had a wonderful learning experience. I know that many of my students will never forget that summer visit to the Quindaro Underground Rail historic site. Another memory of mine with him, is when I picked him up, and we drown to watch the Kansas City, Missouri semi-professional football team play. This was a team that I used to be apart of as a football player. We talked about Quindaro, and we talked about the future of Quindaro, and share ideas about Quindaro, but he was mostly teaching me during the ride, and gained a greater sense of respect for this outstanding civic statesmen. I looked up to this brother in so many ways as a historian, social justice leader, and as a teacher who taught the history of Quindaro in such a profound way. Watching him speak at the Quindaro symposium helped to give me new perspectives into the history of Quindaro. His light will continue to shine brighter, and I am looking forward to witnessing how the seeds will continue to grow that he planted throughout Quindaro. Above all, God called my brother in service home a bit early, because I know that God has a far greater task for him to fulfill. His service and legacy is going to continue to echo, and I believe that those of us who are still living are going to benefit significantly from the groundwork that he laid for us. I am hoping that he is in heaven rooting for all of us to work together

collaborative to help preserve Quindaro for future generations. For those of us who believe, we will have the opportunity to connect with him again spiritually in heaven, because our best days are ahead of us, just like Mr. Robinson's best days are ahead in heaven. I know that he must be rejoicing and praising God on a whole another level. Thank you brother Robinson, well done. What an incredible testimony of faith, and persistence that you left behind for us. You will be missed dearly.

*Written with brotherly love and with an authentic honorary salute,
Mr. America B. Patton*



Mr. America B. Patton - August 26, 2024 at 08:26 PM

JG

“ Please accept my deepest condolences. Marvin was a courageous, godly man and a gentle soul. He will be deeply missed. Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace.

Jeanne Gawdun - August 26, 2024 at 02:34 PM

JW

“ Sorry to hear about Marvin's passing. I got to know him through his frequent Amtrak trips back and forth from Kansas City during the legislative session. I always enjoyed talking to him.

James Woods - August 26, 2024 at 07:49 AM

HD

“ Thanks Marvin for being my only brother, the uncle and great uncle to my children and grandchildren. I will always cherish my memories of you. I will never forget you. You have been always and will always be in my heart!!! I love you and will see you on the other side. Rest well.

Sincerely yours for the cause of Christ.

Pastor Harold C. Dwight

P.S. Tell Mommy Hi.

Harold Dwight - August 26, 2024 at 01:16 AM

CF

A tribute to my brother, Marvin, a loving, caring soul for all your days. To me you have always been passionate about equality and respect of our ancestors- rather our ancestors are family, community leaders, native Americans or just your next door neighbor. A humble and unapologetic man of principle. In your death I have a new perspective of your sacrifices and connections. I get it now and I wish I had gotten it about 10 years ago. We spoke often about the ruins, the many milestones that you had achieved and what's next for the Ruins- it was your heart and I really never knew just the countless lives your passion touched. I am so proud of you and all the lives you touched and the lives that your sacrifices and commitment will touch for many more years. You fought a good fight- so rest in heaven and rejoice - I will miss you dearly - give Mommy a hug ❤️❤️❤️ Carmen

Carmen Frierson - August 29, 2024 at 11:46 PM