



*Dr. Lemuel Berry*

Oct 11, 1946 - June 2 2024

We hold onto the cherished memories and profound love they brought into our lives. Their spirit will forever live on.



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Dr. Lemuel Berry, Jr. departed his earthly life on Sunday, June 2, 2024 at Gosnell Hospice Center in Scarborough, ME in the presence of family. He was born October 11, 1946 the eldest child of Ethel Flippen Berry and Lemuel Berry, Sr. in Oneonta, NY. After a few years, the family relocated and settled in Burlington, NJ. Despite his intellectual gifts, he was a reluctant student as a child. However, he showed an early talent for entrepreneurship with his shaved ice cart that he ran. He graduated from Burlington High School and went on to Livingstone College where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Education. He received his Master's and Doctoral degrees in Music Education from the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. He studied trumpet, performing both classical and jazz music.

He welcomed two sons, Lemuel III in 1973 and Cyrus James in 1976. His expansive academic career as a professor and administrator included positions as Dean, College of Humanities & Social Sciences, at Virginia State University; Dean of Humanities & Fine Arts, Mercy College; Dean, Caudill College of Humanities, Morehead State University; and finally, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of New England.

In 1992, with a group of faculty at Virginia State, he founded and was Executive Director of the National Association of African American Studies, an organization that supports continuous growth, respect for global community, professional development and an overarching goal of providing faculty and students an opportunity to engage in scholarly endeavors. The association has held an annual conference every year since its founding and expanded over the years to include research forums and culture tours in China, South Africa, Ecuador, Mexico and Trinidad & Tobago.





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In 1993, he met Keva Wright while she was on a business trip to his university, Virginia State. The two quickly fell in love and married on December 9, 1995.

Ever passionate about his many work projects, he continued to develop new initiatives well past retirement. One such project is the UNESCO-World Heritage Inscription for the Phoenix Settlement of Durban, South Africa, the site where Mahatma Gandhi lived and worked. The Phoenix Settlement was awarded national heritage inscription for South Africa on September 25, 2020 and is awaiting international inscription from UNESCO.

He wrote more than 200 articles on music, education, and many topics in between and published books on Black musical artists, including Great African American Musicians from Marian Anderson to Stevie Wonder in 2010. The Phoenix Settlement - A National Heritage Site is scheduled for publication in 2024 followed by the 2025 publication of the Encyclopedia of Who's Who in Black Gospel Music.

He will be remembered for his sense of humor and charisma, professional ambition and vision, and dedication to his family.

He was preceded in death by his parents Ethel and Lemuel, Sr.; his brothers Cyrus Hillsman Berry and Karl Selwyn Berry; and sister Michelene Berry Hewitt. He is survived by his wife, Keva Wright Berry; sons Lemuel III and Cyrus (Melissa) Berry; daughter Kyla Marshall; sister Karen Berry Bolling; granddaughters Amaya and Chriyoko; favorite cousin Jacqueline Scott; and a host of nieces and great-nieces, nephews and great-nephews.

May he rest in peace knowing that he was well loved.

