



Lakay Anita Beasley Banks

December 1, 1937 - May 28, 2022

"Lakay's Story"

A great humanitarian, philanthropist, civic organizer, and mentor to students, Mrs. Lakay Anita Beasley Banks transitioned on May 28, 2022. She was a bundle of joy to her parents Sylvester and Nevada Beasley, born on December 1, 1937, in Tallahassee, FL. Mrs. Banks, wife to the late C.W. Banks, M.D., and the mother to three children, was not only the woman behind a great doctor in the Gainesville Community but a true force of nature in her own right.

Lakay Beasley graduated from Florida A & M in 1959 with a bachelor's degree in Psychology. She was listed in *Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities*. Lakay served as sophomore and junior attendant to Miss FAMU and later reigned as Miss FAMU in her senior year. Her commitment to her alma mater remained throughout her life and she became a life member of the Alachua County Chapter of the FAMU Alumni Association.

At FAMU, Lakay was initiated in the oldest black sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, and continued her love and commitment to the organization beyond college. She is honored as a Life member, and a Golden and a Pearl Soror after 62 years of service. She was a charter member of two chapters in Ocala and Gainesville, respectively. In addition, Mrs. Banks was a charter member of the Gainesville (FL) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated,

and received the distinction as a Platinum and Alumna member.

Actively engaged in the civil rights movement, Mrs. Banks was a Life Member of the NAACP, the League for Civic Action, and a founding member of the Gainesville Women for Equal Rights. She continued her involvement for equality and justice for all people.

When the white pre-schools in Gainesville would not accept her son, Mrs. Banks was determined to provide an education open to all races. She co-founded the Millhopper Cooperative Nursery School, which continues to teach school readiness skills and cultural appreciation of all people. For her service in education, Mrs. Banks was appointed by Florida Governor Bob Graham to the Governor's Commission on Post-Secondary Education in 1979.

When integration was taking place at the University of Florida, Mrs. Banks and her husband organized support for potential African American medical students. She arranged events for academic enrichment sessions, social activities, medical care, and fundraisers for scholarships. Mrs. Banks continued her involvement by serving as Chair of the scholarship committee and later as President of the Florida State Medical, Dental, and Pharmaceutical Association Auxiliary. She was also President of the Central Florida Medical Auxiliary. Mrs. Banks became the first African American member of the Alachua County Medical Auxiliary.

For years, she planned special events for foster children, those least likely to be adopted through her involvement with the One Church, One Child program. Mrs. Banks served on the Board of the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPO) so that low-income parents of preschool children were aware of the need for them to assist their children in school readiness. She coached a girls' basketball team for the City of Gainesville, served on the North Florida AIDS Network, and worked with the Girl Scouts of

Gateway Council on its Women Who Make a Difference Steering Committee.

Mrs. Banks devoted her time to Gainesville's recreation for all people and its natural beauty by serving on the Gainesville City Beautification Board and the Gainesville City Recreation Board. She aided the Cone Recreation Park project in 1999. As a member of the Camelliattes Club, Mrs. Banks focused on educating the community about the African American culture by assisting in the annual Tasting Party and African American exhibits at the Thomas Center, which displayed the richness and diversity of African American Culture. She also served on the UF's Phillips Performing Arts Center Advisory Board.

Mrs. Banks has been honored numerous times for her tireless commitment to her community. The Florida Medical, Dental, and Pharmaceutical Association and Auxiliary honored her for her commitment and dedication service to the State of Florida. The University of Florida Black Medical Students honored her for her service and support to them and the University of Florida Outreach honored her for her multiple services to the Gainesville Community. The Concerned Citizens of Putnam County Organization commended her for her Outstanding Service. The Alachua County Chapter of the NAACP also lauded her Outstanding Community Service. With more than 50 years of membership, Mrs. Banks' church, Greater Bethel AME proclaimed the third Sunday in February 15, 2004, as Lakay Anita Banks Day and the Alachua Board of County Commissioners announced December 22, 2004, as Lakay Banks day in Alachua County, Florida. The Pleasant Hill Historical Society honored Lakay for her community service in 2019.

The University of Florida African American Studies honored Lakay at their 50th Celebration of Integration for her support of UF students in the 60's and 70's.

Mrs. Banks now rests in God's peace and love joined again with her beloved husband, Dr. Cullen Banks, her parents Sylvester and Nevada Beasley, and her brother, Sylvester, Jr. 'Sonny.' She will be missed by her children; Barry Banks (Maritza), Alachua, FL, Dr. Garry Banks, Valparaiso, FL, and Colleen Banks, Virginia Beach, VA; grandchildren, Barry Banks, Jr., and Jessie Banks; her brother Steve Beasley, Tallahassee, FL; and sister, Ellene Kelly (Leonard), Gainesville, FL; nieces and nephews, Anthony Davis Beasley, Baton Rouge, LA, Juan Howard Beasley, Birmingham, AL, Carlos Hill, Clemson, SC, Sindy Blake, Houston, TX, Danny Beasley, Tanzania, Africa, Syllene Kelly Hill (Reggie), Spellville, GA, Neva Kelly, Gainesville, FL, Cheryl Beasley, Tallahassee, FL; great-nieces and nephews, Joshua Hill, Snellville, GA, Nicole Bowden, and Mauriona King, both of Tallahassee, FL; and many other relatives and caring friends.

Her persistence in lifelong service to her community and Christian faith will continue to serve as a strong example to our community and to those in whose memory she will live on. Lakay gave glory to God for all she accomplished for others. Such was the Story of Lakay, may she Rest in Paradise.

In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to the following: Shands Kidney Transplant Program or the Cullen W. Banks, M.D. Scholarship, University of Florida Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 14425, Gainesville, FL 32604-9949 or by phone, 1-877-351-2377.

The AKA Sorority Ivy Beyond the Walls will take place on Saturday, June 3, 2022 at 3:00 PM at Greater Bethel AME Church, 701 SE 43rd Street, Gainesville, FL 32641.

Visitation for Mrs. Banks will be Saturday, June 4, 2022 from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM at Greater Bethel AME Church.

Funeral Services will be held on Sunday, June 5, 2022 at 3:00 PM at Greater Bethel AME Church, Rev. Dr. Carl Smith and Rev. Ron Rawls, Officiating.

Family and friends are asked to meet at the Banks Residence, 1335 SE 11th Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32641 at 2:15 PM to form the Cortege.

Due to COVID-19, all in attendance are asked to please wear a facial covering.

Arrangements Entrusted to the Care of Chestnut Funeral Home. Cards may be sent to 18 NW 8th Avenue, Gainesville, FL 32601. To order floral arrangements, please visit www.chestnutfh.com/obituary/lakaybanks. Any questions may be directed to 855-5-CHESTNUT or admin@chestnutfh.com.
"A CHESTNUT SERVICE"

Tribute Wall

MS

“ *Sister Banks was an amazing person, I thank God for the pleasure of knowing and working with her. Prayers to the Banks and Beasley Families. Earth has no Sorrow that Heaven does not feel and heal.* ”



Mary Silva - June 08, 2022 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ *To Soror Ellene Beaseley Kelly and Family, The Queens of Miss FAMU are saddened to learn of the loss of our beloved Miss FAMU, MISS JUNIOR ATTENDANT TO MISS FAMU, MISS SOPHOMORE ATTENDANT TO MISS FAMU, and MISS FRESHMAN, QUEEN LAKAY Beaseley Banks, your sister. It was the Ancient Egyptians who said that if we should keep the names of the deceased on the tongues of the living then it would seem as though they have not departed this good earth. My husband, Dr. H. Earl Cotman, always says at our family funerals that, "We never ever have to think of our loved ones as having passed!" Prayers help to heal from grieving. Do grieve as long as is necessary. With the passage of some time, life once again will seem normal. Respectfully, Jacqueline Nickson Cotman, Miss FAMU 1966-1967* ”

Jacqueline N. Cotman - June 07, 2022 at 12:00 AM

BA

“ *Condolences and prayers for the family of dear Lakay. We will always remember those wonderful days of growing up in Tallahassee and on the FAMU campus in the old neighborhood! The Beasleys and our family were great friends. May you find comfort in the knowledge that she is now in Eternal Rest. Byron and Barbara* ”

Barbara Anders - June 07, 2022 at 12:00 AM

MJ

“ *Ms Jackson lit a candle in memory of Lakay Anita Beasley Banks*



Ms Jackson - June 07, 2022 at 12:00 AM

PM

“ *Priscilla Monroe lit a candle in memory of Lakay Anita Beasley Banks*



Priscilla Monroe - June 06, 2022 at 12:00 AM

TS

“ *With deepest sympathy.*

Tribute Store - June 06, 2022 at 12:00 AM

DK

“ *Mrs. Banks always supported my journey in the ministry. Her words of love and encouragement as well as her wonderful smile were essential in times of tests and sheer exhaustion. I will love her forever. - Rev. Dr. Debra Walker king, IE*

Debra Walker King - June 04, 2022 at 12:00 AM

SS

“ I was sorry to hear of the passing of Sis. Banks. My condolences to the family she will surely be missed. Sis. Banks Blessed me at a time when i really need a blessing and i know for sure that God was answering prayers through her. She didnt know that God was using her that day. May God give the family and church family peace and comfort during this time of transition.

Staffon smith - June 04, 2022 at 12:00 AM

GF

“ With our deepest condolences

G Bradley Insurance Agency and Bradley Family - June 04, 2022 at 12:00 AM

OI

“ With loving thoughts from the Brothers of the Beta Pi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. please accept our warmest and deepest condolences.

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. - June 03, 2022 at 12:00 AM

TS

“ I am deeply sorry for your loss. As you grieve, please know that you are deeply in my prayers, Syllen. My condolences to you and your family

Tribute Store - June 03, 2022 at 12:00 AM

LF

“ " Death is nothing else but going home to God, the bond of love will be unbroken for all eternity" Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Love, Earl and Soror Meisha Wade and Family - June 03, 2022 at 12:00 AM

MW

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with you.*

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wiley - June 03, 2022 at 12:00 AM

LC

“ *Sadness fell on me when I got the news.she was a lovely and loyal friend.we gonna miss her*

Linda cornell - June 02, 2022 at 12:00 AM

DH

“ *Thank you for being a guiding light. May you Rest In Peace.*

Dr. Bertram Hughes - June 02, 2022 at 12:00 AM

JH

“ *Always positive, always moving forward to make our community better, she will be greatly missed but her good works will last forever*

John Hotaling - June 02, 2022 at 12:00 AM

ED

“ *HEARTFELT ERNESTINE DORSEY GAINESVILLE FL*

Ernestine Dorsey - June 02, 2022 at 12:00 AM

JI

“ *Lakay's joyful, loving spirit was felt by all who came in contact with her. Her smiling countenance belied her steeliness, purpose and intent. I was blessed to spend time with LaKay over many years. God has welcomed his child. Love, prayers and condolences to the Banks family. Jean, Ingram*

Jean Ingram - June 02, 2022 at 12:00 AM

FC

“ Mrs Banks and Doc played such a major part in mine, and my mother and father's life that it's hard to not think of all of them during this time of grieving . I'll never forget the times in Tallahassee when I saw my father at his best discussing with Mr Beasley, Doc and others FAMU football while Mrs Banks and Mrs Beasley were so excited to just be with family & friends. This set the stage for developing a standard for my future. Barry, Gary and Colleen please accept our heartfelt condolences and sympathies for your endearing loss. The Coleman Family

Frank Coleman - June 02, 2022 at 12:00 AM

TS

“ You and family have shared some much love for my mom NeeNee and I. We will truly miss you!! Kiss my mommy for me!! Love you Soror LAKAY!

Tia Stover - June 02, 2022 at 12:00 AM

MP

“ Miriam Parker lit a candle in memory of Lakay Anita Beasley Banks



Miriam parker - June 02, 2022 at 12:00 AM

SH

“ Every summer I had the time of my life visiting my Aunt and Uncle! My Aunt always planned the best activities which made every day special. Thank you for the precious memories Mama Kay, you will never be forgotten.

Syllen Lakay Hill - June 01, 2022 at 12:00 AM

TS

“ *With deepest sympathy. From the Trustees of Greater Bethel A.M.E.*

Tribute Store - June 01, 2022 at 12:00 AM

SD

“ *With love and hugs, I will miss you Lakay Beasley Banks. Peace, prayers and blessings.*

Soror Juanita Davis and DeWayne Davis - June 01, 2022 at 12:00 AM