



## Derek Victor Spencer

May 17, 1934 - October 3, 2023

Derek Victor Hauge Spencer

Derek Spencer was the first child of twelve born to the late Charles and Muriel Spencer in Gouyave, Grenada. He is preceded in death by his siblings Marilyn, Amelia, John, and Mrytle.

At an early age Derek joined St. John's Anglican Church and was a loyal supporter throughout his life. Derek graduated from Grenada Boys Secondary School in 1952. He worked as a civil servant in Grenada in the treasury department until 1958. In the fall of 1958, he began his undergraduate studies at Howard University. He completed his undergraduate degree in 1962 and his medical degree from Howard University College of Medicine in 1967.

In his own words. Written April 20th, 2017.

“Being one of the few hospitals offering training in family practice, notification of my acceptance to be a rotating intern in Akron General Hospital, Akron, Ohio was great news. However, the baptism with mountains of snow presaged four horrible years, and this Caribbean man was not ready for that experience, so the plan was to complete the internship and regroup. My application for a position at the Virgin Islands Department of Health was approved and I moved post-haste. My service started in the Division of Public Health; an award by the United States Public Health Services afforded me the opportunity to earn a Master of Public Health degree at Columbia University School of Public Health and Administrative Medicine in New York City. Upon resumption of duties in 1970, I filled the post of Director, Office of Comprehensive Health

Planning. In late 1976, at the invitation of John Sherrer and the urging of two old friends on the Veterinary Medicine faculty at Tuskegee Institute, my family moved to Auburn, Alabama; I continued to be in public health and conducted a small general practice. Working in such environments with meagre resources, much vaunted rhetoric but vacuous official support is traumatizing. Dr. Paul Cornely's pronouncements of selfless involvement for the greater good provide solace in such situations and remind one that the race is not for the swift. With that in mind, I began a Psychiatry Residency Program at the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation at the Austin State Hospital. The successful completion of that program was followed by recruitment into the Veterans Administration Health System. My first posting was at VAMC, Waco, TX; then a transfer to VAMC, Temple, where after serving as a staff psychiatrist, came promotions to Chief of Service and later Associate Chief of Staff for Ambulatory Care. While on assignment at the multidisciplinary clinic in Austin, a tragic event led to the premature end of my service. During a somber and reflective moment came a telephone call from Wilbur Callender; all that is remembered from that conversation is the question... "are you ready to return to the V.I.?" "Without much thought I returned to "the rock". In the fall of 1999, I served as Deputy Commissioner, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention and Director of Mental Health Services. From 2003-2015 I held the post of Chief, Behavioral Health Service at Roy Lester Schneider Hospital. Presently, I am at the mercy of my two granddaughters, but find time to stay abreast of current affairs, viewing cricket in person or on television, visiting family and friends, listening to several genres of music and being thankful that snow and cold weather are distant." To cherish his memory are his children Justin Cox, Nicole Spencer, Sarah Hobbs, Derek "Victor" (Samantha) Spencer, Jr., and Philip Spencer. His grandchildren Jason Benoit, Joel Benoit, Jomi Thomas, Amelia Spencer, Olivia Hobbs, and Sophia Spencer. His siblings Ralph Spencer, Margaret Spencer, Evlyn Spencer, Joy Spencer, Beverly Spencer, Joan Spencer, and Peter Spencer. In addition, a host of great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews,

cousins, and friends.

Let us joyfully remember Derek, who enriched the lives of all who knew him with his zest for life and as a public servant that tried his best to help others.

Celebration of Life Services for Derek Spencer will be held on Saturday, October 14, 2023 at 1:00 PM. These services will be recorded and streamed live. If the event is interrupted at any time due to technical issues, the entire event will be uploaded and available to view later in the day. Please copy and paste the link to share, or simply click on the link to view the event.

<https://vimeo.com/event/3771889>

# Tribute Wall

JH

“ We are truly saddened at the passing of Derek V.Spencer, MD, MPH and regret our schedules could not permit offering our condolences in person.

*As a native of Gouyave our mother shared a bond with him. But it is the everlasting friendship with our dad that we know is continued in the beyond.*

*Our love to you all,  
Jennifer and Angela Howard*

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**Jennifer M Howard** - October 14, 2023 at 08:20 AM

LM

“ Dr. Derek Spencer will long be remembered in the health professional communities of the U.S. Virgin Islands. His contributions to healthcare in the territory, especially mental health, were most valuable and appreciated. The other side of his "coin" revealed a solid carnival reveler, bringing joy to all in his presence. Condolences to his family and friends, and may he rest in peace.  
Dr. Lucien Moolenaar

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**Lucien Moolenaar** - October 13, 2023 at 11:03 AM

SH

*Dr. Moolenaar,*

*Thank you for your kind words about my father.*

*Sarah*

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**Sarah Hobbs** - October 13, 2023 at 02:21 PM

SM

*I enjoyed the time that I spend with your father at church. He has some interest story about you when you were growing up. I was glad to get to know him. A real nice man. I will be Praying for you and your family.*

*Sam McClinic I*

Samuel M McClinic - October 13, 2023 at 07:45 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Derek Victor Spencer.



October 10, 2023 at 08:49 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Derek Victor Spencer.

October 10, 2023 at 08:49 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Derek Victor Spencer.

October 07, 2023 at 10:45 PM



“ Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of Derek Victor Spencer.



October 05, 2023 at 03:05 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Derek Victor Spencer.

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October 05, 2023 at 03:05 PM