



## Digna Idalia Cruz-Rivera

May 13, 1947 - July 11, 2025

Digna Idalia Cruz, lovingly surrounded by her family, peacefully transitioned at Emory Hospital in her hometown of Decatur, Georgia, on July 11 at the age of 78.

Digna, affectionately known as Idalia by her family, was fondly referred to as "Madame Dee" by her close friends and lovingly called "Moma Dee," having become a mother figure to many. She was born on May 13, 1947, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to Juana Rivera and Augustin Cruz.

At the young age of two, Idalia moved to New York City with her mother, where she began her education at Public School 165 and thrived at the High School of Art and Design. In her final year of High School, she returned to Puerto Rico to live with her father and stepmother, Carmen, in Guaynabo, where she graduated from Margarita Hanel High School. Afterward, she returned to New York City and pursued her passion for design at Parsons School of Design. Following graduation, she worked as a costume buyer for the Metropolitan Opera House and the New York City Rockets, allowing her creativity to shine.

In time, Digna met her partner, the late Eric Harding. Together, they operated a boarding home business. They raised three children: Vernex, Eric Jr., and Deric Harding. For twenty years, she devoted herself to her family in Mount Vernon, NY. During this time, she returned to her studies and obtained a BS degree in Human Services and Healthcare from Westchester Community College. She then found fulfillment in her role as a Medical Administrator at Mount Vernon Hospital before retiring.

In her retirement, Digna sought a quieter life in Decatur, Georgia, filled with peace and reflection. As an Avid reader and decorator, she brought joy to her community as a senior hall leader, where she planned events and assisted less mobile seniors. Digna embraced her spirituality, loved shopping, and cherished walks with her dog Lady.

Digna is now reunited with her beloved parents, Juana Rivera and Augustin Cruz, as well as her siblings: Ferdinand (Frank), Mariana, Carmen Gloria (Nelly), and cousin Mariana. She is also with her cherished dog, Gizmo.

Digna leaves behind her loving children—Vernex, Eric Jr., and Deric (with his wife Nikita)—along with her siblings: Ruben, Augustin Jr., Evelyn, Mildred, Bernice, Richard, Madelyn, and Gustavo Cruz. She will be greatly missed by her treasured grandchildren: Eric Jr., Devin, Marcus Jr., and Jordan, as well as a host of nieces and nephews, and her beloved Titi Anna Herber. Her faithful companion, Lady, also remains.

Digna's spirit and warmth will continue to inspire and be cherished by all who knew and loved her.

During this profoundly difficult time, your kindness and support mean the world to us. Following the family's wishes, the service will be private.

If you wish to send donations, please use the link:

<https://mealtrain.com/43k6l7>

# Tribute Wall

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“ *Dee, you will be deeply missed for your humor in the midst of a storm. Your endurance up against hurdles and obstacles that most can't even imagine. Foremost your perseverance to support, and care for others even when you really didn't have to. Your held a big heart, and now I feel your rewards that you might not have received in this life may you blossom with in the afterlife. Until we meet again. May Love,Peace follow you for eternity.*



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**Patricia Chandler-Collins (sister in law - July 18, 2025 at 02:05 PM**