



Keith William Phillips

March 21, 1957 - November 27, 2020

Reflections on Life as the Man, The Public Servant, The Husband, The Father, The Business Man and Coach

The Early Years

Keith William Phillips was born to Ruby Jewel Phillips and Stanley Arthur Phillips on March 21st, 1957, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and slipped away at approximately 8 p.m. on November 27th, 2020. Both of his parents and only brother, Kevin Arthur Phillips, preceded him in death. He accepted Christ at an early age and was a proud acolyte at St. Barnabus Episcopal Church in Germantown, Philadelphia. Keith's leadership skills became apparent in his early years at Germantown High School where he served as the class president of the 108th graduating class during his senior year.

The Man

In 1975, Keith graduated at the top of his class and moved to Raleigh, North Carolina, to attend Saint Augustine's University. One of his proudest achievements was becoming a member of the Gamma Omicron Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. in the spring of 1977. He was actively involved, serving as the Polemarch from fall 1977 to the spring of 1979. He

earned a Bachelor of Arts in accounting and moved to San Angelo, Texas, where he was employed by a telecommunications company and introduced to A. L. Williams (now Primerica) by his supervisor. Shortly after, he moved to Atlanta and got a job with Cox Media Group's Channel 2 news station as an accountant while waiting for his insurance license to be approved. Keith's employment with the news station was short-lived; he soon began to build his A.L. Williams franchise. He had big, ambitious dreams and a burning desire to become financially independent, which would allow him to help his deserving mother. As the success of his business grew, he was able to retire his mother from her job and move her to Atlanta into a brand new home along with a brand new car. His generosity extended beyond his mother and to his in-laws, when he purchased them a retirement home as well. Providing for others is what he enjoyed the most.

Keith was a prankster and sometimes couldn't pass up an opportunity to play a practical joke on an unsuspecting friend or family member. In his humorous nature, he considered himself the sixth member of The Temptations. He loved life and was a foodie at heart. Although he met countless people in his lifetime, he always made everyone feel loved and special. If you were fortunate enough, he would even give you a nickname that would affectionately stick with you forever.

The Husband

Keith and Deborah's love story started much like one of oil and water. He thought she was arrogant due to her job title as a manager at a telecommunications company, and she thought he needed a lot of help with his wardrobe. Their first interaction was when Deborah was invited to a business opportunity meeting that just so happened to be at Keith's office. She would eventually decide to join the company to pursue financial independence through entrepreneurship. Deborah became Keith's second

Regional Vice President, and eventually, his wife. They eloped to Ocho Rios, Jamaica in 1987 and were married on his birthday, March 21st. Getting married on Keith's birthday would ensure he never forgot his marital anniversary and eloping made it easier to get back to building their now family business. They both found a love that only some can dream of: a love to last a lifetime; and it did. They were affectionately described as two peas in a pod and spent as much time together as humanly possible. They were best friends and each other's ride or die. Joined at the hip, they did everything together. During his later years, the two of them would frequent their lake house enjoying life and each other's company, from boat rides to home renovations. His love language was food. He enjoyed every cuisine imaginable and loved experimenting with his wife in the kitchen. Keith doted on his wife and drove her everywhere, as he would jokingly say "Driving Ms. Deborah". He would constantly profess his love and adoration for her and often told her that if he preceded her in death, to know that being married to her made him the happiest man alive. He always said, "My number one job is to provide for my family and make sure you all are happy."

The Father

Keith was a loving and devoted father and a true "girl dad." His girls were everything to him. Jessica, Sara, Chelsea, and Mackenzie were his pride and joy, and their very existence made him excited about life and building a legacy. He would often tell the girls, "I'm 1000% in your corner" and "Everything I do, I do it for you!" One of his proudest accomplishments was putting each of his daughters through the university of their choice. He never wavered on his children's college preferences: Jessica Ré (Stanford University); Sara (Howard University); Chelsea (Auburn University); and Mackenzie (The University of Miami). Fatherhood was something he did not take lightly, and he immensely enjoyed spoiling his girls. He even coined a phrase when they

were younger, “that’s why your daddy works hard for you,” that has been used even up until the girls’ adult years. There was not a day that went by that he did not reach out or communicate with his daughters. His job was to make sure they had everything they needed to position themselves for success and to provide support whenever needed. He enjoyed bragging on his girls to anyone that would listen. The girls never took it for granted; they were the luckiest girls alive with the best Dad of all time.

The Business Man and Primerica Coach

Keith joined A.L. Williams, a financial services startup company, in March 1980. He became a Regional Vice President in June 1983 and quickly accomplished many milestones along the way, including becoming a member of Primerica’s prestigious Wall of Fame in 1995 and ultimately becoming a Senior National Sales Director in April 2018. He and Deborah were recognized for their career success as MVPs at the International Primerica Convention in 2019. In November 2020, he received his 9th diamond, just one milestone away from “The Ruby”.

Keith was a mentor and a coach to many entrepreneurs across the country. He found his life’s purpose in serving others through education about life insurance, investments, and financial planning. With a passion for financial literacy in the black community, he became a charter member of the African-American Leadership Council and served on the Executive Committee as Treasurer since its inception. He found financial independence through Primerica and made it his life’s mission to share the opportunity and possibilities with as many people he could reach. Financial services were his passion and purpose in life! Every morning he would hit the floor around 4:30 a.m. ready to get his day started.

He was excited about the men and women he had been blessed to be in

business with. Keith had a wonderful group of Vice Presidents that he supported, mentored, and trained on a daily basis. He also spent time training and developing even the newest entrepreneurs in his organization and encouraged them on the journey towards financial freedom. He was very influential with people and he motivated them to want a better life for their families. Over the years, Keith developed a reputation for reliability, professionalism, and integrity among his clients. Additionally, even though he and his wife were in love, they were always able to maintain a great partnership in business. The pinnacle of his success was having his wife and daughters carry on his legacy.

The Public Servant

Community involvement was important to Keith. In 1988, he helped to capitalize the first black-owned bank in Lithonia, Georgia, First Southern Bank, as one of the founding Board of Directors. In 1997, the bank subsequently merged with Citizen's Trust Bank, one of the largest black-owned financial institutions in the United States. In 1981, Keith was one of the founding charter members of the College Park Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. Keith also served as a Board Member of the Greater Atlanta Community Foundation for several years and a silver-tier sponsor for the Arts Association of Newton County since the early 2000s. Every year, he and his wife sponsored students with book bags for school, bikes and toys for the holidays, and never missed an opportunity to give out hams and turkeys for Thanksgiving. He attended Springfield Baptist Church under the pastoral leadership of the Rev, Dr. Eric Wendell Lee, Sr., where he was a member from 2003 until his passing.

The Legacy

Keith leaves behind many loved ones to cherish his fond memories: a loving

and devoted wife of 33 and a half years, Deborah Smith Phillips; four daughters, Jessica Ré Phillips, Sara Ashley Phillips, Chelsea Savanna Phillips, and Mackenzie Symone Phillips; four sisters-in-love, Cynthia Phillips, Mary Smelley, Barbara Jackson, and Sandra Owens Sinclair (Alexander); two brothers-in-love, Lawson J. Smith and Benjamin Smith (Bonnie); one maternal aunt, Margaret 'Honey' Hall (Ferdinand); one godson, Shaun-Charles Cameron Allen; a dearly beloved dog, Gotti; many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins and a host of other relatives, friends and business partners.

Celebration of Life Services for Keith William Phillips will be held on Saturday, December 5, 2020 at 1:00PM. These services will be recorded and streamed live. In the event the service is interrupted at any time due to technical issues, the entire service 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 service.

<https://vimeo.com/485709015>

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service (INVITATION ONLY)-Live Streamed

DEC 5. 1:00 PM (ET)

Gregory B. Levett - Rockdale Chapel
1999 Hwy 138 SE
Conyers , GA 30013

Tribute Wall

RC

“ I just found out about Keith’s passing. What an awesome & giving business professional! Keith helped me get my insurance license in 2008 after I moved to Atlanta from Miami in April 2008. Although I left the insurance industry in 2009 I continue my insurance policy. I returned to consulting full time as this profession was my strength in the business world until I retired in 2014.

Debra & family, y’all have our belated prayers and condolences. Keith was giant hearted as entrepreneur & builder of other people. What a huge lost and I know the entire family is still grieving Keith’s loss. However, we know that God is too wise to make mistakes and to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord! Sadly, he’s gone but shall never be forgotten and I thank you & Keith for the opportunity in Primerica. Bountiful blessings! Rev Jerome & Mrs Lucille Council, servants of Jesus Christ!

Rev Jerome Council - April 13, 2023 at 05:31 PM

ST

“ I remember my first time meeting Coach Phillips. A friend of mine invited me to a Primerica meeting on Lavista and Coach sat and ate with us at OCharleys. Coach Phillips blessed us with insight and treated everyone like family. My condolences to Sarah and the rest of the family. May you all carry on his legacy.

Stanley - September 14, 2021 at 04:02 AM

DE

“ Good morning. My deepest condolences to the late great Mr. Keith William Phillips wife, children and family and friends. Mr. Keith Phillips was a true scholar and a gentleman. Mr. Keith Phillips was a real pioneer leader motivator innovator and visionary. Mr. Keith Phillips was a the epitome of what a powerful role model is and an exceptional example to follow. Mr. Keith Phillips possessed a true since of grace, class, elegance, competence,, sophistication, professionalism, and dignity. Mr. Keith Phillips will be greatly missed but his positive impact and powerful influence that he had on numerous people will live on forever. Rest well sir. Job well done sir. Enjoy heaven with your beautiful queen mother. This is coming with true genuine sincerity and humbled honest heavy heart from a man who truly looked up to you, was inspired by you and greatly respected you, Mr. Damione Evans. Thank you for all the good things that you have done sir for so many countless people including me. Rejoice In Power sir.

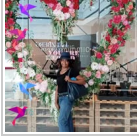
Damione Evans - July 19, 2021 at 02:33 AM

CW

“ Deepest sympathy to the PHILLIPS FAMILY. Mr. Phillips was a wonderful, kind person. He was our financial advisor for years. He will truly be missed.

Clara B Wilcoxson

CLARA B WILCOXSON - June 04, 2021 at 03:37 PM



“ To Mrs Deborah Phillips and family. I wanted to take this opportunity to extend my condolences to your family. Unfortunately, I have been out of the Country for 3 months. I ran into a gentleman in Walmart today. He was a Primerica RVP. His name was Mr. Duane L. Lang. I did asked him did he know Kieth , he paused and said that he passed in December. My heart dropped. Mrs Phillips, You two were my Most Admired Couple. Again, My heart goes out to you. If I can do anything for you, just let me know. I do hope that you do remember me, I was Recruited by Cheryl Crawford. Take Care Of Yourself and family. Sincerely, Ms. Beverly A. Vause

Beverly Vause - February 23, 2021 at 04:07 PM



“ My sincere condolences to the family and friends of Keith William Phillips. I heard about his homegoing on a zoom call hosted by Donnie Glover and 75 members of his hierarchy tonight. Thank you for protecting your family in such a way that your legacy will continue to speak of your fruit. god bless!

*Lewis Lockett
District Leader
Jackie Edwards Hierarchy*

Lewis E Lockett - January 06, 2021 at 09:51 PM



“ To the Phillips family; you have my deepest condolences. May GOD continue to bless and protect you.

John Nalls - December 06, 2020 at 09:55 PM

KC

“ We continue to pray for the phillips family asking them to stay bound in God's care we love you and He will see

Keith and sheila chappelle - December 06, 2020 at 04:53 PM

EC

“ I would like to send my prayers to the Phillips Family! May the Lord my God continual to keep you safe and bless you. Amen

Edna Calhoun - Primerica Family

EDNA J CALHOUN - December 06, 2020 at 09:34 AM



LT

“ Lori Thomas lit a candle in memory of Keith William Phillips

Lori Thomas - December 06, 2020 at 09:23 AM



JP

“ Jackie Coston, Primerica lit a candle in memory of Keith William Phillips

Jackie Coston, Primerica - December 05, 2020 at 04:00 PM



IS

“ *My deepest condolences to the Phillips family. I went to Germantown High School with Keith class of 1975*



IRVING D SMITH - December 05, 2020 at 02:40 PM

BJ

“ *Beverly Jackson lit a candle in memory of Keith William Phillips*



Beverly Jackson - December 05, 2020 at 12:03 AM

FB

“ *To the Phillips Family, sending love and deepest condolences to all of you. I had the pleasure of meeting Keith last November in Atlanta as a new RVP and I was incredibly struck by his kindness when he took the opportunity to take me to lunch and give me some guidance and coaching as a new RVP. Keith was one of the kindest, most humble Primerica leaders I have ever met. He was a genuine servant leader and will be greatly missed. I pray that you take comfort that he is in God's loving embrace and that his soul is filled with joy in God's Kingdom.*



Farah Broom - December 04, 2020 at 11:05 PM

JS

“ Jeffrey E. Savage lit a candle in memory of
Keith William Phillips



Jeffrey E. Savage - December 04, 2020 at 08:50 PM

LW

“ Lawrence & Connie Walker purchased the Seren
e Reflections Bouquet for the family of Keith
William Phillips.



Lawrence & Connie Walker - December 04, 2020 at 07:00 PM

EF

“ To The Phillips Family. My Big Brother Keith Phillips, you will truly be missed. My family and I have known you and your family for 30 years. You are truly God's Servant and a major blessing to many people and families all over during this time. I have personally seen you bless people by walking up to them offering words of wisdom, encouragement, as well as financial blessings. Your actions speak a loud sermon of how we should live and love each other without bias. Your time here on earth has paved a broad path. When we met 8 days ago at Wal-Mart on Gresham Road you and Sister Deborah and your family Blessed us with several turkeys and hams to deliver to Seniors to assure a great Thanksgiving. I asked you how you were doing, and you responded "Great" You personally wanted to load the boxes into my car when you said you were headed to a meeting downtown. Once again, you were serving! Thank you Big Brother Keith Phillips. you will truly be missed and always thought about WITH LOVE.

Eddie and Colleen Lowe and Family

Eddie and Colleen Lowe & Family - December 04, 2020 at 04:18 PM

JF

“ John Frady purchased the Rainbow Of Remembrance Spray for the family of Keith William Phillips.



John Frady - December 04, 2020 at 03:56 PM

TJ

“ *The Escott-Russell Family. Sundra and David Jr. purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Keith William Phillips.*



The Escott-Russell Family. Sundra and David Jr. - December 04, 2020 at 01:52 PM

GH

“ *In loving memory of Keith William Phillips, Please accept our most heartfelt sympathies for your loss. Coach Keith was one of the kindest men I've encountered in the past 10 years. He showed compassion and care for so many, and never seemed to meet a stranger he couldn't hold down a conversation with. He will surely be missed. Well done, Thy good and faithful servant. Come on up a little higher. -Matthew 25:21
~The Hawkins Family~*

Geri W Hawkins - December 04, 2020 at 01:41 PM

WB

*In memory of our high school classmate and leader, Keith William Phillips. Even in our high school years, it was easy to see that Keith was someone who was destined to do great things. So, in reading the story of his life and the many kind memories spoken here, I'm not surprised to see what a wonderful man he was. My prayer for you Deborah and your daughters is that the many memories you have of Keith serve to bring you a sense of joy and peace as these difficult days, months and years go by.
God Bless you
Willam L. Banton Jr*

William Banton - December 05, 2020 at 07:49 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Keith William Phillips.*



December 03, 2020 at 10:37 PM



“ *Please know that we are thinking of you and your family during this difficult time. May time help you heal and bring you peace.*



Dale & Lawrence - December 03, 2020 at 08:13 PM



“ *A Full Life was purchased for the family of Keith William Phillips.*



December 03, 2020 at 01:16 PM



“ *Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. purchased the Lily and Rose Tribute Spray for the family of Keith William Phillips.*



Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. - December 03, 2020 at 01:16 PM

GF

“ Glenn, Peter, Primerica Home Office Family purchased the Lily and Rose Tribute Spray for the family of Keith William Phillips.



Glenn, Peter, Primerica Home Office Family - December 03, 2020 at 10:59 AM

JE

“ Jeffrey Egan lit a candle in memory of Keith William Phillips



Jeffrey Egan - December 02, 2020 at 05:34 PM

JT

“ Jeff Egan & Franklin Templeton purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Keith William Phillips.



Jeff Egan & Franklin Templeton - December 02, 2020 at 05:30 PM



“ Sweet Tenderness was purchased for the family of Keith William Phillips.



December 02, 2020 at 01:43 PM

EF

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with the family. Continue to rely on God and know that he hears your prayers, because he cares for you. Truly sorry for your loss.*

Evans family - December 02, 2020 at 10:12 AM

SM

To Mrs. Deborah Phillips and daughters: I have walked in your shoes. You will now walk with your memories of him in your hearts and smile, (or cry, that's all right) when you think of the good times you spent with him. I'm sure you will thank God for them. My prayers are with you and may God strengthen and comfort you at this time.

Sylvia C. Moore

Sylvia Campbell Moore - December 02, 2020 at 10:50 AM

CC

To Deborah and the girls, Mike and I are praying for your continued blessings and strength!!! We love you all!!!

Clara and Mike Campbell - December 04, 2020 at 01:32 AM

TM

We Love You - Deborah, Re'(Jess), Sara, Chelsea and MacKenzie ... Our loss is Heaven's Gain. Coach Keith's "dash" will continue with You and the Girls and generations to come - No weapon formed against "ME" shall prosper... Isaiah 54:17. Sincerely, Teresa Mitchell & Family

Teresa Mitchell - December 05, 2020 at 12:41 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Keith William Phillips.*



December 01, 2020 at 04:17 PM



“ Thank you Mr Phillips and family for your great amazing financial knowledge. I will always cherish your amazing directions and wisdom. You left a great legacy for people to go by. Thank you for a job extremely well done. Now rest in Heaven. Joyce Grady

Joyce A Mosby-Grady - December 01, 2020 at 03:43 PM

BJ

“ Thank you Keith Phillips and the Phillips family for all the teachings on financial security. You have touched so many lives in a good way through your life's journey. RIP
Melvin and Betty Jones
We were under the Pringle team

Betty Jones - December 01, 2020 at 02:31 PM

MP

“ Margaret B. Pringle lit a candle in memory of
Keith William Phillips



Margaret B. Pringle - December 01, 2020 at 11:06 AM