



## Genela Curry Hardin

June 11, 1962 - June 24, 2020

Genela Altric Joan Hardin was a wife, mother, sister, aunt, daughter, friend, advisor, self-made entrepreneur, leader, guide, philanthropist, and prayer warrior who transitioned to meet her maker on Wednesday, June 24, 2020. Genela was born in Sumter, South Carolina on Shaw Air Force Base to the late Joan Curry and late E. Perry Palmer, Jr. She was lovingly raised by her mother and step-father, Owen F. Curry. As the eldest amongst her siblings, she loved and looked after her two younger sisters, Gigi Sanchez and Lorri (Mark) Jones. This little family would go on adventures together traveling the world as their father was in the Air Force. Along with their mother, all of the girls enjoyed singing together and putting on family talent shows to show off their vocal stylings.

Early in her life, Genela felt the presence of the Divine. She was baptised and raised in the Catholic church. Genela often told a story of when she was tasked by her mother to make her bed in a specific pristine fashion, a difficult task for her at a young age. Her mother was so impressed with the making of the bed, she believed someone may have helped her. When asked about it, Genela told her that she was visited by the Virgin Mary who made the bed for her. A true believer in the Lord, and his teachings, Genela was encouraged by the word and enjoyed worship as a young person singing hymns along with her sisters in Catholic church. Her most precious possession is the hand painted Madonna her mother gave her as a child that sits on her dresser with

her rosary.

Studious and curious, Genela excelled in her studies and developed a knack for finance and entrepreneurship as evidenced by her ability to sell candy to her friends and her sisters. Genela would keep a ledger of her allowance money that she saved while occasionally loaning out funds to her sisters to be paid back with interest. This financial and business acumen would continue to serve her throughout her life.

She graduated from Biloxi High School in 1980 and went on to attend the University of Mississippi (Ole Miss). Her step-father, Owen, was so proud of his daughter going on to college and studying Journalism, since the family had experienced the tragic loss of Genela's mother, Joan Curry earlier in the year. While at Ole Miss, Genela met several people who she would grow to love and care about, including her best friend and roommate, Bridget Perkins Ocean. And there was one boy, who spotted her walking in front of him in the Student Union and was so mesmerized he said to his friend, "I'm going to marry that girl"! He began to court her asking her out multiple times, and on one fateful day, she agreed to go out with him. Genela was always clear about her desires in the relationship, and found that though he was a young broke college student, he had potential. She fell in love with him. Genela and Grover were on the Gulf Coast in Mississippi in the famous Friendship Tree when Grover asked Genela to marry him without a ring-- she said yes! She trusted her new fiance would eventually find the perfect ring for her. While this was a beautiful connection, Genela realized that her time at Ole Miss was limited and needed time to continue her healing process from her mother's untimely death. Genela returned to Biloxi for a while before telling Grover her plans to spend time working and going to school in Sumter, SC closer to her maternal family. Genela left Biloxi and journeyed to Ole Miss to see Grover and here, Grover presented her with the ring to make their engagement "official". Grover couldn't let her go and asked "Why do we need to wait? Let's get married

now”, and with that they got their marriage license and were married within one week in Memphis, Tennessee where Genela was considered of legal age in 1982. This union has lasted over 38 years!

Genela has always prioritized and treasured the family unit. She witnessed first hand how special it can be to have the support of caring parents, siblings, grandparents, and extended family. When raising her own family, Genela knew that she and Grover would use their loving foundation to support the maturation of their children by first exhibiting self love and the acceptance of others. Genela brought into this world two daughters, Courtney Teresa and Tiffany Marie, born in 1983 and 1985 respectively. Due to Genela’s influence, her daughters exude care and compassion, and a knack for connecting people. She cared deeply for her children advocating for them in private with their father, mediating little arguments, and creating a fun and joyful environment creating family talent shows, tea parties, and the consistent push for her girls to try new extracurriculars, like horseback riding and ballet lessons. Her desire was to ensure Courtney and Tiffany’s love, patience and acceptance of one another was endless. She often reminded her girls at any moment to “be good to your sister, because this is your only sister!”. With her daughters, though they may have personality differences, she could tell that they are more than siblings, they are friends who share a genuine bond and secret sister language. This warmed her heart. Whenever Genela was with her family, there were many jokes, smiles, songs, good conversation and laughter.

As a self-made entrepreneur who taught herself computer software quality assurance in the 1980s, she started her own business, Hardin Associates Software Quality Testing, in the 1990s to support her family and join the digital revolution working at Fortune 500 companies such as IBM, Perot Systems, Compuware, and others. Genela’s ability to adapt to new locales as a child of

an Air Force Noncommissioned Officer became key in her adult life as she and her family moved often in support of new career opportunities expanding the possibilities for her family. Genela and Grover have relocated over 14 times living coast to coast! Genela made every house a home with intentional design. Her specialized skill set in software testing empowered her to be able to work from home and find work anywhere in the world. While many children born in the 80s were playing with video games, her children had floppy disks and DOS prompts! Always with an eye for cultural trends and mainstays, Genela predicted that the tech industry would be on-going and set her eyes on creating generational wealth. Since her candy business as a young girl, Genela has had a fierce dedication to financial education to empower her family and underserved communities. Until recently, she was in the midst of creating curriculum for financial workshops. Her family will ensure her desire to empower women and people of color to gain a healthy relationship to personal finance will continue.

Genela set a tone for generosity activating her skill sets to support her community in all the cities she has lived in, volunteering her time at the local library, the local African American museums, NAACP and most recently the Ronald McDonald House. Additionally, she would spend her time volunteering to teach seniors and adults computing skills. Beyond this, on a regular basis, she would listen to her friends and families ambitions, and actively provide information, personal connections, and strategy to help build the roadmap to reach those goals. She believed that we all have the inalienable right to live our best lives at the highest levels. Genela supported those who desired an education, and knew how hard it can be to find financial support, so, under her leadership, she started the “Keep On Keeping On” Scholarship to aid young adult family members along their educational journey.

With a variety of special interests, Genela enjoyed fencing, gardening, collecting Pandora charms, spoons and shot glasses from her travels, LLadro

figurines, fine China, \$2 bills, and creating photo books with family photos. Though it would not be obvious, she has an extensive jewelry collection filled with rare and precious natural gemstones. Later in her life, she became fascinated with genealogy and was able to realize a life long dream of locating her birth father, the late E. Perry Palmer introducing her and her family into the loving arms of the Naudin-Dibble family lineage. With this acceptance, Genela immersed herself in learning more about the Palmer branch, working with DNA detectives to help piece together ancestral stories and cultural history alongside her first cousins, Lorin and Vikki Palmer.

Genela Altric Joan Hardin can be described as many things, but chief among them is a light to all she meets providing comfort, guidance, strength and love. To witness the selflessness of her care not only to her loved ones, but her community members, and fellow entrepreneurs has been and will always be a blessing to carry in our hearts.

“Keep On Keeping On” and “Do Not Let Anyone Steal Your Joy” were two of her life mantras. It is with these words the rest of us will carry Genela in our spirits feeling the ever-present joy of her laugh and smile in our memories as we continue to move forward. Genela is survived by her doting husband, Grover Hardin, and her two daughters, Courtney Hardin-Krieg (Daniel), and Tiffany Hardin. Additionally, her step-father, Owen F. Curry, her sisters, Lorrie Jones (Mark), GiGi Sanchez, her sisters-in-law, Sandra Edwards and Denise Hardin, and brother-in-law Mark Hardin (Sherri) as well as nieces, nephews and a host of cousins. Her generosity, confidence and influence has impacted many, but none so much as her “three musketeers” to whom she dedicated her life and who will honor her as their Queen, yesterday, today, always and forever.

We love you.

Her generosity, confidence and influence has impacted many, but none so much as her “three musketeers” to whom she dedicated her life and who will honor her on July 3rd at J.C Helling’s Funeral Home Chapel, 107 Stokes Street, Lebanon, TN. 37087 with visitation beginning at 9:30 am followed by a 10:30 am service. Interment will be performed at Hermitage Memorial Gardens.

Please note social distancing protocols will be followed. If you wish to attend remotely, please contact J.C. Helling’s Funeral Home. Additionally consider a donation made in her name to her non-profit interests: MS Society, Lupus Foundation of America, Ronald McDonald House, National Museum of African American Music, and Thistle Farms. Thank you in advance for your sympathy and prayers.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Genela Curry Hardin*

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October 04, 2023 at 11:33 AM



“ *It is so sad to see this, I am a predicted 4th - 6th cousin to Genela according to ancestry.com and 23andMe. My thoughts and prayers go out to her family and friends.*

*Brad*

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**Bradley R Showell** - December 31, 2020 at 02:30 PM

SL

“ Please accept my most sincere condolences in the passing of your beautiful Genela. I truly never met a better soul in all my life. What a beautiful angel Heaven has now.

Genela worked on my software testing team at CompUSA in Dallas for a while back in the 1990's. She was without a doubt the most gifted software tester that I ever met. Her critical thinking skills were superb. (I knew then that she was destined for much greater things in her career.) I told stories about Genela and held her up as an example to many younger testers that I worked with throughout my career. I challenged them to grow their talent and strengthen their work ethic to be like her. My favorite story about her was of her single-handedly finding 75 defects in a single day in a particular programmer's code. It brought the ire of the programmer and his manager (and created quite an uproar). Despite the management turmoil it created for me, I took nothing away but immense pride for Genela and her contribution to our team. Besides being an amazing software tester, she was a wonderful team player, funny, kind, and a true friend.

I have corresponded with Genela over the years and followed the families moves and career accomplishments with pride and a certain level of awe. In fact, we kept in touch fairly regularly until just the past several years. I left my career almost two years ago to care for my husband who passed away last November after a long battle with cancer and heart disease I'm also caring for my elderly mother who lives with me. With everything going on, I have lost touch with many people. I just today learned of Genela's passing. I'm devastated and terribly sad for Grover and her girls. I admired what an absolutely amazing team that the four of them were, and was in awe of what great parents Genela and Grover were. To know Genela was to know without doubt what they meant to her. She was always bursting with pride about their accomplishments. I actually learned of her death via a wonderful article that Grover posted on LinkedIn about Tiffany's latest accomplishments in Nashville. I know Genela would be so very proud.

*Genela once related a funny story to me about dealing with an issue with one of the girls during the teenage years... in it she stated that her child had the mistaken impression that their household was a democracy, when in reality it was a dictatorship run by King Grover and Queen Genela. I laughed SO hard at her story, but also greatly admired her handling of the situation (especially having had teenagers of my own). It was the best example of a parent "putting their foot down" that I had ever heard. Funny, but brilliant. Such a truly amazing woman.*

*Prayers of comfort to all those who loved, and still love, Genela. I have no doubt her light is shining brightly in Heaven. I will carry her in my heart always. Peace be with you.*

*Kindest regards,  
Sylvia Lenters*

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**Sylvia Lenters** - November 19, 2020 at 03:32 PM