

In Loving Memory of



Mary James

Sunrise
July 29, 1938

Sunset
March 29, 2020

Service:
Wednesday, April 8, 2020 - 11:30 am

MCCALL'S BRONXWOOD FUNERAL HOME

4035 Bronxwood Avenue • Bronx, New York 10466

Rev. Norman Champion, Officiating

Kevin Wade, Organist

Obituary

Mary was born in New Orleans, Louisiana to Mary Young and Lester Kuykendall. She attended primary school in New Orleans, Louisiana and graduated from McDonogh 35 Senior High School Summa Cum Laude. After completing high school, she attended The YMCA School of Commerce where she earned a diploma as an Executive Secretary.

She relocated to New York City in 1959 to improve her employment opportunities. She was employed as an Administrative Assistant in one of the large department store chains in New York City. After being in New York for a short time, she met the love of her life, the General, who at the time was a second Lieutenant; not long after they met, they were married. Her career was interrupted for a number of years while she raised her four children.

She continued her education in order to further her career opportunities and earned a Certificate of study for Grant writing for non-profit organizations from the Bronx Community College. She was instrumental in the establishment of the 369th Historical Society, and one of the museum curators where she devoted a great many hours developing the Society's membership and displays for its exhibitions. As one of the Society's chartered members, she has served on a number of committees and is now a member of the Society's Executive Board as the Corresponding Secretary.

Much of her time and energy is devoted to organizing fund raisers for the Society and increasing the organization's membership. In addition, she chaired the Annual Reception of the 369th Historical Society to kick-off Black History Month at the 369th Armory. She is the chairperson on many projects for the Society and holds the honor of being the first person to Chair the New York National Guard Spouses Committee Luncheon and Networking Seminar, which was a challenging task.

She was presented a Certificate of Merit from the Executive Chamber of the State of New York. She is the first recipient of the prestigious Knolma Lolita Duckett Award, presented by the 369th Historical Society to the spouse of a New York National Guard Person who has worked tirelessly on behalf of her spouse in the furtherance of military traditions and ideals. She has received a number of awards and honorary awards, usually reserved for spouses of service members. She is active in a number of civic and social clubs in the New York Metropolitan Area. Mrs. James is a CEO and exercises her entrepreneurial skills in cooking and book writing which she has worked on throughout her professional career.

Mary Kuykendall James was a force who spoke loudly when needed but also found solitude orchestrating in the background. She has been described as classy and elegant and was a leader without effort, she was also very kind and direct. Mary possessed a strength that exuded confidence and a love that would move mountains for her family and friends. To those who loved and knew her best, she was "mommy", "grandma", "Aunt Mary" and "Nanan".

On March 29th, 2020, our beloved May was called home to be with The Lord. She leaves to continue her legacy, her daughter Roslyn Williams, her sons Nathaniel, Jr. , Darryl (Valerie) , Eric (Jill) , eight grandchildren: Amani, Shana, Adrien, Sean, Ashley, Mikayla, Lauren, Christopher, and two great-grandsons, Tyler and Ksawery, her god-daughter Shannon (Edward) and god-daughter Sharon Rogers and host of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do, I give you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." -John 14:7