



Mr. Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr.

May 28, 1928 - January 27, 2019

Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr. was born on May 28, 1928 in the Snow Hill Community, Sampson County, North Carolina to the late Mittie Spell Tatum and Eugene Milton Tatum. He departed his earthly life on Sunday, January 27, 2019 at home in the company of family and friends. He was preceded in death by his loving wife of sixty-two years, Gertie Blackwell Tatum.

He attended the public schools of Durham North Carolina graduating from Hillside High School in the summer of 1944. He continued on to North Carolina College for Negroes his freshman year and matriculated to Fayetteville State Teachers College graduating with a B.S. Degree in Elementary Education in 1948. A Masters' Degree in supervision and administration was completed at North Carolina Central University in 1958. Continuing education for principal leadership was earned in 1964 at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Herbert's initial year of teaching was at the Henderson Institute, Henderson, North Carolina from 1948 – 49. Teaching in Durham City Schools from 1950 – 51, he joined and served our country in the United States Armed Forces. After his military service and honorary discharge in 1953, he returned to Durham and started teaching at Whitted Elementary School; and became an assistant principal in 1964. Transferring to Crest Street Elementary, North Durham

Elementary School he was principal for two years. He moved to Shephard Junior High School where he worked as a teacher and assistant principal for two years then became principal for twelve years. Herbert was touted as a present and respected administrator. After completing administrative leadership at Shephard Junior High School, he moved to Holton Middle School and served another four and a half years; retiring in 1990. Never a man with an idle mind or hands, Herbert assumed the role as courier in his son's law practice for more than twenty five years where he was highly regarded by everyone.

His educational affiliations included the National Association of Educators, the North Carolina Association of Educators, Durham City Association of Educators, North Carolina Principals Association, Durham City Principals Association and the North Carolina Middle/Junior High School Association. Herbert was an avid proponent of education whether in the classroom or promoting learners of any age. His educational legacy as teacher and principal continues to live in the number of students, teachers and principals he mentored and shared times in the classroom experience.

Herbert was very active in many organizations: Doric Lodge #28, C Hudson Chapter #63, Durham Consistory #218; John Avery Boys and Girls Club, Inc. serving as president of the Board of Directors and interim Executive Director twice during his time with the club; United Way of Durham, Inc.; Hayti Development Corporation; Scarborough Nursery Board; James E. Shephard Sertoma Club, Inc. serving as secretary and treasurer.

Once a member of the White Rock Baptist Church, he served as the church clerk, member of the Trustee Board, Deacon Board, and Sunday school

teacher for many years. In 1993, Herbert shared in the organization and was a founding member of Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church. Faithful and active, he served in many capacities – Sunday school teacher, site committee, Trustee, Deacon, Finance Committee member; and continued to perform in any capacity needed until no longer able.

Herbert is survived by his sister, Kale Sichens (Mary Yvonne Tatum) Atlanta, Georgia; two sons, Michael Todd Tatum (Melonie) Texas City, Texas; and Herbert Eugene Tatum III (Jacqueline) Chapel Hill, North Carolina; three Grandchildren, Michael Karee Tatum, Alyssa Jenee Tatum and Herbert Eugene Tatum IV; three great grandchildren Aubrey Rose Tatum, Amari Zion Jefferson-Tatum and Khari Khalil Jefferson-Tatum and many cherished relatives and friends.

Funeral services will take place on Saturday, February 9, 2019 at Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church, 403 Cook Rd., Durham, N.C. 27713 at 1:00 p.m., with a family visitation one hour prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, Memorial donations can be made on behalf of Herbert E. Tatum, Jr. to the Beacon Light MBC Scholarship Fund, 403 Cook Road, Durham, NC 27713.

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 9. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church
403 Cook Rd
Durham, NC 27713
<http://www.beaconlightchurch.org/>

Celebration of Life

FEB 9. 1:00 PM (ET)

Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church
403 Cook Rd
Durham, NC 27713
<http://www.beaconlightchurch.org/>

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr.*

October 05, 2023 at 11:31 AM



“ *Dear Eugene and Jackie, I was so sorry to hear about your dad. He was a wonderful man who was always the same when you saw him. I will never forget his kindness and friendship with me. He was truly loved by many. He had the best personality of anyone that I had known. I can hear him now saying Good Morning when he would run errands for you. He had the sweetest smile and the countenance of an angel. You were really blessed to have such a wonderful father. May God Give You And Your Family Comfort and Peace During This Time Of Sorrow! My Thoughts and Prayers Are With You! A Friend Always, Hope Raynor*



Hope Raynor - April 27, 2019 at 12:41 AM



“ *We'd like to extend our deepest condolences for the loss of your beloved father. We pray that God gives you peace and comfort during this time of bereavement. - Kevin and Timmeshia Wilson*

Timmeshia Wilson - February 09, 2019 at 10:46 AM

NM

“ *Nellie C. Mangum lit a candle in memory of Mr. Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr.*



Nellie C. Mangum - February 08, 2019 at 03:20 PM

AV

“ *Attorney Tatum and Family-so sorry to hear of the loss of one so dear to so many. It was always a pleasure to see and talk with him and you are indeed in my prayers.*

Andre D. Vann

Andre D. Vann - February 08, 2019 at 02:53 PM

LJ

To the family of Herbert Tatum, we are so sorry for the loss of your loved one, and we thank GOD for the strength and love that he given unto you in this sorrowful time. Lewis Justice and family

Lewis Justice - February 09, 2019 at 11:35 AM

MR

“ *Tatum and I were long-time friends and shared many wonderful experiences as Deacons and Trustees at Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church. He will be missed but not forgotten.*

My family and I also want to express our deepest condolences and send our thoughts and prayers to uplift the family in the celebration of his life.

Butler Redd, Jr.

Mary Redd-Clary - February 08, 2019 at 10:37 AM

CG

“ *It is with great sympathy of the loss of your Father Gene. We are praying for you and family. I am sure God picked a strong flower for His garden in Glory. Always remember the great times you had and the wisdom that was given to you. We love you and Jacki.*

Clarry and James Gathers - February 07, 2019 at 10:15 PM

SB

It was always a pleasure to see Gene, Jackie and the grands out . Every time i saw him we wiuld laugh about getting paid worjking at the law firm. Many fond and fun memories.

Sandra Battle - February 08, 2019 at 09:36 AM

LS

“ *Gene, Our deepest condolences to you upon the passing of Mr. Tatum. Words can't express how saddened we are to hear of your loss. I am here if you you need anything brother.*

Lawrence Sanders and Family

Lawrence Sanders - February 07, 2019 at 10:57 AM

PJ

“ *Gene, your father was an outstanding man. He bragged about what a great son you are, you meant the world to him. So many people have fond memories of your father, he will be missed. Truly sorry for your loss. Paul and Jackie Jones*



Paul Jones - February 06, 2019 at 01:12 PM

WB

“ To the Family of "Herbert Eugene Tatum Jr." please accept our sincere condolences in the lost of your father, brother, grand-father, great grand-father and a relative to many.

Herb, as he was affectionately called, was a great contributor, in general and specifically, to Durham and the education community. He touched many students and educators, in a very positive way, in helping shape their lives and careers.

Thanks also, for sharing him with the Durham Community, through the many years of his life, a life well lived. It was my privilege to have known him and considered him to be a friend.

William V. "Bill" Bell and Family.

Tuesday 2/5/2019 @ 1:23pm

WILLIAM V. "BILL" BELL - February 05, 2019 at 01:24 PM

DC

“ Diane Cox lit a candle in memory of Mr. Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr.



Diane Cox - February 04, 2019 at 02:32 AM

TW

“ Gene, Mike -- Your dad was such a key intricate part of our 'village' and I am eternally grateful to him for that. Through the years it would always warm my heart when I would see him... and remembering that trademark 'pipe'.

Praying that God's strength and peace will rest upon and carry your family.

Shepard JHS Panthers ('73 - '75)

Terryl (Terri) Williams - February 02, 2019 at 08:09 AM

RM

“ Mike and Gene:

As a Panther and former student of Shepard Jr. High ('72 - '75), my family and I are extending our condolences to you and your family during this time. Mr. Tatum was a good principal and we learned a lot from him as young students. As you treasure the memories you have of your Dad you will always have him with you.

May the peace of God which passeth all understanding sustain you during this time.

Raymond McAllister - February 01, 2019 at 08:25 PM

SW

“ Mr. Tatum was my Principal at Shepard Middle School. He was always courteous and had a wonderful demeanor. He was my Favorite Principal. I always respected him. He will truly be missed. Thanks Principal Tatum for being a wonderful role model for your students.



Sylvia Watson-williams - February 01, 2019 at 05:57 PM

ML

“ Mike and Gene,

Your Dad, without a doubt, was my favorite principal due to his kindness, fairness, and common sense approach to dealing with young adults. (Even when he busted me for sneaking over to Ms. Best' Store)

I know he was proud of you both and please know that your family will be our prayers during this difficult time.

*Michael Linton
Shepard Jr. High "71 - 74"*

Michael Linton - February 01, 2019 at 02:45 PM

VJ

“ I will miss Mr. Tatum V. Jackson



Virginia Jackson - February 01, 2019 at 02:12 PM

DB

“ Dorothy "Dot" Brower lit a candle in memory of Mr. Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr.



Dorothy "Dot" Brower - February 01, 2019 at 07:31 AM

JD

“ James E. Shepard Sertoma Club Of Durham lit a candle in memory of Mr. Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr.



James E. Shepard Sertoma Club of Durham - January 31, 2019 at 01:02 PM

TC

“ Thanks James E. Shepard Sertoma Club lit a candle in memory of Mr. Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr.



Thanks James E. Shepard Sertoma Club - January 31, 2019 at 01:01 PM

HJ

“ Prayers for the family from Harvey Hinton, Jr



Harvey Hinton Jr - January 31, 2019 at 10:07 AM

DR

“ Gene you and your family have my sincere condolences on the passing of your father. May the holy spirit keep you and comfort you in this time of grief.

David Robinson

David Robinson - January 30, 2019 at 09:14 PM

TS

“ Uncle Herbert was always pleasant, and had a great sense of humor. I always enjoyed visiting him and Aunt Gertie--especially as a child. Sending love and prayers to you cousins Gene and Michael and the rest of our family. Love you all. Sincerely, Teresa Cook Spruell, husband, and sons.

Teresa Cook Spruell - January 30, 2019 at 07:12 PM



“ Michael Tatum lit a candle in memory of Mr. Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr.



Michael Tatum - January 30, 2019 at 07:03 PM

JD

“ Juanda Dorsey lit a candle in memory of Mr. Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr.



Juanda Dorsey - January 30, 2019 at 08:01 AM

JD

“ I would like to express my deepest sympathies to the Tatum family. Mr. Tatum was a loving, encouraging, and calming force and all who were able to know him was all the better for it. He will be missed.

Juanda Tatum Dorsey

Juanda Dorsey - January 30, 2019 at 06:44 AM

SA

I am definitely thankful that Mr Tatum has gone to be with the Lord. He was a great man that I loved and respected dearly. God bless the family that he left behind. I will always remember his love of life and his caring ways

My deepest condolences to the family. In which I am blessed to be a part of. Much LOVE to you all!!

Sharon Amos - January 30, 2019 at 03:31 PM

NC

Mr. Tatum was the best principal I had in school. He made my transition from Norfolk, VA to Durham a pleasant experience at Shepard Jr. High. He always talked about striving to do your best, which he did as a principal, father and wonderful friend to my father. Blessings for the Tatum Family during this most difficult time.

Natalie Smith Clayton

Natalie Smith Clayton - January 31, 2019 at 02:08 PM

RB

Gene and Michael, you had a great dad. He was inspirational to everyone that knew him. As kids, if we paid attention, family, work being there for the community's kids and developing young people were his life. As we the kids became adults, he tended to ask how you were doing and I know I felt compelled to talk about everything with him. He knew my family, and they were a part of your family when we were kids. I loved Mr Tatum as I am sure others did in Durham, and he will be missed. Always a smile.

Live like your dad and you will still have things to do, he kept busy.

With deepest sympathy

Bobby Brown

Robert M Brown - January 31, 2019 at 02:46 PM

AH

To the Herbert Eugene Tatum, Jr. Family. I was saddened to hear of Brother Tatum's passing. Please remember that God is too wise to make a mistake and too holy to do anything wrong. It was a blessing for me to have been accepted into the Tatum family over 60 years ago. It is not often that you meet a family that the whole family has impeccable integrity.

I learned many years ago that a good name is more valuable than silver and gold. This could only mean one thing that I was accepted into a very rich family over 60 years ago.

Brother Tatum will surely be missed. He was pillar in the Durham Community where he helped to mold thousands of young people's lives over the years. I would like to say to my Brother that it is finished and thank you for a Job Well Done. Farewell, Farewell. We will keep you in our thoughts and Prayers.

This is with much love.

The Albert and Dorothy Huey Family.

Albert Huey - January 31, 2019 at 04:04 PM

MS

Thank you for your grand tribute to our family. Seeing your name and your comments brought back divine memories. You were older than me, but I remember you with my older siblings and other family members. Thank you so much. Mary Yvonne (Bitsy) Tatum

Mary Yvonne Tatum (Kali Sichen) - February 02, 2019 at 08:10 AM

MS

My brother Herbert, was like my father. He was totally devoted to me, our nephew Bennie Jr, and our Mother, Mrs Mittie Tatum. I was a student in Junior High when he started his career as a teacher. He treated me just like all the other students. His attributes of fairness, humility, justice, compassion and understanding he learned from our mother. He carried these traits into every aspect of his life and into all relationships. He was greatly loved by ALL.

One could not have asked for a better father, so devoted to his family, his wife and his sons, Mike and Gene. He was blessed with grandchildren and great grands. A full life he lived. Surely, any life he touched was truly a BLESSED life. We sing the highest PRAISES to the Great God who brought him to us. Amen

Mary Yvonne Tatum (Kali Sichen) - February 02, 2019 at 08:33 AM