



Katherine Detherage

September 2, 1939 - April 13, 2023

Dr. Detherage, a legendary nurse, nurse educator, and leader transitioned from her

earthly life unexpectedly on Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 83 years of age.

Katherine

Bernice Smith was born in Sleepy Hollow, Kentucky to Joseph Barney Smith, Sr. and

Virginia Dorsey Smith. She was the youngest of four children to their union:

Joseph

B. Smith, Jr., Dorothy S. Dowe, and Milton H. Smith. In 1960, she married James M.

Detherage and to that union were born Kimberly L. Detherage, James M.

Detherage,

Jr. and Kevin J. Detherage.

In her early years, she attended Brownsboro Elementary School, Lagrange Training

School, Pewee Valley Elementary School and Forest Elementary School in Berrytown, KY. She graduated valedictorian from Lincoln Institute, class of 1956 at

the age of 16. Dr. Detherage was a graduate of St. Joseph's Infirmary School of

Nursing, Spalding College School of Nursing in Louisville, Kentucky, The University

of Kentucky in Lexington, where she earned her Master's Degree in Nursing.

At

these three schools she was the first person of African descent to be admitted and

graduate. She earned her Ph.D. at Boston College.

Dr. Detherage began her nursing career at St. Joseph's Infirmary as a nurse and then

as an instructor for many years. In 1967, she was one of the first faculty members at

Jefferson Community College. (She taught Aunt Dot, and Aunt Margaret). She then

went on to be an Assistant Professor at the University of Louisville School of Nursing

where she was one of several persons who were tasked to begin the Nursing program at the University of Louisville. She loved Nursing, she loved teaching and

believed that education was important. She wanted students of African descent to

excel in nursing and often had students at her home tutoring them. In 1973, the

family moved to Massachusetts and Dr. Detherage became an Assistant Professor at

Boston College.

Dr. Detherage moved to Rochester, NY as a Robert Wood Johnson Fellow at the

University of Rochester School of Nursing in 1980. After completing her Fellowship,

she joined the faculty at the University of Rochester, and later served as the Vice

President of Nursing Practice at The Anthony Jordan Health Center, Adjunct Professor at SUNY Brockport, Chairperson of the Nursing Departments at St.

John

Fisher College, and Nazareth College. She served Nazareth College with distinction

until retirement. While there, she served as the Principal Investigator of a HRSA

funded grant entitled, "WE CARE" (Welcoming Everyone to Culturally Appropriate

RN Education), a program to recruit underrepresented nursing students. She received the College's Civic Engagement Award for outstanding volunteer service,

April 2009, and served as Principal Investigator of a HRSA funded grant entitled,

"WE CARE" (Welcoming Everyone to Culturally Appropriate RN Education.

Dr. Detherage excelled in various capacities. She received numerous awards throughout her career. One award that held special meaning as an African American

was the "Fabulous 5" honoring by the University of Kentucky. In 2020, she was

honored as one of the Fabulous Five graduates of the University of Kentucky School

of Nursing and first African American graduate with a Master's of Nursing as a trail

blazer effecting change in nursing and racial equality. In honor of the legacy of the

"Fab 5" a commemorative art display was permanently installed on the 3rd floor of

the School of Nursing at the University of Kentucky.

She was the first and to date, the only African American President of the Genesee

Valley Nurses Association. She was a member of Sigma Theta Tau International, Honor Society in Nursing, Delta Kappa Gamma, a society for key nursing educators, and Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc. (CEP), where she served in leadership roles for Beta Chi Chi, Inc., the local chapter, and the Northeast Region. She has served on the Boards of Directors of the Catholic Family Center, the only nurse on the Rochester Health Commission, the McCree McCuller Wellness Center, St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center, the Regional Review Council of the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency, and the Finger Lakes Donor Recovery Network. The Rochester Community will miss her sweet, kind, gentle leadership, her, impeccable coordination and planning skills, her patience and unyielding support. Dr. Detherage, loved God, her family, people and culture. She was an avid reader, scrabble player and loved to do the New York Times crossword puzzle every day and did so, up until several days before her death. She was a world traveler, patron of the arts -season tickets to the theatre, Actors theater in Louisville and GEVA in Rochester. She loved being with her children. She supported all of their activities and attended every event. She was proud of all of their accomplishments and always ready to tell someone about them. She was a loving and kind woman who always had a willing listening ear. She taught her children, the importance of

learning, to be your best, to treat others with respect and dignity, that dreams were possible and to let no one deter you from your goals. Her favorite flowers were daisies and lilacs.

Dr. Detherage, leaves to mourn her passing, her husband, James M.

Detherage,

daughter Rev. Kimberly L. Detherage, Esq., East Elmhurst, NY; sons James M.

Detherage, Jr. (Ginger), Washington, DC, The Honorable Judge Kevin J.

Detherage,

Sanford, Florida, brother Milton H. Smith (Mary Catherine), four grandchildren

Jose,

Jillian, Justin, and Madison, dear friends and a host of nieces, nephews,

relatives, and

dear friends.

Homegoing Services:

Friday, April 28, 2023, 6 – 8pm Visitation: A.D. Porter & Sons Funeral Home, 1300

W. Chestnut St., Louisville, Kentucky

Saturday, April 29, 2023, Wake: 10am - 12noon, Funeral: 12 noon, Repast to follow,

7435 Brownsboro Baptist Church, Rev. Augustus Prentice, Pastor. Eulogist Minister

Judith Smith Malone, Highway 329, Crestwood, Kentucky

Memorial Service:

June 3, 2023, Rochester, NY: Agape Fellowship United Methodist Church, Rev.

Marlowe Washington, Pastor. 121 Scholfield Road, Irondequoit, NY 14617.

In lieu of flowers, the family is requesting that you consider making a donation for a

Nursing Scholarship to be established in Dr. Detherage's name honoring a student of

African descent in Rochester and Kentucky.

Condolences may be sent to: The Detherage Family c/o Kimberly L. Detherage, 24-

02 Ericsson St., East Elmhurst, NY. 11369

<https://evt.live/remembering-dr-katherine-detherage>

Previous Events

Visitation

APR **28**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

A. D. Porter and Sons Funeral Home - Downtown
1300 West Chestnut Street
Louisville, KY 40203
(502) 587-9678
a.d.portersoutheast@gmail.com
<https://adporters.com/>

Visitation

APR **29**. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Brownsboro Baptist Church
7435 Ky-329
Crestwood, KY 40014

Service

APR **29**. 12:00 PM (ET)

Brownsboro Baptist Church
7435 Ky-329
Crestwood, KY 40014

Tribute Wall

JH

“ Kathy as I called her was one of my teachers at JC Nursing school and was a friend also. When my husband(Who has since passed)was very ill She helped me take care for him. I could always ask her for help.
Her daughter and my daughter Daphne were high-school friends. I know she will be missed by all who knew her.

Joan Hardin - April 27, 2023 at 06:37 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Katherine Detherage.



April 27, 2023 at 09:59 AM



“ A Full Life was purchased for the family of Katherine Detherage.



April 26, 2023 at 12:48 PM

CS

“ Aunt Katherine was the most gentle, kind-spirited and soft spoken women I’ve ever known. Her calm will be tremendously missed. In this world of constant chaos, confusion and turmoil, she is what this world really needed. She was genuinely happy for my marriage. Every time we spoke, she’d always ask “how’s Bj?” Heaven has truly gained an intelligent, phenomenal angel. Love Cassandra, Shikil and BJ.

cassandra scott - April 25, 2023 at 04:50 AM

IS

“ In Loving Memory: The Sutton's purchased the Sweet Sincerity for the family of Katherine Detherage.



In Loving Memory: The Sutton's - April 24, 2023 at 09:42 PM

KM

“ Dr. Detherage, one of only two teachers in college that made the biggest impact on my life and helped to guide me in the perfect direction to take for my nursing career. I’ll never forget her kindness, her compassion, and her belief in me. She inspired me to choose mental health nursing and I’ll forever be thankful. Even though it’s been many many years since I’ve talked with her, I’m comforted by the fact that I know she knows how she impacted me because I told her. *Don’t wait for tomorrow people... May she rest in peace.

Kristina Moss - April 24, 2023 at 08:12 PM

ML

“ *Our dedicated Soror, sweet, kind, gentle servant until the end. Gone but never forgotten. Soror Lovett-Scott, and family.*

Margie Lovett-Scott - April 24, 2023 at 06:35 PM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Katherine Detherage.*



April 24, 2023 at 06:27 PM

EH

“ *Emeritus Dean and Professor Janie Heath purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Katherine Detherage.*



Emeritus Dean and Professor Janie Heath - April 24, 2023 at 03:04 PM

JH

“ *So grateful the University of Kentucky College of Nursing was able to honor Katherine in 2020 as one of our FAB FIVE -first African American graduates when she earned her MSN in 1974 - her trailblazing efforts continued to soar for driving change and promoting health equity and social justice in nursing education and healthcare delivery. Such an amazing career and beautiful legacy she made for our nursing profession. Warm thoughts and prayers to the Detherage family. Janie Heath, Emeritus Dean UK College of Nursing*

janie heath - April 23, 2023 at 10:44 AM