



Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce

January 10, 1961 - December 20, 2022

"You don't choose your family. They are God's gift to you, as you are to them."

~Desmond Tutu~

Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce, 62, of Utica, NY, passed away on Tuesday, December 20, 2022, at St. Luke's Memorial Hospital, surrounded by her family.

Born in New Hartford, New York, on January 10, 1961, Diane was the daughter of the late John W., Sr. and Thelma (Blackshear) Pierce. Diane was a loving Daughter, Sister, Mother, Grandmother, Aunt, and Friend. Her spirit and her tenacity will always remain in our hearts.

Raised and educated in Utica, Diane attended Miller School through Utica Free Academy – ultimately obtaining her GED.

In the fall of 1976, Diane met her fiancé, the late Robert Garrett, and from this union, Rashida and Robert Garrett were born.

With exemplary bedside manners and a heart for helping others, Diane's kindness, compassion, and gentleness kick started her career in the nursing field. Her natural gift for assisting and serving people was exemplified through her many years of service as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) throughout various nursing settings in Utica.

Following the advice of her brother, the late Patrick Pierce, Diane left Utica in 1992 and moved to Albany, NY. Her move was the catalyst for many other family members to relocate from Utica to Albany.

Diane continued to work as a CNA in Albany, a vocation that brought her

many long-lasting and loving relationships during this career period. Her HUGE personality, larger-than-life demeanor, impeccable sense of humor, and uncanny ability to create formidable relationships contributed significantly to the remarkable life she created for herself and her children in Albany. With an emphasis on family dinners at the table, she nurtured and raised Rashida, Robert, Mariah, Imani, and Toya with love and great pride. Her loving heart made her suitable for this role.

Bestowed with an exquisite sense of humor, a smile that would light up a room, and a laugh that could shake any blue sky, Diane loved life!

Affectionately called Dolly or Lil Mary, she was known as "The Life of the Party!" She loved having cookouts - showcasing her much-raved-about pasta salad, celebrating and entertaining with friends and family. You could find her sipping "tea" and playing spades at any given get-together. You would always know when the party was "lit," evidenced by her robust "OWWWWWWWWWW" and rhythmic finger-popping to her FAVORITE song, Wifey.

More importantly, Diane never met a stranger; once she renamed someone, they became her family! She possessed a pure, loving heart, and no matter the time, place, or reason, she was there for you. Diane's legacy will live on through the love she graciously gave others.

Diane is survived by her children, Rashida J. Garrett (Aaron) and Robert W. Garrett (Danielle); great-nieces who are like daughters, Mariah Jackson, and Imani Pierce; a bonus daughter, Toya Rowlett and her Godson Lorenzo Holliman; and her grandchildren, Ava, Zoe, and Ace; Crawford, Robert Garrett Jr., and Kyrie Garrett. Diane adored her grandchildren and loved nothing more than talking to them on the phone and spending time with them.

Diane's cherished memories will remain in the hearts of her siblings, John W. Pierce Jr., Patricia Pierce, Peggy & Jose Torres, and Melanie Pierce.

Aunt Diane also leaves a host of nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews.

Many cousins also survive her. Diane had unique connections with her

cousins, Tiffany Farrish, Catherine Wilson, and Cassandra Bradford, whom she held near and dear to her heart and loved talking on the phone to.

Diane leaves her special friend, Judy Rowlett; and her lifelong friends, Belinda Holliman, Serena Johnson-Smith, and Yvonne Green. And her long-term aide, Jasmin DeJesus, who became more like family.

Diane is predeceased by her parents, John W. and Thelma (Blackshear) Pierce Sr.; maternal grandparents, the Rev. Matthew and Mary (Butts) Blackshear; paternal grandparents, Josh Pierce and Lula Mae Tillery; sister, Carrie Rucker and brothers Donald, Anthony, Ronald, and Patrick. And her fiancé Robert Garrett.

The family extends their most profound appreciation and would like to thank the nursing staff at St. Luke's ICU for their caring hearts and efforts. MVHS Dialysis Center, The Grand Rehabilitation and Nursing at Utica, and all the transporters and aides who helped care for Diane so caringly and lovingly.

And to all those who also loved and assisted Diane, the Pierce family gives our most sincere THANK YOU! We cannot call the names of everyone, but please know that we sincerely appreciate everything you did for Diane.

Visitation will be on Saturday, January 7, 2023, from 10:00 AM -12:00 PM at St. Matthew's Temple COGIC, 110 Washington Street, Utica. Diane's Celebration of Life and Home Going Service will commence immediately upon the conclusion of the calling hours. The repass will be held at the American Legion, 409 Herkimer Road in Utica, from 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM.

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 7. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Matthew's Temple Church of God in Christ
110 Washington Street
utica, NY 13502

Home Going Service

JAN 7. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Matthew's Temple Church of God in Christ
110 Washington Street
utica, NY 13502

Tribute Wall

CS

“ I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THAT I AM SO SORRY FOR LOSS FAMILY. BE SAFE EVERYONE AND CONTINUE CALLING AND LEANING ON THE LORD. YOUR FAMILY ARE IN OUR PRAYER'S.

SAFETY AND BLESSING'S TO YOUR FAMILY.
THE SLADE FAMILY.

CYNTHIA SLADE - January 31, 2023 at 07:47 PM

WM

“ Wanda Morris lit a candle in memory of Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce



Wanda Morris - January 05, 2023 at 08:25 AM

OC

“ Ophelia Barber Caine lit a candle in memory of Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce



ophelia barber caine - January 03, 2023 at 07:10 PM

B(

“ Bobby and Catherine (Wilson)King purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce.



Bobby and Catherine (Wilson)King - January 03, 2023 at 10:04 AM

WM

“ Wendy McKinsey lit a candle in memory of Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce



Wendy McKinsey - January 02, 2023 at 09:02 PM

YF

My deepest sympathy to the families of Diane. May God continue to give you all comfort and strength is my prayer 🙏❤️

Yvonne (Bonnie) Stubbs Palm Coast, Fla. - January 04, 2023 at 12:43 AM

SS

“ Sheila Story lit a candle in memory of Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce



sheila story - December 30, 2022 at 07:15 AM

SS

Sending prayers to the family from our family!

sheila story - December 30, 2022 at 07:16 AM

MM

“ *My sincere condolences to the pierce family on the loss of Di. She was a true gem and she will be missed! Michele Maio*

michele maio morawiec - December 30, 2022 at 06:48 AM

RN

“ *Deepest condolences to the family.*



Rochelle Moore- Nichols - December 30, 2022 at 05:24 AM

VT

“ *Have many fond memories of Diane, ones I will always cherish, had so much fun with her at the family barbecues, so sorry to hear of this, my condolences to the entire family*



Vivian Tucker - December 29, 2022 at 05:43 PM

CB

“ *Diane “Lil Mary”
My heart is broken! I am grateful every time we spoke it ended with “L Love You”! This will be Hard however your suffering has come to a cease! Father GOD please be with Our entire family... Amen 🙏*

cassandra b - December 29, 2022 at 12:57 PM

EM

“ *Eleanor McDonald lit a candle in memory of Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce*



Eleanor McDonald - December 29, 2022 at 12:55 PM



“ *Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce.*



December 29, 2022 at 12:55 PM

MB

“ *Mary E Blackshear lit a candle in memory of Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce*



Mary E Blackshear - December 29, 2022 at 12:53 PM

GD

“ *I have been in this family life my whole life time, was blessed to visit with Diane on one of my visits back home, She was so happy to see me as I was her, Rest easy baby, my deepest sympathy to the family.*



Grace DeCastro - December 29, 2022 at 11:12 AM

SR

“ *My Condolences to the family, It was a pleasure working with her.SIP*



Salimah Rahman - December 29, 2022 at 11:02 AM

AP

“ *Angela Roger Patterson lit a candle in memory of Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce*



Angela Roger Patterson - December 29, 2022 at 07:42 AM

JD

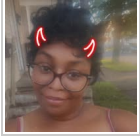
“ *Sleep Well Cousin
So many fond memories and laughter what a joy you are to be around.
Condolences to my Cousins.
Peace and Blessings
Jody Dorsey and Family*

Jody Dorsey - December 29, 2022 at 07:19 AM

KE

“ *My condolences to you all.*

Kendel - December 29, 2022 at 05:58 AM



“ My condolences to the family . I will miss u Diane . Us being noseay and gossiping together.

Tot Jones - December 29, 2022 at 05:14 AM



“ My condolences and prayers to the family
Rest In Heaven



Ernesto montanez - December 28, 2022 at 11:49 PM



“ Rest in paradise cuz. Love you sweetheart!❤️

Tyrone Robinson - December 28, 2022 at 10:47 PM



“ So sorry for your lost I know Diane long time, but God loved her more I always was friend with the Blackshear family love God don't make no mistake

Annie mae brooks - December 28, 2022 at 10:07 PM



“ Sending prayers and condolences to the
Pierce/ Blackshear families. Sorry for your
loss.



Dawn Winston - December 28, 2022 at 08:25 PM

AB

“ *"Aunt" Diane not by blood but by community. I always admired your beautiful skin and welcoming personality. I remember hanging out at your house during the Summer, just sitting on the porch, listening to music. I also admired how well you kept Rashida and Robert. They were always dressed to impress. I pray that you Rest In Peace and my deepest condolences to the family in this time of grief. Diane will be missed, but great memories will always remain.*



Alberta Bell - December 28, 2022 at 07:33 PM

RA

Diane, Beautiful spirit and a smile bright like the sun. Anytime I use to see her she always was smiling and saying my son Ed looking like those Blackshear's. Rest in Paradise. May the Siblings and family find comfort in the lord in your loss. My deepest condolence and prayers.

Ritha A - December 30, 2022 at 08:35 AM

Melanie
Pierce

“ *Melanie Pierce lit a candle in memory of Karen Diana (Diane) Pierce*



Melanie Pierce - December 28, 2022 at 05:42 PM

Melanie
Pierce

I'm going to miss my sister love u forever❤️

Melanie Pierce - December 28, 2022 at 05:43 PM

RP

Cupcake

That waste name I called her an she would say Teddy...

Rip Diane rip

I have so many fond memories of her that will live in my heart forever.....I send my sincere condolences to The Pierce Family.

Rose Patterson - December 28, 2022 at 06:23 PM

PM

Praying The Lord will comfort you all during these sad days ahead.

Lean on Him, He will be right there with each of you.

R.I.P. DIANE 🙏💕🙏🌹🌹🌹

Pamela Maddox - December 28, 2022 at 10:54 PM