

Dr. Steve Wesley Batson

August 20, 1946 - April 7, 2018

Steve W. Batson, Ed.D., CFRE, a devoted husband and father, passed away Saturday, April 7, at the home he shared with his wife, Kathleen “Kathy” Batson, in Albany, Georgia. He was 71.

A celebration of his remarkable life will be held on Saturday, April 21, at Kimbrell-Stern, 1503 Dawson Road, in Albany. Visitation will be from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., and a memorial service will follow at 11 a.m. William Collins, minister to senior adults at Porterfield Memorial United Methodist Church, will officiate.

Born Aug. 20, 1946 in Wilmington, North Carolina, Dr. Batson was the son of Mildred and John Batson. They raised him in the Macon, Georgia area, where he raced go-carts, read as many books as he could get his hands on and pursued his passion for science and education.

He earned his bachelor’s degree in biology and psychology at Mercer University in Macon and specialist in education and master of education degrees in biology at Georgia College in Milledgeville. While earning his degrees, he served as a part-time biology laboratory instructor and also a secondary administrator and science instructor. He made a lasting impression on his students, who remember him as a respectful teacher and mentor who taught them important lessons about science and life both in the classroom and on canoe trips in the Okefenokee Swamp.

Dr. Batson began his administrative career in higher education in 1979 at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, where he served as assistant vice

president for academic affairs and director of institutional research. In 1982, he moved to Commerce, Texas to serve as assistant to the president and director of planning at East Texas State University. There, he met his beautiful wife and best friend, Kathy. They married in 1985 and he became father to her two children, Meredith and James Raine.

He went on to serve as director of facilities planning and instructor of educational administration at East Texas State before becoming vice president of planning and institutional advancement at West Virginia State College and executive director of West Virginia State College Research and Development Corporation.

While in West Virginia, he earned his doctor of education from the University of Georgia in Athens. His years of hard work, dreaming and planning also earned him a 1979 Hammond motorboat, which he named the Georgia Lady. For more than two decades, while listening to the tunes of Jimmy Buffett, Reba McEntire and other country music artists, he navigated the Georgia Lady through rivers, lakes and coastal waters in West Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, Maryland and Virginia.

After his son joined the U.S. Coast Guard in 1996, Dr. Batson became a volunteer with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, clocking hundreds of support hours. In support of his love for being on the open waters with the Georgia Lady, his wife joined him as a volunteer.

In 1998, they returned to Dr. Batson's roots in Georgia, where he continued to advance his career as a leader in education and philanthropy at Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus, the Camp Coca-Cola Foundation in Atlanta and Darton College in Albany.

From 2000 to 2001, he served as chair of the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), the world's largest organization for fundraisers. As chair-elect, he oversaw AFP's strategic plan and name change from National Society of Fund Raising Professionals. Under his leadership, the highly successful Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE) certification was made an independent organization. He also chaired the Governance Taskforce for AFP

and was honored in 2002 by the Georgia Education Advancement Council with its Distinguished Service Award for Educational Fundraising.

Dr. Batson marked the end of his professional career as a senior consultant with Cargill Associates, where he worked with nonprofit organizations on strategic planning, board development, fundraising and public relations.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Mildred and John Batson, and beloved family pets, Dixie, Sasha and Mollie. He is survived by his wife, Kathy, who was by his side until the end; daughter Meredith Raine and her partner Michael Cothran of Houston, Texas; son James Raine, daughter-in-law Jennifer Raine and grandchildren Sage, Ava and Waylon of Williamsburg, Virginia; and one very affectionate black Labrador named Lucy.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in honor of Dr. Batson to Phoebe Hospice, 320 Foundation Lane, Albany, Georgia 31707 or at phoebehealth.com/hospice/.

Previous Events

Visitation

APR **21**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Kimbrell-Stern
1503 Dawson Road
Albany, GA 31707
(229) 883-4152
<https://www.kimbrellstern.com?>

Memorial Service

APR **21**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Kimbrell-Stern
1503 Dawson Road
Albany, GA 31707
(229) 883-4152
<https://www.kimbrellstern.com?>

Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. Steve Wesley Batson*

May 22, 2023 at 10:29 AM



“ *Dr. Steve Wesley Batson*

May 22, 2023 at 01:29 AM



“ *Dr. Steve Wesley Batson*

December 24, 2022 at 02:54 AM



“ *I was around him at Darton College to know that he made women around him uncomfortable. Virginia Hawkins wanted to sue him and her husband said he would do him harm if he ever crossed paths. Caroline Fielding and Joan Darden went out of their way to research his past antecedents before he got fired. Stevie himself told me at the Lowe's parking lot that he could have sued for wrongful termination, at which I said to his face he was a sexual harasser and that is not cool!*

Peggy Ash - June 29, 2021 at 03:36 PM

PS

“ Steve and I went to grammar school at J. Ellsworth Hall back in the late 50's and 60's. We were never very close but I would always call him my friend. I knew throughout our grammar school and high school that he was destined to great things. Reading his obituary shows that he did indeed make a great impact on this world of ours. My deepest sympathy to his wife and children. He will always be remembered as a great man.



*Peggy (Davis) Stephens
Macon, GA*

Peggy Stephens - April 23, 2018 at 08:07 AM

TA

“ The staff and family of Cargill Associates purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Dr. Steve Wesley Batson.



The staff and family of Cargill Associates - April 18, 2018 at 11:33 AM

RR

“ Occasionally someone comes along in our lives who leaves a lasting lifelong friendship through their inspiration, their intellect, and a warm, comforting, and caring personality. Such was Steve Batson. We first met Steve when he arrived at East Texas State University in the early 1980's as Assistant to the President. From then till both our families left in 1985 Steve played a major role in the development of the University. Always a positive force in finding solutions to the endless problems faced by ETSU, his engaging smile was always accompanied by a soft but respectful voice that somehow illustrated a workable path through the challenges.

Steve's work in higher education expressed the very essence of executive leadership and his leadership in national professional associations illustrate high honors bestowed on him by his colleagues.

We will miss a warm loving friend. We also extend our deepest sympathy to his wonderful wife Kathy and their children Meredith and James. May the hand of God reach out and comfort them in this time of sorrow.

Ron and Pat Robinson
Greenville, Texas

Ron Robinson - April 13, 2018 at 03:35 PM

LT

“ Lonnie and Tim purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr. Steve Wesley Batson.



Lonnie and Tim - April 12, 2018 at 10:50 AM

KB

“ Today, April 11, would have been our 33rd wedding anniversary. Happy anniversary to the sweetest, kindest person I know. Steve Batson I will love you to the end of the earth. You are the best thing that ever happened to me.

kathleen batson - April 11, 2018 at 05:28 PM

JG

“ Steve Batson has been my special friend for more than 40 years. We worked together through some difficult times at East Texas State University (now Texas A&M University at Commerce). The challenges we faced forced us to make some very tough decisions that weren't always well received. I am proud to say that we consistently tried to do "the right thing" to protect and advance the University.

Steve was an extremely bright and thoughtful guy who also was blessed with a great sense of humor. It was always a great pleasure to be in his company. Although his physical stature was small, his heart, character and courage were huge. I will miss him immensely.

Sincerely,

Jack Gray

Jack B. Gray - April 10, 2018 at 10:56 PM

WS

“ Please accept the deepest sympathy of a fellow AFP colleague and admirer from Canada. Steve's involvement and leadership in the organization has left an indelible stamp of respectability and ethical practice in what Archbishop Desmond Tutu described as a “noble profession” in his 2011 address to the International Fundraising Conference in Chicago. Steve's warmth, passion and vision will be sustained by the more than 30,000 members of AFP International throughout the world.

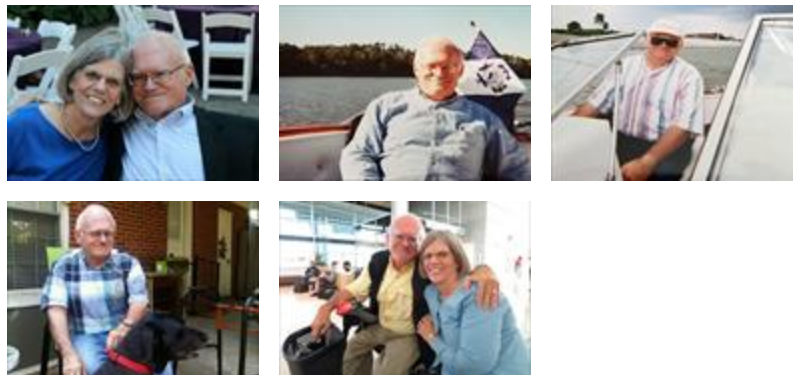
Steve made a difference and will be remembered fondly.

~ Wayne Steer, Secretary, AFP Canada

Wayne Steer - April 10, 2018 at 06:09 PM


Meredith
Raine

“ 10 files added to the album Family Photos



Meredith Raine - April 10, 2018 at 04:40 PM

RA

“ What a truly great guy! Steve was someone I always admired and he will be sorely missed.

Randall - April 10, 2018 at 04:31 PM

RN

“ *Randall Norris purchased the Simply Elegant Spa thiphyllum for the family of Dr. Steve Wesley Batson.*



Randall Norris - April 10, 2018 at 03:47 PM

CC

“ *Ralph Waldo Emerson's quote: "The purpose of life is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you lived and lived well." embodies the Steve Batson I knew.*

I'll never forget attending Southwestern's campaign kick off event with Steve and meeting President Jimmy Carter- honorary campaign chair- who sat directly behind me at the dinner. Lucky for me the secret service did not escort me out of the dinner when I touched the president to congratulate him on his award- probably due to Steve's intervention!

Steve was the consummate professional whose life was a shining example to me and so many others. We are so grateful for our time with him and that Kathy loved him so well! Our hearts are with you and your family during this time.

Cheryl Cobbs

Cheryl Cobbs - April 10, 2018 at 02:46 PM

KB

Thank you Cheryl. That was a beautiful tribute and so true.

kathleen batson - April 10, 2018 at 05:35 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Dr. Steve Wesley Batson.*



April 10, 2018 at 08:39 AM



“ *Steve was a giant of a man who helped build Darton College to its peak success. He was creative and disciplined and very helpful to the faculty. He will be missed.*

Roger Marietta - April 09, 2018 at 08:11 AM



“ *Kathy, Meredith and James know that you're in my prayers. Steve was a wonderful man. I will miss our Monday's of trying to solve the world's problems. Prayers of peace and love for y'all.*



Connie Lundy - April 08, 2018 at 06:09 PM



“ *Mrs. Batson*
So sorry to hear about Dr Batson's passing. I always enjoyed working with him at GSW. He was always one of my biggest supporters on the work I did. I know he will be missed. You and your family are in our thoughts and prayers.
Arthur B. Clark

Arthur B. Clark - April 08, 2018 at 05:42 PM