



## Ismael Casillas Melendez

September 20, 1960 - January 10, 2024

Ismael Casillas Melendez, 63, passed away on Wednesday, January 10th, 2024 at home in Columbus, Ohio. He was born on September 20th, 1960 to Luis Casillas Silva and Angela Melendez Muñoz in Caguas, Puerto Rico. He met his wife Janice while they worked together at the Conservatory of Piano, and they married in 1989. Ismael came to Ohio in 1985 to study at THE Ohio State University, where he earned his Bachelor of Science in Mathematics. His connection to Ohio State was very deep, and he loved spending his Saturdays in the fall watching football and attending games. He spent his work life primarily as a network engineer, and worked at Schooley Caldwell, R.G. Barry, Health Power, and Sterling Commerce. At Sterling, he was often called “Izzy” by his coworkers who he always made sure bought Girl Scout cookies from his daughter, Carmen. He loved his family, friends, and neighbors and was always the life of any party he attended, bringing piña colodas, coquito, chicken wings, or a pork roast he made in his smoker. He was incredibly proud of his daughter and his nieces and nephews who he always made sure to stay in contact with via text messages and phone calls. Ismael loved to laugh and had a story for every moment, remembering the small details that really made everyone listen and laugh along with him. He loved spending time talking with his neighbors, especially while gardening or playing salsa and merengue music from his garage. He returned to Puerto Rico whenever he could, and maintained deep friendships with both childhood friends and his “Buckeye Boricuas,” friends from Ohio State who shared his homeland. While

his health was a difficult obstacle throughout his adult life, his character and zest for life never failed him. His family is grateful to all the doctors, nurses, specialists, and members of his care team in Ohio and Texas who gave him so many years to spend with those he loved and who loved him.

He is survived by his wife, Janice, his daughter, Carmen, his nieces and nephews—Marien, Alberto Javier, Jeshua, April, Lindsey (Keith), Matt (Kaytea)—and many members of his family and community who loved him. Que Dios te bendiga.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his memory to either The Dr. Marjorie Joseph Cram Chema Scholarship Fund (641227) for students from Puerto Rico or The OSU Medical Center Adult Congenital Heart Disease Programs and Services Fund (312625) at The Ohio State University by visiting [giveto.osu.edu](http://giveto.osu.edu) or calling 614-292-2281.

Visitation will be Sunday, January 14th, 2024 from 2 PM to 5 PM at Rutherford Funeral Home at Powell, 450 West Olentangy Street, Powell, OH 43065. A funeral service will be held Monday January 15th, 2024 at 11 AM at Linworth United Methodist Church, 7070 Bent Tree Blvd., Columbus, OH 43235.

Ismael's funeral service will be livestreamed and can be viewed at the following link. Please select the "Live" tab from the webpage below.

<https://www.youtube.com/@LinworthOnline>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN **14**. 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (ET)

Rutherford Funeral Home at Powell  
450 West Olentangy Street  
Powell, OH 43065  
(614) 792-1471  
info@rutherfordfuneralhome.com  
<https://www.rutherfordfuneralhomes.com/>

## Funeral Service

JAN **15**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Linworth United Methodist Church  
7070 Bent Tree Blvd  
Columbus, OH 43235

# Tribute Wall



“ Rutherford Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Ismael Casillas Melendez



Rutherford Funeral Homes - January 12, 2024 at 06:52 PM

SM

“ I am so sorry for your loss. I was honored to see him as a patient at McConnell Heart Health Center for many years and he was exactly as described in the beautifully written obituary. There was always humor, warmth, and intelligence involved with his visits. His last visit was a very positive one and he seemed to be enjoying his daily routine.

He is the only patient that has ever brought me an oregano plant to take home! Therefore, I think about him whenever I use oregano. My staff (especially Joyce) and I will miss seeing him.

Scott Merryman - May 19, 2024 at 08:31 AM

SM

“ I will truly miss wonderful Ismael and his every-Christmas-Eve gift of delicious coquitos that he snuck to me — in church no less! What a great sense of humor and infectious laugh. Rest in peace, Friend.

Sue Kuhn Melvin

Sue Kuhn Melvin - January 14, 2024 at 01:44 PM

JM

“ do .[SEP] Having a friend for 35 years and an intelligent business colleague for the last 6 years was a gift to me .[SEP] Sent from my iPhone

*Ismael Casillas, Ismael, Izzy, Ish, mi hermano, my unconditional friend, for the past 41 years. A lifetime together. In 2016 upon my early retirement from a life career, Ismael was my anchor helping me through this transition for he could understand, he as well retired at an early age. We spoke every morning, connecting with each other and that was the perfect way to start the day. What a blessing to have such a special friend and mentor in my life.*

*In 2017 hurricane Maria struck and devastated much of our island Puerto Rico. I called upon Ismael for help and he quickly engaged to support our strategy to find the best resources to engage and manage this humongous project we were affronting in these next 18 months challenge. He got on a plane destined to his home, here we met and together we gathered a team to help push the effort needed to get Puerto Rico back on its feet. He was there in spite of his health challenges with a hard hat on, safety boots worn along with a safety jacket ready for the site mission without faltering. The task was a site inspection in Vieques for our client and the US Corp of Engineers supporting our administrative work, upon arriving to PR we boarded a military helicopter neither of us knowing it was a first-time experience just as the many we experienced since being together since our days in college.*

*Ish was also my business manager, he worked effortlessly to advise and analyze all the pertinent aspects of my workings, just as did in college explaining quantitative physics to me with such patience as I watched all the girls in the class. Have you ever tried to tackle an excel sheet? It's not easy, thank goodness I had my buddy to help me through. In a matter of 5 minutes Ismael corrected and constructed the excel sheet of the day, I will miss him dearly my friends. Imagine he accompanied to Mexico to Bacanora in the region of Sonora. To help me with a Lithium Mining project, with high elevation condition. I tell you this because my dear friend was not afraid, he wanted to live his life using his brain power and never-*

*ending support and commitment to me as I was to him.  
Above all, he was he was elegant, a gentleman and a a great friend.  
A dedicated husband and father. He will b e greatly missed but rest  
assured I will be in contact with him everyday.  
Rest in peace my dear friend until we meet again.*

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**Julio Miranda** - January 13, 2024 at 04:17 PM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Ismael Casillas Melendez.*



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January 13, 2024 at 11:31 AM



“ *Mollie Balko planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ismael Casillas Melendez.*

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**Mollie Balko** - January 13, 2024 at 11:31 AM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Ismael Casillas Melendez.*



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January 13, 2024 at 08:53 AM

KM

“ Keith and Brenda Moyer planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ismael Casillas Melendez.

Keith and Brenda Moyer - January 13, 2024 at 08:53 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Ismael Casillas Melendez.



January 13, 2024 at 08:13 AM

JG

“ We were bless to know Ismaelito for many years. Ismaelito and I (Juan Ángel) were together from prekinder to 4th grade in the Colegio Bautista de Caguas. After many years of not seen each other, we met again at The Ohio State University. Ismaelito and I (Wanda) had the opportunity as a family in Puerto Rico. Janice and Carmen we pray that God’s love, care and peace be with you and the rest of the family at this difficut time. Lo recordaremos con amor y cariño. Juan Ángel Gutiérrez Rodríguez y Wanda I. Pabellón García.

Juan Angel Gutierrez - January 12, 2024 at 07:22 PM

CH

“ *Connie/Rick Riffle, Kaye/Bruce Hamilton purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Ismael Casillas Melendez.*



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**Connie/Rick Riffle, Kaye/Bruce Hamilton** - January 12, 2024 at 03:25 PM

JK

“ *He made me laugh - and he got my jokes. 😊 He cared and was kind and was funny. Sterling Commerce was better because of him. I will hold his memory.*

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**James Klun** - January 12, 2024 at 03:15 PM

TT

“ *We worked together at Sterling Commerce. He was a wonderful human being. He always made me smile & laugh and I looked forward to his visits over to our HR Dept. Prayers to the entire family.*

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**Tina Tiberi** - January 12, 2024 at 07:11 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Ismael Casillas Melendez.*



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January 12, 2024 at 06:28 AM

BM

“ I've known Casillas since seventh grade and we played basketball together until high school. We have stayed in touch all these years, being the last time this past Three Kings Day. Great man with a beautiful soul and a warm sense of humor. May God give his family the strength to move past this. It's time to rest my friend! - William Melendez

Bill Melendez - January 12, 2024 at 06:28 AM

JA

I met Ismael and his family (wife and daughter) through my brother-in-law Guillo Sapia in Columbus, Ohio. What a gentleman. Always cheerful and a good sense of humor. Cumplidor y buena gente. Will be missed by many of us. Peace to his family and dear ones. Bro, Rest In Peace. Your mission on Earth is done. Go and be with the Lord. Amén.

Joe Alfonzo - January 12, 2024 at 08:30 AM



“ Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Ismael Casillas Melendez.



January 12, 2024 at 01:46 AM



“ I worked with Izzy at Sterling Commerce, and he was a key cog to our ESM team. Knew that he also treasured his family, prayers for them at this time

Buzzy Zorich - January 12, 2024 at 12:23 AM



“ *Worked with Ismael and he always made me laugh and was always so friendly. Great to have known him and may he rest in peace.*

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**D.j. Cercone** - January 11, 2024 at 11:04 PM



“ *High School buddy, may you rest in peace. My condolences to the entire family.*

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**David Diaz** - January 11, 2024 at 10:06 PM



“ *Great friend and person. I miss him*

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**William Paulson** - January 11, 2024 at 09:30 PM



“ *I am do sorry yor your loss...We were childhood friends, I visited him at OSU back in the day. So long dear friend, until we meet again! GBY*

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**John R Ramos** - January 11, 2024 at 08:50 PM