



Joseph L. Davis

September 8, 2016

Joseph L. Davis, 89, of Columbus, died September 8, 2016 at First Community Village, Upper Arlington, OH. Dr. Davis is survived by his loving wife of 66 years, Margaret F. Davis; sons Stephen Davis (Susie) and Thomas Davis (Gina), daughter Jane Leach (Donald), grandchildren Emily Lorusso (Vinny), Jenny Taylor (Paul), Gwen Nordman (Matthew), Anna Leach, McKenna Davis, and great grandchildren Davis Taylor, Sophie Taylor and Abigail Nordman. A lifelong educator serving the Denver Public Schools, the Columbus Public Schools, the Ohio Council on Vocational Education and The Ohio State University, Joe is best remembered for his years as Superintendent of the Columbus Public Schools (1977-82). His strong and thoughtful leadership during the initial phase of court ordered desegregation allowed Columbus to be one of the only cities in the country to peacefully implement such a plan. He did much more. During his service as Superintendent he reorganized the school system into middle and four year high schools, closed 50 schools to reduce overhead, expanded special and vocational education, and passed an operating levy - the first to pass in 13 years and accomplished just two years after desegregation. After retirement he served as Executive Director of the Ohio Council on Vocational Education and as an adjunct professor at The Ohio State University where he established the national Superintendents Academy. A proud South High Bulldog alumnus and graduate of The Ohio State University (B.A., M.A., PhD), Joe served two tours of duty in the US Naval Air Service and was active in

numerous community organizations, including Rotary Club of Columbus (President, 1991-92), Friends of WOSU (President, 1989-91), and Center of Science and Industry. Always articulate and well-prepared, Joe lectured and wrote on education topics throughout the country. He received numerous awards recognizing his contributions to Central Ohio and education, including the American Association of School Administrators Distinguished Service Award, the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce Award for Civic Leadership, the Columbus Bar Association Liberty Bell Award, the National School Public Relations Association Presidents Award, Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow Award, Bnai Brith/Knights of Columbus/Masons Joint Brotherhood Award and The Ohio State University College of Education and Human Ecology Career Achievement Award. A memorial service will be held 1:00 p.m. Monday, September 12, 2016, at the Overbrook Presbyterian Church, 4131 N. High St., Columbus, OH 43214. Family will receive friends in the parlor at the conclusion of the service. Rev. Bill Gause and Rev. Mary Gause officiating. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Hilltop Education Corporation (aka The Hilltop Preschool), 12 S. Terrace Avenue, Columbus, OH 43204 or to the First Community Village Foundation, 1800 Riverside Drive, Columbus, OH 43212. Private entombment. Arrangements by SOUTHWICK-GOOD & FORTKAMP FUNERAL CHAPEL. On line condolences may be made at www.southwickfuneral.com

Previous Events

Memorial Service

SEP **12.** 1:00 PM (ET)

Overbrook Presbyterian Church
4131 N. High St.
Columbus, OH 43214

Tribute Wall

HU

“ God Bless and Thank YOU, Dr.Davis for your service in The United States Navy... RIP.... And Semper Fi.



Herb Guyer-Sharfenaker USMC - September 12, 2016 at 07:50 AM

AM

“ I was teaching at Eastmoor Middle School when court-ordered desegregation took place under the masterful and kind hand of Dr. Davis, and appreciate so much his leadership, and his personal kindness to teachers and students. My condolences to his family and friends.

Ann E McCrystal - September 12, 2016 at 12:07 AM

BP

“ I knew Joe as a kind and bright man. I was the news director for WTVN Radio during his entire time as Superintendent. We had a wonderful relationship. It was always a joy to interview him. He was one of the finest men I have ever worked with, and often in stressful times. My sympathy to the family.

Bill Patterson

Bill Patterson - September 11, 2016 at 06:42 AM

PT

“ Paul and Cynthia Taylor purchased the Treasured Lilies Spray for the family of Joseph L. Davis.



Paul and Cynthia Taylor - September 10, 2016 at 01:47 PM

EC

“ What a nice man! I'm happy that the paths of Joe and I crossed more than once over the pas 65 years beginning with my employment at the Columbus Board of Education to the last time when you, Margie and Joe visited calling ours for my husband, Bill Camp.

So very thoughtful of you and meant a lot to me. My prayers are for you and your family as to adjust to life without the physical presence of Joe. But he will always be with you in spirit and thoughts as you hang on to memories of this fine man who succeeded in life because of a supportive and loving wife.

Most sincerely,

Emmy Murphy Camp

Another South High School "Bulldog"

Emmy Camp - September 10, 2016 at 10:22 AM

CA

“ The South High School Alumni Association and its Board of Directors want to express our sympathy and send condolences at the death of your loved one. Our entire South High School family is diminished by his passing.

Columbus South High Alumni Association - September 09, 2016 at 10:06 PM