



Aida Vazquez

April 4, 1935 - November 14, 2019

A life well-lived, a Heroine and Champion: A legacy of love for family and community

Aida Vazquez, 84, died peacefully at her home in Trenton, New Jersey, on November 14, 2019.

She was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, on April 4, 1935, to Herminio Cortes and Santa Ortiz. Named by her father after the princess in the Verdi opera, "Aida," she was a vivacious and joyous child who had a special love for music, singing, and dancing. As a very young child Aida loved to entertain family, friends, and strangers alike with traditional Spanish songs and her imitations of a then-famous actress and singer, Mariantoneata Pons.

When Aida was eight years old, she moved with her family to Spanish Harlem in New York City, where she adapted quickly and became very popular in school. Later, after a brief return to Puerto Rico, she moved to Trenton with her children, Carlos and Aida, where she joined her brother, Angel Luis, and his family. Being a proud and independent woman, she declined to seek public assistance, immediately found a job, and brought her younger sister Leticia and Leticia's baby daughter, Arlene, to live with her.

It was not long before a handsome man named Leoncio Vazquez set his eyes on this beautiful and charming woman. They fell in love, married, and had two children, Leoncio, Jr. and Lyssette. For many years, their home remained a haven and a central gathering point for their many relatives and friends.

In 1997, after 27 years as the first bilingual community officer at Trenton Central High School, where she was a mentor and second mother to countless students, Aida retired. A tireless community servant, she lent her wisdom and experience to numerous civic organizations, including El Desfile Puertorriqueno (Puerto Rican Parade) de Trenton, as a founder and officer; Cialenos Unidos Club; the Puerto Rican Association; the Hispanic Democratic Caucus of Mercer County; the Education Taskforce of the Puerto Rican

Congress of New Jersey; the Union Industrial Home for Girls and the Trenton Public Library, as the first Latino representative on their boards; the Father Flannigan Boys Home; Easter Seals; and the Mercer County Department of Social Services, where she was the city's first Latino foster care parent.

In 2008, after almost 50 years of marriage, Leoncio passed away; but Aida continued to the end of her life as the grand matriarch of her large and very close family. In 2018, at the Hispanic Gala where the recipient of the Carlos Pacheco Award was named, Aida received a thunderous standing ovation for her gift to the city of Carlos and for the superb way she had always lived her life.

Aida is survived by her children, Aida Pacheco, Leoncio Vazquez, Jr., and Lyssette Calderon; her stepdaughter, Linda George; her grandchildren, Chantel Ray, Gisette Suarez, Gabrielle Vazquez, Alexander Vazquez, Justin Vazquez, Jovani Calderon, and Armani Calderon; her great grandchildren, Te'Ajeah Ray and Mya Garcia; her sister, Leticia Robles; her brothers, Angel Luis Cortes and Manuel Acosta; her sisters-in-law, Martha Cortes and Martha Acosta; and numerous loving nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Funeral Mass will be celebrated on Thursday, November 21, 2019, 3:00pm at the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption, 151 North Warren Street, Trenton NJ 08608. Family and friends may begin to gather at the Cathedral at 2:00pm for viewing. In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully requests memorial contributions to be made in her honor to Catholic Charities, 132 North Warren Street, Trenton NJ 08608 or online at <https://www.catholiccharitiestrenton.org/donate>.

Events

NOV **Visitation** 02:00PM

21

Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption
151 North Warren Street, Trenton, NJ, US, 08608

NOV **Funeral Mass** 03:00PM

21

Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption
151 North Warren Street, Trenton, NJ, US, 08608

Comments



“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



rachel - November 22, 2019 at 06:46 AM



“ We use to drive to Trenton from NYC to visit and were always welcomed with "pan and cafecito" followed by breakfast. We'd wake the kids and play all day. It was always a fun time and made so memorable by her welcoming spirit. She was a force for good in the world and I am glad to have known her. Your family will always be whole because the love she gave lives on in each of you. God's blessings and comfort be with you always. Love. Madeline Hernandez and Porfiria & Luis Rivera.

Madeline Hernandez - November 21, 2019 at 10:03 AM



“ Sending my love and prayers to Lyssette, Lee, and the rest of the family. I remember seeing Doña Aida a lot growing up when my parents were involved with the Desfile Puertorriqueño. She had the nicest smile and was always kind to everyone. I'll always remember her fondly. Rest In Peace <3

Maria Rodriguez - November 21, 2019 at 09:56 AM



“ Kenneth A Johnson lit a candle in memory of Aida Vazquez



Kenneth A Johnson - November 20, 2019 at 04:58 PM



“ Aida was a very special human being, Loving Caring and true friend, My sincerest Condolences to the family and friends and may she be Resting in Peace and now by the side of her dear son, Carlos... She'll be missed by those that new her and loved her and by all the Trenton Community.....

Carmelita Rivera - November 20, 2019 at 02:20 PM



“ Carmelita Rivera lit a candle in memory of Aida Vazquez



Carmelita Rivera - November 20, 2019 at 02:16 PM



“ I was saddened to hear of Aida's passing. On behalf of the Burgos family I extend our deepest and most sincere condolences go out to all the family. She took in life all the happiness life had to offer despite the pain that came with prematurely losing a son, a grandson and a husband she loved so dearly. Her laugh was infectious, her commitments to making her community a better place was unending and her dedication to her family limitless. Dios te bendiga con la paz eterna. Ahora te has unido a tus seres queridos que te han precedido. May you rest in eternal peace.

George Burgos - November 20, 2019 at 09:56 AM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Olga Romero - November 20, 2019 at 08:33 AM



“ I love you Titi ! You carried yourself with grace and class every single day of your life. I will miss your stories, your laughter and your zest for life. You were truly forever young !

Now, you are a beautiful angel. You shall live forever in God's Kingdom. One day we will meet again. I love you so much. Thank you for always believing in me .

Your nephew,

Juanito

Juan Rosario III - November 20, 2019 at 01:05 AM



“ I was sadden to hear of the passing of your mother. She will truly be missed.

Aundree Jones - November 19, 2019 at 06:59 PM



“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



julie cortes - November 19, 2019 at 03:51 PM



“ Our beautiful titi we will love and miss you always



julie cortes - November 19, 2019 at 03:30 PM



“ Our beautiful titi we will love and miss you always



julie cortes - November 19, 2019 at 03:27 PM



“ My condolences. Wishing your family peace and comfort in the midst of sorrow. Praying that they are given the strength for every tomorrow. Memories will always be held dear, and, time will wipe away every tear.



Fred Mills - November 19, 2019 at 03:09 PM



“ My very Heartfelt Sympathy to the entire Family of Mrs Vasquez ...Rest Peacefully Sweet Angel ! Wendy Leonard (Johnson) Ft Valley GA

Wendy Leonard (Johnson) - November 19, 2019 at 12:04 PM



“ Ms. Aida Vazquez you will be missed by many. You definitely touched many lives and you will never be forgotten. May you rest in peace in the arms of our Lord.

Pedro Medina - November 19, 2019 at 11:13 AM



“ Mamá Aida has always treated me with such love. Whether it was the first time we met when I was at Princeton or more recently visiting her a few weeks ago. It is so rare to feel so very connected by pure love. I am thankful for having known her.

Vanessa Austin - November 19, 2019 at 10:48 AM