



Preston Eugene Grace

NOV 22, 1967 - JAN 10, 2023



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Preston Eugene Grace

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Preston E Grace passed away peacefully in his Seaford, DE home on Tuesday, January 10, 2023, at the age of 55 after a long battle with kidney disease.

Preston grew up in Greenwood, DE, graduated from Woodbridge Jr/Sr High School in 1987 and from Wilmington University in 2004. One of his fondest school memories was being on the historic basketball team that made it to the State Championship game in 1987. After high school, he worked at DuPont in Seaford and Rand-Whitney/Inland Packaging in Harrington before holding several positions in the Woodbridge School District and at S.C.O.P.E, where he retired in 2021.

Sports were a lifelong passion for Preston, or "Coach Grace" as most people knew him. In the fall of 1987 he volunteered as a coach with the Woodbridge High School football team. He loved it so much that he became an Assistant Coach with the program until his passing. There were many special seasons over those 35 years. In 1999 the team went 10-0 in the regular season, winning the Southern Division Championship and earning their first ever spot in the playoffs. The 2016 team had an undefeated 13-0 season as they won their first Division II State Championship, and this was followed with another State Championship in 2018. In addition to football, he also coached baseball and basketball for a few years, and was Head Coach of the Middle School basketball team. In 2017, he received the Ed Brown Award as Assistant Coach of the Year in Delaware High School Football. While winning games was satisfying, it was always the relationships with players and fellow coaches that he most valued. The community spirit on display during those seasons is something many will never forget and he was so proud to be part of that.

In his free time, Preston could be found at other sporting events including youth games, going to basketball tournaments with friends, or traveling around the country with his wife supporting former players at their college games. Many fall Saturdays were spent with special friends at Wesley College games. He was a proud member of the Delaware Afro-American Sports Hall of Fame since his induction in 2019.



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Coach Grace leaves many people to cherish fond memories - his wife, Christine Grace; brothers Charles Grace of Washington, DC (Malaika Younger), Jerome Johnson of Bridgeville, DE, Emory Johnson of Colorado Springs, CO, and Alfred (Faye) Johnson of Seaford, DE; sister Christine Winchester of Greenwood, DE; a host of cousins; in-laws who loved him as their own, Ann and Ron Hurst Sr, and Ron Hurst Jr of Greenwood, DE; a number of very special friends including Harry Benson, Iffy Jones, Dionne (Parker) Keeler, Danny Mills, Marvin Morris, John Mosley, Danielle Richards and Ty Smith; and countless students, players, co-workers and coaches that were like family to him.

He is preceded in death by his beloved parents Preston Foreman and Elizabeth "Liz" Grace; and brothers Melvin Johnson and Ronald Taylor.

Services will be held on Saturday January 21, 2023 at the Woodbridge High School auditorium in Greenwood, DE with visitation beginning at 10 am followed by a Celebration of Life service at noon. Attendees are encouraged to wear their Woodbridge (or other school) apparel.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to a scholarship being created in Coach Grace's honor and sent to Woodbridge School District, 16359 Sussex Hwy, Bridgeville, DE 19933.




Events

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Visitation

 **Saturday**, January 21, 2023

 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM ET

 Woodbridge High School

Memorial Service

 **Saturday**, January 21, 2023

 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM ET

 Woodbridge High School



Tribute Wall

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Susan Bassett posted:

It was an honor to know and work with Coach Grace at the 'Bridge. Not only was he a great coach, he had a huge impact on the lives of the students he worked with. He was always kind, considerate, and never made you feel like he didn't have time to talk. He will definitely be missed.

January 26 at 3:28 PM



Billy Boyle lit a candle in honor of Preston.

Preston Grace was the finest example of a true alumni of Woodbridge Highschool. He lived and breathed the majority of his life to make sure he shaped the lives of many young men and women to become productive citizens in our community. We knew from very early on that he would be one heck of a leader and that his passion for sports would help him accomplish some of his life goals, molding and shaping everyone he touched to be better and feel good about themselves. Press had a way of picking you up when you were down, dusting you off, giving you whatever you needed, even the shirt off his back if necessary to make you feel better about yourself. I could go on and on for I had the luxury to have him act as a big brother to me and many of my friends in "our group. Always there for Chuck and the rest of us and made sure he kept us on the straight and narrow. Those years will never be forgotten and to the very end even through his illness he never stopped helping shape the younger generation into being the best they could be. A True Raider at heart, he embodied what a Woodbridge Raider was and that rubbed off and was obvious to everyone he touched. His School Pride was matched by none and he made a difference in this world and he showed the rest of us how to get it done. We will miss you Terribly Press, but are so happy that you know get to be the assistant coach w/ Our God Almighty and still watch over us. We know have peace that you are where you were always meant to be. One of the Great Ones to never be replaced. If you knew Coach Grace, you were lucky because he touched your soul and left you better than he found you. ❤️



January 16 at 8:15 AM



John H. Parker Jr posted:

When I arrived in the fall of 1989 at the "Bridge" Coach Grace was there to lend a hand and help in anyway. Mr. Blue Raider (Preston) was never about himself, but always about the students he taught or coached. The lessons of Attitude, Discipline, & Intensity was a motto he embodied and the example he choose to walk. Coach Grace is beyond a doubt a huge loss for the "Bridge" community. My wife, Johnny, and I wish to express our heartfelt condolences to the family of Preston. May God provide you with strength to get through this difficult time. Strong in FAITH - John H. Parker Jr, Leav Parker, & Johnny Parker

January 16 at 3:53 PM



Tribute Wall

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Dan Towers lit a candle in honor of Preston.

Coach Grace was an amazingly kind man who touched the lives of several generations of Woodbridge students. His support and generosity enriched the lives of all who knew him. Even though he is no longer physically with us, his presence will forever be felt in our lives. Fly high Coach Grace and keep an eye on all you loved here on earth.



January 16 at 8:15 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Preston by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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