



## Daphne Renee Johnson

January 15, 1961 - March 31, 2026

Daphne Renee Johnson, a beloved daughter, sister, mentor, and friend, was born on January 15, 1961, in Chicago, Illinois, to Joseph and Ella Johnson. From an early age, Daphne was recognized as a bright and gifted child who embraced the arts with passion. She attended Amelia Earhart School through the 5th grade, where she played the flute in the school band and delighted in gymnastics and dance classes. Her love for gymnastics was evident as she could often be spotted performing cartwheels down the hallways of Joseph Warren School—much to the delight of her classmates and not so much by her teachers! After graduating from Joseph Warren Elementary in 1975, she continued her education at the best high school in Chicago, Robert Lindblom High School, where she graduated in 1979. At Lindblom, she nurtured many lasting friendships and participated in various social activities.

Daphne enrolled at Northern Illinois University in the fall of 1979, and on March 28, 1981, her life took a significant turn as she became a bonded sister with 15 other Ivies of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., rising as Captain of her pledge line. The joy of sisterhood with her shippees became a cornerstone of her life. In 1983, Daphne earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Northern Illinois University.

Daphne began her career in Information Technology at the corporate office of Montgomery Ward in the Store Systems department, where she honed her

skills and formed lifelong friendships. In 1992, her journey took a turn when the IT department was outsourced to Electronic Data Systems (EDS). Embracing this change, she took on various roles that allowed her to further develop her skills. Later, she accepted a position with Lucent Technologies, which eventually became Alcatel-Lucent, where she remained for several years before ending her career in technology in 2012. Following her professional journey, Daphne was blessed with the opportunity to care for her aging parents, a testament to her loving nature and commitment to family.

A woman of deep faith, Daphne cherished God's Word and lived her life with kindness, grace, and an unwavering spirit until her last days. She exemplified immense strength, embodying the teachings of Psalm 27:1: "The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" and carried that faith with her always. Throughout her journey, she never faltered in her trust in God, consistently placing herself in His loving arms.

Daphne truly embodied the spirit of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., demonstrating a profound commitment to service. She frequently checked in with her line sisters, family, and countless friends, spreading love and positivity wherever she went. A dedicated volunteer, she actively supported organizations such as the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Greater Chicago Food Depository, dedicating her time and energy to help children and their families overcome challenges. Her nurturing spirit extended to mentoring young girls, encouraging them to explore new possibilities, and pursue their dreams with confidence and style, particularly through programs like "Dress for Success Greater Chicago".

A whimsical free spirit, Daphne radiated warmth, support, and love. She made it her mission to celebrate life and important milestones, especially her birthdays, which she joyfully marked every five years at incredible venues filled with music and dancing, ensuring guests had plenty of libations while

she was not afraid to drop it like it was hot to one of her favorite jams. Traveling the world was her aspiration, and she explored many exotic locations across the globe, including Argentina, Brazil, England, France, Italy, Mexico, Spain, and many, many islands while accompanied by many dear friends. Although Daphne left us far too soon, she lived her 65 years to the fullest, creating countless beautifully memorable moments with and for her family and friends.

Daphne brought joy in both profound and simple ways. She was not only a friend but a sister-friend to many—a steady light and a source of comfort. She kept connected through numerous group chats, sharing inspirational messages, comical and heartfelt photos and videos, and she delighted in life's pleasures—from classic films featuring Bette Davis and Joan Crawford to her love for old-school R&B and house music. She enjoyed friendly competition and games, especially her fondness for Jeopardy!, which she played with enthusiasm and joy.

Despite her ongoing battle with cancer, diagnosed first with breast cancer in 2014 and eventually spreading to other organs, Daphne remained an inspiring figure of grace and strength. After her initial battle, she emerged as a passionate advocate for breast cancer awareness. She bravely shared her experience and inspired others and was prominently featured in Oprah Winfrey's O Magazine. She faced her health challenges on her own terms. While those of us who loved her immensely wished we could have lightened her load earlier, we respected and honored her approach to her journey.

As we celebrate Daphne's life, we honor the profound love and radiant light she bestowed upon her family and friends. The countless ways she touched the hearts of those around her will resonate forever in our lives. Daphne was as beautiful on the inside as she was on the outside, exuding a unique sense

of style that drew admiration. With her flair and remarkable presence, she truly brought her clothes to life, effortlessly setting trends and showcasing an elegance that we know she inherited from her mother, Ella Mae. Much like her mother, she was always the belle of the ball, possessing an innate ability to elevate any event she attended, making it more enjoyable for everyone present.

Although Auntie, Cousin, Shippee, Sister, and Sister-Friend Daphne is no longer physically with us, the bonds she forged remain unbreakable, forever woven into our hearts and lives, influencing the paths we take and the lives we live in her honor. She leaves behind a powerful legacy of resilience, devotion, and an unwavering faith that touched everyone who knew her. Daphne will always be a shining light, and a source of strength for many.

Daphne is survived by her brother Derrick (Bernice), sisters Patricia, Margo, and JoEllyn, nephews Eric and Bryce, niece Alexa, cousins, and countless friends and sister-friends near and far. She was preceded in death by her brother, Joseph Leonard.

# Cemetery Details

## Evergreen Cemetery

3401 W. 87th Street  
Evergreen Park, IL 60805

# Previous Events

## Public Viewing

APR **24**. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Calahan Funeral Home - Legacy Center  
7046 S. Halsted  
Chicago, IL 60621

## Visitation

APR **25**. 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Calahan Funeral Home - Legacy Center  
7046 S. Halsted  
Chicago, IL 60621

## Funeral Service

APR **25**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Calahan Funeral Home - Legacy Center  
7046 S. Halsted  
Chicago, IL 60621



# Tribute Wall

YR

“ Your NAACP Brothers, Arthur, James, Nate, PeeWee, Terry & Ronnie purchased a sympathy card for the family of Daphne Renee Johnson.



Your NAACP Brothers, Arthur, James, Nate, PeeWee, Terry & Ronnie - May 12 at 10:51 AM

MT

“ She was a friend to many and she made her love known through her presence. She cultivated relationships, not just surface friendships. Rest in sweet peace Daphne.

Mattie Tyson - April 25 at 12:47 PM

LC

“ Love Mrs. Stringer, Levita, & Calvin purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Daphne Renee Johnson.



Love Mrs. Stringer, Levita, & Calvin - April 23 at 11:39 AM

LC

“ Love Mrs. Stringer, Levita, & Calvin planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Daphne Renee Johnson.

Love Mrs. Stringer, Levita, & Calvin - April 23 at 11:39 AM



“ *Daphne and I attended Middle School and part of HS together. We rode bikes in the Summer and dreamed of what we would grow up to become. She held me up when my Mom passed, even though we had not seen each other in 30 years!! Her smile was always The Light and The Blessing. Rest in Peace, my Friend.*

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**Hazel Adams-Shango** - April 19 at 11:59 AM

JN

*Daphne and I attended high school and became friends in our sophomore year. She always greeted me with a smile and kindness. She will definitely be missed. Condolences to her family and friends. Forever in our hearts.*

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**Junene Norman** - April 24 at 09:38 AM

CF

*Rest in heavenly Peace my friend, I miss you so much! Not hearing your voice daily is what I miss most. I met Daphne at work and we have been friends ever since. I'll never forget your kind heart and grace you showed in adversity.*

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**Cassandra Frieson** - May 08 at 06:49 AM

YR

“ *Your NAACP Brothers, Arthur, James, Nate, PeeWee, Terry & Ronnie purchased the Rose Garden Heart for the family of Daphne Renee Johnson.*



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**Your NAACP Brothers, Arthur, James, Nate, PeeWee, Terry & Ronnie** - April 16 at 05:44 PM

DK

“ *Dr. Michael McAfee & Maja Kunzi purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Daphne Renee Johnson.*



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**Dr. Michael McAfee & Maja Kunzi** - April 12 at 06:39 PM

DK

“ *Dr. Michael McAfee & Maja Kunzi planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Daphne Renee Johnson.*

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**Dr. Michael McAfee & Maja Kunzi** - April 12 at 06:39 PM