



## Gretchen Gloryetta Hamlett

November 8, 1934 - February 8, 2023

Gretchen Gloryetta Hamlett, born November 8, 1934, went home to be with the Lord on Wednesday February 8, 2023.

Born in Des Moines, Iowa to loving parents Robert A. Jackson, Sr. and Catherine Carr, Gretchen was raised in the loving home of her great uncle and aunt Henry and Julia Slaughter. Gretchen's primary education was provided in the Des Moines Public School system. She attended Nash Elementary School, Washington Irving Jr. High School, and in 1952 graduated from Des Moines Technical High School. Throughout her early years, Gretchen was actively involved in church, community and school activities involving sports, social committees, student council, service & pep clubs, and school newspaper co-editorial responsibilities.

In 1952 Gretchen married Carl Colie Jaco and from that union were born five children: Colie Jaco III, Carla Colice West, Pat Gloryetta Jaco, Carl Colie Jaco, IV and Winston William Jaco, Sr. Gretchen began what would be a 25-year career with Northwestern Bell Telephone Company – which later became US West and now Quest. In 1977 Gretchen married her late husband Zack Hamlett, Jr. and from that union her family became a blended family with the addition of Zack's five children: Zack Earl Hamlett III, Bruce G. Hamlett, Diane Cooper, Stephanie Stevenson, and Reginald

Hamlett. During this union Gretchen completed her Associate of Arts Degree from the Des Moines Area Community College, a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Grandview College and a Masters in Public Administration from Drake University.

During her career as a Marketing Sales and System Manager, Gretchen was a member of Blacks in Management, an organization that worked to empower and equip future leaders. After her retirement in 1986, Gretchen took a 2 ½ year appointment from Iowa Governor Terry Branstad, to serve as the Director of the Department of Human Rights. The Department contained 9 Advocacy Agencies which included: Community Action Agency, Commission on Children Youth and Families, Criminal Juvenile Justice Planning and Victim Assistance, Commission for the Blind, Deaf Services Commission, Persons with Disabilities Commission, Spanish Speaking Peoples Commission, Commission on the Status of Blacks and Commission on the Status of Women. She spent her evenings teaching courses in marketing at Des Moines Area Community College. In 1989 - 1997 Gretchen and Zack became “snowbirds” before they permanently relocated to Arizona.

Gretchen considered herself to be a Christ-centered woman led by God. As a longtime member of Corinthian Baptist Church in Des Moines, Gretchen served as Church School Teacher, Choir soloist, and member of the Corinthian Baptist Trustee board. Gretchen also served as a Women’s Day speaker at a host of churches including Corinthian, Maple Street, Wesley United Methodist, and Shiloh Baptist. She served her community through the Daughters of Des Moines, a civic and social nonprofit, where she took on various roles, including president, secretary, and treasurer. After relocating to Arizona, Gretchen joined the First Institutional Baptist Church of

Phoenix Arizona. There she served as a teacher for the Children's Church School for 20+ years. In 1993 - 1994, under the leadership of Rev. Leon Howard Sullivan's International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH) program, Gretchen and Zack spent 10 ½ months in the Gambia, West Africa as Teachers for Africa.

As a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. for nearly five decades she served in a host of roles to empower youth, increase voter turnout, and champion civic engagement. Gretchen's lifetime goal was to utilize her experiences, knowledge, skills and abilities to mentor and train African American youth and adults, teaching techniques for succeeding in American society. She established "Aid A Kid" Summer Pre-school Learning Program in city parks in African American neighborhoods. In Phoenix she gave Black History Dramatic presentations at Phoenix Gateway Community College, Mesa Community College, and the Sisters of the Valley. Outside of her roles as a mentor and active church member, she enjoyed activities such as dominos, playing cards, storytelling, baking peach cobbler, and bowling.

Gretchen fought the good fight, holding fast to her faith in Jesus. She continued to serve others through her activism and community organizing at Emmanuel Baptist Church and in sisterhood with her beloved San Jose Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Gretchen was preceded in death by her husband Zack Earl Hamlett, Jr., two children, her infant son Colie Jaco III and daughter Carla Colice Jaco-West, her father Robert A. Jackson, Sr. and mother Catherine Carr Curtis, a sister Ellen M. Edwards, two brothers

Robert A. Jackson, Jr. and Floyd Jackson McGee and a grandson Winston William Jaco Jr. She is survived by her daughter Pat Gloryetta Jaco; her sons Carl Colie Jaco, IV (Ivy) and Winston William Jaco Sr. (Kerry); three sisters Roxanna Mayes, Rosalind Miller, and Myrtle Curtis; six grandchildren, Shelly Quintana, Willie Earl West, Nateka West, Dianne Jaco, Dana Jaco and, Taunya Jaco, as well as a host of great grandchildren, nieces, nephews and extended family and friends.

# Previous Events

## Viewing

FEB 18. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (PT)

Emmanuel Baptist Church  
467 N. White Rd  
San Jose, CA 95127

## Service

FEB 18. 11:30 AM (PT)

Emmanuel Baptist Church  
467 N. White Rd  
San Jose, CA 95127

*Repast will be held immediately following the services at the church. Flowers and Cards may be sent to: Carl Jaco 105 Paseo Laura Los Gatos, CA 95030 In Lieu of flowers, please consider making a memorial donation, in honor of Gretchen Hamlett, to the educational development of African American youth by donating to the San Jose Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority,*

## Committal Service

FEB 23. 10:30 AM (MT)

National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona  
23029 N Cave Creek Road  
Phoenix, AZ 85024

# Tribute Wall

OM

“ *The Langston Hughes Players send condolences to the family of Gretchen Hamlett. She was a member of the theater troupe and performed with us throughout the Midwest. She was well known for her portrayal of the pains of the African American mother and capturing the four little girls that were bombed and kill in Alabama at Sunday School. She was able to capture and bring the Black experience in a dramatic fashion to the stage. She was a delight and will always be remembered. Odell McGhee, Director.*

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**Odell McGhee** - February 18, 2023 at 10:32 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Gretchen Gloryetta Hamlett.*



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February 17, 2023 at 11:27 AM

ET

“ I have had the honor of knowing Gretchen Jaco Hamlett since I was a teenager back in the sixties in Des Moines, Iowa, where we lived as neighbors on Twenty-fifth St. After my marriage to Zack E. Hamlett, III, she became my even better friend when she married Zack's dad. She was an amazing lady, a distinguished lady, a dedicated activist and a prominent community leader. It was wonderful to visit with her and Zack, Jr. in Arizona in later years. We kept in touch over the decades and corresponded by telephone, Facebook and letters. .She was a good friend to my late mother and sister when she and Zack, Jr. lived in Des Moines, especially in the bowling leagues. God rest her soul. Like so many, I will miss her. I will make a contribution to the educational foundation in her name.  
*Eleanora E. Tate.*

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**Eleanora E. Tate** - February 17, 2023 at 10:45 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage* was purchased for the family of Gretchen Gloryetta Hamlett.



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February 16, 2023 at 06:38 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Gretchen Gloryetta Hamlett.



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February 16, 2023 at 01:25 PM

TJ

“ 10 files added to the tribute wall



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**Taunya Jaco** - February 16, 2023 at 11:55 AM

TJ

“ *Grandma*

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**Taunya Jaco** - February 16, 2023 at 11:53 AM

EP

“ *To Aunt Gretchen's Family, please accept my condolences and know that I'm praying for you all. Rest now Aunt Gretchen.*

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**Eric Parker** - February 16, 2023 at 08:24 AM

CM

“ *Sending heartfelt condolences and prayers to Gretchen's Family. May you find comfort and peace knowing that Gretchen touched so many lives. God Bless you always.*



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**Cathy Mallard** - February 15, 2023 at 07:07 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Gretchen Gloryetta Hamlett.*



February 15, 2023 at 05:35 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Gretchen Gloryetta Hamlett.*



February 15, 2023 at 07:32 AM



“ *4 files added to the album Mom*



Carl Jaco - February 15, 2023 at 01:00 AM

CJ

“ 34 files added to the album Mom



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**Carl Jaco** - February 14, 2023 at 03:17 PM