



Lorenzo A Croft

February 21, 1928 - July 4, 2023

Lorenzo A Croft peacefully transitioned at home with his family in his sleep after a lengthy illness on July 4, 2023. He was 95.4 years old, a detail that he enjoyed sharing with everyone he encountered.

Lorenzo Andrew Croft entered the world on February 21, 1928. His parents Elnora (Ford) Croft and Lavert Croft and brother Charles welcomed the energetic baby. Lorenzo was special and memorable from the start. His quick wit, humor, intellect and curious nature placed him on a path for success.

Lorenzo attended Detroit Public School's Miller High School and excelled in sports and academics. This resulted in him being selected to the Detroit All City Football Team, This and other successes would later have him inducted into the Miller High School Hall of fame.

Upon graduation he was offered several academic and athletic scholarships, to various colleges and universities. He finally selected Kentucky State College (University) located in Frankfort, Kentucky.

Lorenzo was very active and prominent on campus, joining Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., The Kentanna Club and was co-captain of the football team. The year that he co-captained the team 1952-1953 was the same year the Kentucky State Thoroughbreds played the first interracial, collegiate football game in the state of Kentucky.

Lorenzo was honored to have a scholarship named in his honor. The Lorenzo A. Croft Award is presented to athletes and scholars, who have excelled in sports and academics. In addition, he was inducted into the Kentucky State University Hall of Fame, in 1995.

During his tenure at Kentucky State College (University), Lorenzo met Geraldine Maxine Carter, his "bride" (as often referred to her). Realizing he had found his soulmate Lorenzo proposed and married Geraldine after graduating from Kentucky State College (University), with his Bachelor of Science Degree. Lorenzo and Geraldine were together for over 70 years and July 25, 2023 would have been

their official 70th wedding anniversary.

Lorenzo and Geraldine relocated to Detroit after graduation and began a life of love and adventure. Together they raised five children and grandchildren. They enjoyed spending time together as a family celebrating holidays, visiting family and friends. One of their passions was to travel the United States and Canada during the summer months in their camper with the children. Exploring the

countryside and witnessing history and geographic wonders firsthand.

Lorenzo was a staunch supporter of higher education and always emphasized academic success to others. He enjoyed working with youth, mentoring them and assisting them in finding the right path to success. He enjoyed seeing them once they completed their education, return to the community and give back to others. Lorenzo obtained his Master of Education Degree from Eastern Michigan University, in addition to completing post graduate work at Wayne State University and the University of Kentucky. Moreover, Lorenzo was extremely proud that he instilled the importance of education in his family. He often reflected on the fact that all of his children and grandchildren had college degrees, with several of them having advanced degrees.

Lorenzo began his public service career, working for Wayne County Michigan at the Youth Home. After obtaining the position of Assistant Youth Director at the Youth Home. Lorenzo decided to dedicate his talents to Public Education and began working for Ecorse Public Schools as a teacher. During his tenure, Lorenzo taught Mathematics, Science, and Special Education. Once he began interacting with the students and staff it became apparent that Lorenzo was a gifted athlete and had a talent for bringing out the best in young people, subsequently he was assigned to teach Physical Education. This was a perfect match for Lorenzo and the community.

As an experienced coach he excelled at coaching Hockey, Boys and Girls Basketball, Football, Boys and Girls Track and Field, and Rowing were some of the Athletic genres he coached. Furthermore, Lorenzo continued to be a trailblazer becoming the first in many areas: He became the First Black Athletic Director at Ecorse Public Schools a role he remained in for twenty years. Also, he was the first Black Hockey Coach in the Nation. Last, but not least he was the first

Black Coach inducted into the Michigan State Track Coaches Hall of Fame.

Lorenzo had many successes in his career at Ecorse High School. He produced two All American Athletes and one two-time NCAA National Champion. Between 1968 -1989 he had Ten State Championships in Boys Track and Field and Four State Runner ups in Boys' Track and Field. Lorenzo also was named Coach of the Year in 1971 and 1984. Along with receiving the Chuck Sweeny Award in 1989. The Gymnasium at Ecorse High School is named the Lorenzo A. Croft Gymnasium in his honor. Lorenzo retired from Ecorse Public Schools after 35 years of service and he and his wife relocated to Lexington, Kentucky.

After this move, Lorenzo was actively teaching classes for Fayette County Public Schools and enrolled in graduate classes at the University of Kentucky.

Lorenzo was preceded in death by his parents: Elnora Croft, Lavert Croft, Brother Charles, sister Flossie, Grandmother Laura Allen, and a special nephew Gregory Smith. Lorenzo's legacy includes his widow Geraldine, daughters Celeste,

Joann, Catherine and Virginia, son Mark (LaRiesa), beloved niece Versa Smith, revered Aunt Esther Battle, ten grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren and eight great-great-grandchildren.

Lorenzo was a lifetime member of the following organizations:

NAACP, Kentucky State University Alumni Association, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., Miller High School Alumni Inc. and Kentucky State University K-Club.

The family of Lorenzo Croft would like to thank everyone for their support during this time.

Previous Events

Service

JUL 14. 11:00 AM (ET)

Lima Drive Seventh Day Adventist Church