



Dr. Aimee J. Wiest

March 8, 1940 - January 8, 2022

Dr. Aimee Wiest, who passed away on Saturday, January 8, 2022, was the epitome of unconditional love and kindness. Dr. Wiest left an indelible impact on everyone she met. Those fortunate to have known her experienced the light that she left on the world through her love and acceptance of everyone that she encountered. To quote one of the many who are grieving her death, “Softly shining light, gentle yet powerful presence and keen ability to understand any situation. What a wonderful teacher. What a wonderful friend.”

What a wonderful individual. Dr. Wiest found purpose and goodness in everyone, whether it be the challenging student, the incarcerated individual, or her academic peers. She gave them equal respect because of their shared humanity. She emanated a positivity and optimism that allowed all who met her to believe in their own potential. Aimee’s generosity was boundless. She contributed to every organization that cared about the survival of all of God’s creatures.

Dr. Wiest, the oldest of two daughters, was born to Harry and Faith Wiest on March 8, 1940. She graduated from William Penn High School in York, Pa. She earned a BA degree from Grove City College, PA, a master’s degree from Morgan State University in Baltimore, MD, and her PHD in English Literature and African American Studies from the University of MD.

Dr. Wiest taught English at Severna Park High School in MD. After a 35-year career as a high school teacher, she worked as an adjunct Professor of African American Literature at the University of MD, Notre Dame University in Baltimore, and Delaware State University in Dover and Georgetown. She continued her studies at the University of Nairobi because she always sought full knowledge and understanding of all cultures. For that reason, Dr. Wiest travelled around the world more for insight than pleasure, though she enjoyed every country that she visited.

To simply say that she was an educator would diminish what she brought to the classroom. Many students recall how her lessons were infused with the essence of who

she was, words, music, social justice, spirituality, and poetry. Many of her past students, in reflecting on her teaching, noted how well prepared she always was, her full knowledge of the subject and how she radiated an absolute love of sharing all her knowledge. Others affirmed that Dr. Wiest gave them the love of learning and, like her, have become eternal searchers for truth and knowledge.

Dr. Wiest was born a musician. The first indication of her musical talent was at age two years, and she continued to entertain many people throughout her life. Though never having studied or trained to play the piano, she played professionally whenever the opportunity arose. She played for the various churches she attended, at private house parties, weddings, public events. However, her greatest joy was playing in restaurants and bars where she always succeeded in getting diners and guests to sing along while she played. For many years, she was the musical entertainment at Nordstrom Department Store in the Annapolis Mall, where the many students she taught would gather around the piano to sing and entertain the customers. There was no limit to her musical preference; she liked it all, from Jazz, to Rap, to Blues, to Gospel, to Opera.

Dr. Wiest was active in several community groups. She belonged to four book groups including the St. Peter's Church book group, the Wolfe Pointe book group, the Natural Selections book group, and the Southern Delaware Alliance for Racial Justice Book Club, which she founded and led for several years. She helped to produce and participated in the Black Poetry Events held by SDARJ. Dr. Wiest was a teacher of Black Literature, Poetry and History at the Osher Program in Lewes, DE. She responded positively to every request for teaching or entertaining, believing that one is obligated to share their knowledge and talents with others.

Dr. Wiest is survived by her spouse and partner of 45 years, Charlotte King of Lewes, DE.; a stepdaughter, Rachel King of Chicago, IL; a sister, Sally Bergeron of Phoenix, AZ; two nieces Alice Gregg and Sidney Besania; one nephew, Lieutenant Colonel U.S. Army Phillip Bergeron; and seven great nieces and nephews.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, March 19, 2022 at 11:00 AM at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 2nd & Market Streets, Lewes, DE. All are invited to attend the celebration of life via livestream by visiting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7M8wmF8CXLQ>

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that you make donations in Dr. Wiest's name to one of the following organizations: Southern Delaware Alliance for Racial Justice: Scholarship Funds, Middle School Student Recognition Awards, Para-Professional Financial

Assistance Program and financial assistance support for incarcerated individuals completing higher education programs, www.sdarj.org, Pathway to Success, www.pathways-2-success.org, Richard Allen School, www.richardallenschoolgeorgetown.com, First State Community Action Agency, www.firststatecaa.org for the Freedom School.

Please sign the virtual guestbook located on the tribute page.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

MAR 19. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Peter's Episcopal Church
Second & Market Streets
Lewes, DE

Tribute Wall

MM

“ I was so fortunate to have had Dr. Wiest as my English teacher way back in 1983 at Severna Park High School. Dr. Wiest made English fun, and she really left a positive impact not only with myself, but with many other students. I will always remember walking into the classroom and on the chalkboard would be the day of the week, but it wasn't just Monday, it was "Marvelous Monday", "Terrific Tuesday", or "Wonderful Wednesday". Through the years I have thought of Dr. Wiest, often. I can't remember any of my three children mentioning a teacher that had as much of an impact on them, as Dr. Wiest had on me. She taught all of her students to treat everyone with respect, kindness, and loyalty, and she practiced what she preached. Dr. Wiest was a wonderful person, kind, talented, loving, and caring she will be missed by many, but will be forgotten by few.

Matthew Murphy - June 20 at 01:06 PM



“ I had Dr. Wiest as an English teacher at Severna Park High School in the early nineties. I still remember how kind and open she was not just to me, but to all her students. Everything seemed positive and a possibility. I feel like she "saw" me and my creativity and it gave me the confidence to continue down my artistic path.

K - June 03 at 04:14 PM

KJ

“ I met Aimee through friends of friends, and I loved her as soon as I met her— Lovely, kind, talented, smart, and genuinely kind without a mean bone in her body. We bonded over our shared cancer journey, and I was shocked at her passing. I will miss her positive spirit and goodness. My condolences to Charlotte and to all who loved her and were lucky enough to have her in their lives.

Karen Jacoby

karen jacoby - March 18 at 03:16 AM

VM

“ Dr. Wiest thank you for making education nit only fun but your passion and love for what you did just radiated to all of us students! I just learned of your passing and you will be missed and never forgotten. Thank you for sharing your beautiful gift with me.



vicky moncrief - March 08 at 08:35 AM

CM

“ Our Dear Aimee, what smiles you brought to our faces with that lovely smile of yours. The fact that you saw goodness and wonderfulness in everything around you was amazing and made us want to experience that as well. I remember the first time my great granddaughter met you - she went running into your arms with such a sweet smile on her face. Children know things!!!! Thank you for being our friend and such a good neighbor. Mark is going to miss that yearly New Year's Eve drink with you.

Connie and Mark - February 26 at 10:46 AM

SP

“ I met Aimee and Charlotte when I moved to Lewes and they were my nearby neighbors. I was overwhelmed by the move and Aimee was welcoming, sweet and kind.

Susan pomerantz - February 26 at 07:49 AM

RW

“ I am so sorry to hear of Dr. Wiest passing, I have not seen her in a few years. I remember her quiet nature and pleasant being. I had the pleasure of meeting her at a dental office I worked at in Rehoboth and had many interesting conversations. Please know she will be missed by many. Prayers and hugs to her family and friends.
Ruth E Walsh

Ruth Walsh - February 01 at 01:48 PM

AK

“ I remember walking into my parents-in-law's house on Keesey Street in the late sixties and hearing some wonderful music coming from their piano, and yes, it was Aimee at the keyboard, playing all kinds of music. My Mother Tom and Father Claude had told me a little about her, and I was glad to meet her and talk to her a little about teaching, as I was also a high school English teacher. Aimee's parents, whom Jim and I affectionately called Aunt Faith and Uncle Harry lived across the street. I do extend my sincere condolences to Charlotte, whom I never met, but I especially want to send my sympathy to Sally and her family. I kept up to date on her and her babies from Mother Tom, but then I lost contact after she passed away in 1996 and Jim was transferred to Wisconsin. Two years ago we returned to York, and I do occasionally drive through the old neighborhood. Sally, I hope that you and your family are well, and I'm so sorry to hear of the loss of your sister.
May God bless you and comfort you.

Audrey and Jim Keller - January 30 at 04:13 PM

KG

“ I just learned of Aimee's passing. My first reaction was that someone made a mistake in posting her Obituary...Meeting Aimee all those decades ago in Annapolis was knowing that I was learning at the moment I was learning: a rare gift.

Oh Charlotte, my love&energy surrounds you💔

Karen Goldman - January 27 at 07:02 PM

ER

“ Dr Weist continues to be the model - for me at least - of all that is good and awesome about humans. I was a student in English class and had the most metaphysical conversations with Dr Wiest at the time, wrapped up in my cello performace auditions for NYU and trying to be as bright a light as I could (so extra even a high school student) When I learned of her passing last week, this month, I grieved, but suddenly felt overcome with happiness, knowing that Dr. Weist was and is even more so now, EXACTLY the type of person, who strongly that would be available to us all now as pure light and knowledge in these turbulent times. I just know she is the teacher who will keep on teaching within all of us, who were so fortunate to know her even for brief exciting moments of our lives.



Love to all the family and fellow students of Dr Aimee Weist!

Erika Lessey

"From the depths of my heart, I pray to you,

To be inseperable from your compassion

I ask for your blessings upon my mindstream.' - Traditional Tibetan Prayer

Erika - January 26 at 03:36 PM

KZ

“ A warm and loving spirit to all who knew her, a dynamo, and a person whose entire life was dedicated to learning, sharing, loving. Kit Zak

Kit Zak - January 26 at 01:32 PM

MH

“ Aimee befriended me as a colleague at Delaware State University, and we enjoyed many lovely lunch dates, which lasted hours because we enjoyed each other's company. We also met often to exercise at the Y. She will be missed greatly. Condolences to Charlotte and Aimee's family.

Mary-Anna Harvie - January 25 at 02:10 PM

CK

Sending love and condolences to all who loved Aimee. I met Aimee at the Wolfe Pointe book club. From our first meeting, I felt I had known her forever. She was welcoming, warm, and caring. She had a true and genuine in others. I will miss that she is not here with us. Thank you, Aimee, for sharing your beautiful spirit.

Chris King - January 27 at 08:07 AM

LT

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Lori Todd - January 24 at 09:48 PM

BK

“ *Every day in class we knew that Dr Wiest loved us and believed in us. It just came through without her needing to say it. I remember specifically how she spoke to a friend of mine who struggle through an oral presentation; praising his courage and willingness to persevere. Honest to God it almost brought tears to my eyes. We were all lucky to know her. Rest in Peace dear teacher.*

Bill Kearns - January 24 at 06:47 PM



“ *Dr. Wiest was my 11th grade English teacher in 1991-92. She taught me so much about how to write, how to thoughtfully read, and how to discuss anything. I still think about lessons I learned in her class and apply them when I'm writing. Plus, her class was fun! I feel lucky to have had her as a teacher. My condolences to her family and many friends.*

Kit Pollard - January 24 at 06:56 AM

CB

“ *Dr. Wiest was a gem among teachers. I loved to escape into books with her. She had an understanding of her students that went far beyond the classroom and I still remember and value her advice.*

Cindy Bilbrough - January 24 at 06:36 AM

GF

“ I'm sure I speak for countless students at Severna Park High School who learned many different things on many different levels from Ms. Wiest (as we called her, not sure that she had her PhD yet). She was always warm and delightful. She knew her students as individual kids finding their way through their teenage years, not just as names on the grade sheet.

Greg Feldman - January 23 at 10:45 PM

KM

“ Saddened by the lost of a special and favorite cousin. She will be missed by many, and she clearly left her mark on so so many....
Karen Miller

Karen Miller - January 22 at 08:15 PM

MJ

“ I can't think of any one individual who had a more positive influence on my life. Aimee defined kindness, brilliance, acceptance, curiosity and generosity. During much of my childhood and adolescence, she was the only adult who could make me feel like I was heard. She did listen. When my mother died suddenly, Aimee was there. She was able to share dreams my mother had that I otherwise never would have known – because she listened to my mother too. My heartfelt condolences to Sally, Alice, Sidney, Phillip, Rachel and their families. Charlotte my heart breaks for you now but to have shared 45 years of joy, light and love with Aimee was an amazing gift as I am sure you are aware. Godspeed Aimee

Martha Jacobs - January 22 at 03:35 PM

KB

“ Aimee was one of my roommates when I came to Anne Arundel County, there are no words to describe this marvelous human being. There are so many stories of her goodness. The Lord is getting a top notch person, a superb angel is now directing in Heaven.

Kay Bogle - January 22 at 11:32 AM

VG

“ *The most amazing, caring, and talented woman. I am forever grateful for our memories and time spent together. She always gave unconditional love and support. Truly the most inspiring person I could ever ask to be my Great Aunt.*



Victoria Gregg - January 21 at 04:55 PM

JC

“ *I had the privilege of taking Aimee to the hospital in Baltimore on several occasions. She was the most pleasant person you could ever meet. She will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege to know her. Rest in Peace Amiee. Jim Carmine*

Jim Carmine - January 21 at 03:57 PM

TP

Aimee was a dear friend, a neighbor, a committee member and the leader of our community book club! We will certainly miss her smile and her kind ways. Our sincere condolences to Charlotte and Rachel on your loss. Terry and Andrew Palumbo

Terry palumbo - January 23 at 09:24 PM

LT

Aimee was my teacher for several English courses at Severna Park High. She was one of the coolest teachers in the school. Everyone loved her. She always had an encouraging word for students who were experiencing difficulties. Rest In peace, Dr. Wiest.

Lori Todd - January 24 at 09:45 PM

BM

Attended a poetry reading run by Aimee for Southern Delaware Racial Justice and an Osher Lifelong Learning class on Black Literature with pleasure. My condolences to Charlotte King who I got to know at AAUW years ago and enjoyed following all their activities over the years here in Lewes. Both have been great leaders for the community. Barbara Mullin

Barbara Mullin - January 27 at 05:10 PM

KM

I just found out about Aimee's passing and am heartbroken. She was a marvelous human being and friend. My condolences and a heart full of love go out to dear Charlotte. Kate McQueen

Kate McQueen - February 04 at 02:51 PM