

In Memoriam

Gail Grigsby Harrison



June 8, 1943 – September 5, 2015

*November 9, 2015 • 6:30pm
UCLA Faculty Center*

Obituary

Born Gail Kathleen Grigsby to parents Richard and Marjorie Grigsby, Dr. Harrison attended the University of California at Santa Barbara, Cornell University, and the University of Arizona, where she received a PhD in Biological Anthropology in 1976. After a 15-year tenure at U of A as a professor in the Department of Family & Community Medicine, Dr. Harrison relocated to California to assume a similar position at the UCLA School of Public Health until her retirement in 2013. She was involved in many teaching and research endeavors, especially focusing on the nutrition and health of underserved and impoverished children, mothers, and families. She repeatedly was called upon to consult with the World Health Organization, US Women Infants and Children feeding program (WIC), and UNICEF. She was elected to membership in the Institute of Medicine in 2003.



Dr. Harrison was predeceased by her brother, Richard S. Grigsby Jr., and is survived by her husband, Dr. Osman Galal; children Tim Harrison and Malinda Bess Harrison; stepchildren Mona and Khaled Galal; stepmother Susan Grigsby; step-siblings Cherrill Kawakami, Barbara LeBlanc, & William Davis Jr.; and five grandchildren.





Order of Service

Welcome/introduction *Michael Prelip, Prof. of Community Health Sciences, UCLA*

Opening remarks *Malinda Bess Harrison*

Tributes & Memories

- Cheryl Ritenbaugh, *Professor Emerita of Family & Community Medicine, Univ. of Arizona*
- Suzanne Murphy, *Researcher (Professor) Emerita, Cancer Research Center of Hawaii*
- Linda Rosenstock, *Dean Emerita, Fielding School of Public Health, UCLA*
- Anne Pebley, *Professor of Community Health Sciences, UCLA*
- Charlotte Neumann, *Research Professor of Community Health Sciences, UCLA*
- Vay Liang (Bill) Go, *Distinguished Prof. of Medicine, Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA*
- Ninez Ponce, *Director, UCLA Center for Global and Immigrant Health*
- Patricia Crawford, *Senior Director of Research, UC Nutrition Policy Institute*
- Shannon Whaley, *Director of Research and Evaluation, PHFE-WIC*

Open mic for others who would like to speak *Former students, family, friends, colleagues*

Slide show/closing remarks *Tim Harrison*



“Daughter Asleep”

Listen for the tiny sound
amid the mighty roar

Search for one pure grain of sand
upon the lovely shore

Pick from out the midnight sky
the twinkling of a star

And realize, my little love,
how wonderful you are.

—Richard S. Grigsby, Sr.



Memories

Gail was always so supportive of my interests. She facilitated my learning and always offered an ear to listen to concerns and answer questions. She holds a special place in my heart after working with her for so many years. We miss you Gail!

—Dana Hunnes

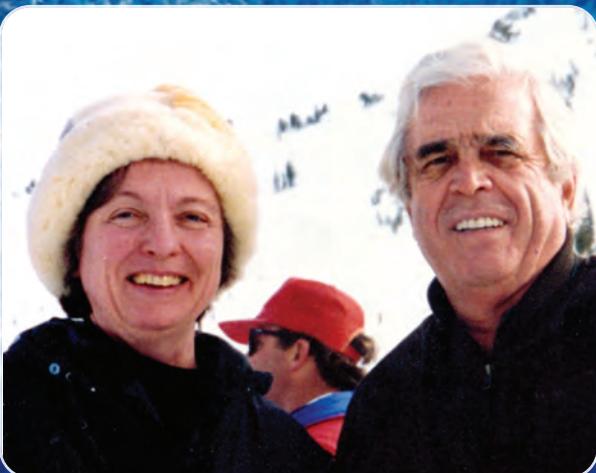
As one of Gail's "youngest" academic "children," in the weaning phase of our academic relationship, her passing was very difficult for me. But I thank God for bringing her into my life—she opened her heart to my family and me and made us feel truly welcome. She understood the difficulties I faced as a student with young children and always had suggestions for things I could do with my family, including opening up her house at Big Bear to us. She had so much confidence in me that I always felt I could do whatever I discussed with her—at least until I started it. She was a great advocate for me and many of the fellowships I got to support me through grad-

uate school were because of the things she said or wrote about me. I cherish the opportunity to have had her as my academic advisor, and I pray her soul finds eternal rest.

—Patience Afulani

Gail was an inspirational teacher, mentor, and colleague. I had the good fortune to complete my PhD in nutritional sciences with her guidance, sage advice, and support. She was a wonderful role model as a professor, mother, and woman of wisdom. Gail had a profound impact on my career and was pivotal in my decision to embark on my PhD program. Her unwavering trust, patience, and confidence in me enabled me to learn in ways that were unique and that had great impact on my life. She truly contributed to making this a better world for many, many people. I thank her and will be forever grateful for the gift of her presence in my life. Her special spirit continues to be with us.

—Linda Houtkooper



Memories

It is hard to put into words the impact Gail has had on my life professionally, spiritually, and as a woman of integrity. Gail became not only my career mentor, but was a maverick for women as a role model in how we need to stand up for early childhood and family. Gail and Cheryl Ritenbaugh supported so many of us young mothers and fathers in balancing our careers and family. It changed my life and how I operate in my career and mentoring. Gail was one of the most important people God has allowed me the honor of knowing, and I humbly say thank you, thank you, thank you for being my friend.

—Laura Kettel Khan

I still remember the first conversation I had with Gail in 1996, when I first started as a post-doc at UCLA in the Center for Human

Nutrition. We connected on several topics, including the fact we both spent time at Cornell for graduate studies. From day one she was welcoming and nurturing. She provided me a number of opportunities at UCLA, including teaching several courses in the School of Public Health. I learned so much from her, most critically how nutrition research can inform nutrition policy in ways that really do impact people to live healthier lives. She is largely responsible for my subsequent career shift from lab research to public health nutrition. Gail brought together people, literally from all over the world, into her home to chat and share stories. For a new post-doc, this was an incredible experience. I'll always hold her in my heart as a friend and mentor.

—Diane Harris





Memories

Gail's sensitivity to and understanding of Islamic cultures was unique among those I knew in the nutrition world. She worked with me on many efforts and always helped me with her entry points to that world. When I think of her I also think of the amazing way she took on the massive set of children and grandchildren, all the pregnancies and array of other comings and goings of Osman's family. She just flowed with this large extended family and all their various dramas. The other thing I most remember about Gail is the love and care she gave to her students and the way she continued to interact with them and nurture them as they moved across the globe.

—Barry Popkin

Dr. Harrison was my mentor and advisor as an MPH student at UCLA. She was truly the WIC champion!! She introduced me to WIC program which inspired me to pursue

my PhD in Nutritional Science and my career as a public health nutritionist to serve low-income communities. I was pleased to see her in August 2015 while she was at USDA-FNS in Alexandria, VA. After so many years without seeing her, she was so happy and delighted to see me—that was the best last memory of her. I will keep her memory alive in what I do in my profession; she was truly the champion for nutrition and maternal child health in the US and around the world.

—Pascasie Adedze

It's so hard to put in words the impact Gail had on my life. She was my academic mentor and a life mentor. She not only supported me during my schooling but also connected me with wonderful people who helped me get where I am today. For that I am *soooo* grateful! Gail, I love you and I will deeply miss you!

—Maria Koleilat

Acknowledgments

Many thanks to May Wang, Shannon Whaley, Preethi Thomas, Melba Tolbert, and Jennifer O'Brien for organizing and facilitating this service, and to Jody Heymann, Steven Wallace, and all those at the UCLA Fielding School of Public Health who helped make it happen with a minimum of stress for us. Great thanks also to Cheryl Ritenbaugh for her many offers of assistance and support, both before and after our mom's passing, and to Myra Muramoto for additional sage advice. Thanks as well to everyone who contributed thoughts and photos to www.forevermissed.com/gail-harrison. And, naturally, thank you to all who came to this service to remember and honor our mom's life and her many accomplishments.

—Tim and Bess Harrison

