

alpha male, a renaissance man, an epicurean of sorts who always enjoyed a great dinner party, an innovator, a change maker, a gifted educator and mentor, and a great supporter of worthwhile societal initiatives that had the potential to better empower mankind. He always seemed to be “a man with a plan who had a purpose in life.”

Without a doubt, Michael will be missed and will live in many of our hearts and memories forever. So, thank you Mike, from all of us (*as family members, extended family members, friends, and associates*) who came from everywhere to be here today for all that you did get done and for all that you tried to get done during your remarkable life! **Well done! In fact, very well done!**



Resurrection Prayer

Most merciful Father, we commend our departed into Your hands.

We are filled with the sure Hope that our departed will rise again on the Last Day with all who have died in Christ.

We thank You for all the good things You have given during our departed's earthly life.

O Father, in Your great mercy, accept our prayer that the Gates of Paradise may be opened for Your servant.

In our turn, may we too be comforted by the words of faith until we greet Christ in glory and are united with you and our departed.

Through Christ our Lord, Amen.



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Graveside Service

Saturday, May 18, 2019
2:00 p.m.

Prairie View Memorial Cemetery
Prairie View, Texas



for
William Michael
MELTON



(alpha) January 26, 1946 † April 13, 2019 (omega)

William's Life Journey

On this occasion in rural Waller County, Texas, a diverse group of individuals joyfully gathered from both far and near to commemorate and celebrate the transition of William Michael Melton (*best remembered as Michael Melton or simply Mike Melton*) into eternal rest on April 13, 2019 (*at Kaiser Permanente Hospital in Los Angeles, California*). The group members also reflected upon his wonderful and accomplished life as well as their individual kinships, friendships, and relationships with him.

Although a permanent resident of Los Angeles almost continually since early childhood, Michael, nevertheless, had deep familial roots in this part of Texas. His grandfather, Dr. Edward B. Evans, served as President of Prairie View A&M University in its early history. Both Dr. Evans and his wife (*Lucille L. Evans*) were permanent fixtures on the University's Campus and in the community for many years and have been memorialized there in a number of ways since Dr. Evans' historic retirement and earthly departure. Michael was close to his grandparents and spent a lot of time at the University through the years, especially during his college days and after his own retirement.

William Michael Melton was the only child born to the union of Ada Louise Evans Melton and William Robert Melton, II. In January of 1946, William Robert was serving as a pilot in World War II as one of the historic and highly acclaimed Tuskegee Airmen. Thus, it was not surprising that William Michael Melton came to be born on January 26, 1946 in Tuskegee, Alabama. Once William Robert Melton, II was honorably discharged at the end of the War, he became very active in the Tuskegee Airmen Organization for the rest of his life and served as its President for a number of years.

At an early age, after he and his mother relocated to Los Angeles, Michael attended the public schools during the school year, but routinely spent part of the summer months visiting family and friends in Texas. There

was never a question when he graduated from Dorsey High School in Los Angeles that he would join his grandparents at Prairie View A&M University to pursue his undergraduate education in Texas. Clearly, this was a very good decision: Michael earned a Bachelor's degree in 1967, he made the decision to become an educator during this period, and he joined Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. prior to graduation.

Although Mike subsequently earned graduate credits at the college level in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, he rarely spoke of this part of his college education; however, he was always loud and proud to acknowledge his graduation from Prairie View A&M University. His professional accomplishments in life further allowed him to represent the University, his family, and himself in a stellar manner. As his professional life wound down and he embraced retirement, he made regular visits to the Campus where he spent time with staff members in the John B. Coleman Library, especially Ms. Phyllis Earles (*Head Archivist*), and donated many documents and artifacts related to Evans Family History, Texas History, and Prairie View A&M University History to the Library's extensive historic Archives.

At the completion of his Bachelor's degree, Mike accepted his first teaching assignment at La Marque High School in La Marque, Texas (*near Houston*) where he taught both History and English. After two years, he returned to Los Angeles where he joined the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) for 40+ years. Initially, his primary emphasis was on teaching English, first at John Marshall High School in the Silver Lake community and, subsequently, at North Hollywood High School in the San Fernando Valley. The immediate neighborhoods supporting both of these schools were quite different from a socio-economic perspective with the Marshall students judged to be at the obvious advantage. Michael was determined to eliminate perceived advantages at Marshall and disadvantages at North Hollywood in the academic performance arena for the students that he taught. Because he was a superb teacher with a great work ethic, he was able to implement teaching and mentoring strategies to accomplish what he envisioned. Also, he regularly taught Advanced Placement or College Preparatory

Courses at both schools and even served on the National Board for the development and scoring of tests for these courses.

After years of enticement from the LAUSD, Michael finally decided to accept the position of Assistant Principal for a few years followed by another appointment as District-Wide Title I Coordinator, the position from which he retired after 40+ years of total service to the LAUSD. In this final position, he is credited with making a huge difference that led to recognizable improvements in management at all levels of the District. In spite of his success as an administrator and manager, he continually asserted that he preferred being in the classroom teaching and developing the potential of his students as he originally committed himself to do when he first decided to become an educator.

William Michael Melton was always a unique individual who lived his life on his own terms and was kind and generous in supporting initiatives and causes that he judged to be worthwhile. One such project that he generously supported was A New Way of Life Re-Entry Project for previously incarcerated women. He always loved and supported the fine arts, and he especially liked opera. This led to his becoming the Chairperson of a critical division of the Opera League of Los Angeles (*where he served on its Board of Directors until his passing*) called African-Americans for LA Opera. Through this effort, he was able to identify young African-American opera singers whose talents he helped showcase by either hosting or producing musical events. Over the years of his love affair with opera, he traveled around the world to attend opera concerts in the great opera houses everywhere and amassed a huge collection of opera recordings, including some of great historic value. He complemented these opera support efforts through his service on the Pacific Region (*Los Angeles District*) Organizing Committee for the famous Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions based in New York.

Although long acknowledged to be a maverick in life, William Michael Melton purposely distanced himself from the "designated exceptional crowd" because he preferred not to be a part of any crowd. He was an