



Derrick W. Diggs

May 25, 1955 - February 15, 2023

Derrick W. Diggs, 67, passed away peacefully, on Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at ProMedica Toledo Hospital surrounded by family members and friends. Derrick was born on May 25, 1955, to Martha Thompson. He graduated from DeVilbiss High School in 1973, where he was a star quarterback for the football team. He was an inductee of the DeVilbiss High School Hall of Fame in 2013. He also played football at Adrian College where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and Political Science. He also earned a Master's Degree in Pubic Administration from the University of Toledo.

As a child, in elementary school, Derrick was influenced to become a police officer after a visit to his school by a Toledo Police Sergeant. He accomplished his childhood dream when he became a member of the Toledo Police Department in 1977. He worked in various sections and units on the Department from street patrol to Investigative Services to Community Services. He was promoted to sergeant in 1986; lieutenant in 1990; captain in 1995; and deputy chief in 2001. He was appointed to Chief of Police in 2011, the first African American to attain that position. He served over 46 years in law enforcement, the last few as chief in the City of Fort Myers, Florida.

He was a Chief made for the 21st century. He embraced the use of technology to improve police service. He was nationally known for his use of intelligence-

led policing which tracked crime patterns and led to reduced crime. He also understood the importance of working closely with community members and partners and worked hard on community engagement programs in Toledo and Fort Myers. He was committed to officers who worked for him and mentored a generation of future leaders on both Departments.

However, not too many people got to witness his other side, the family side. He was a constant source of strength and support to his son, Derrick. Sending texts to constantly remind him to watch his 6, make sure he got the job done, to lead from the front, and take care of his officers. He formed a special bond with Lisa that started off with her being scared and intimidated by him to being best friends and Lisa being his person of comfort when he was at his worst.

The birth of his grandson Derrick (AKA Diggy) brought out his softer side. They had a very special bond. Only his grandfather could get a six-year-old to wear Dior cologne and Polo brand clothes and then come up with a phrase for Diggy "you can't put a price tag on being full-time pretty". The special time shared with him and Diggy just walking to the mailbox in Florida. The special smiles that appeared on his face when his grandsons told him about their team games and practices. His love for pizza parties with the family. And his newfound use of emojis when sending texts of support and love.

He leaves to cherish his memory son, Derrick D. Diggs (Lisa); sister, Shirley Tucker; grandsons Ashton Mitchell, Mason Mitchell, and Derrick Michael Diggs and a host of relatives and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents. Derrick will be remembered as a loving and supportive father and grandfather. He will also be remembered as a passionate but kindhearted police officer, public servant, and leader who was committed to serving his community and serving those in need.

Friends are invited to visit from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Friday February 24,

2023 at Epworth United Methodist Church, 4855 Central Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43615, where services will be held 10:00 a.m. Saturday, February 25, 2023. To watch the service via livestream, click here (<https://www.epworth.com>). Interment at Ottawa Hills Memorial Park livestream can be seen here (<https://vimeo.com/804133250>)

Cemetery Details

Ottawa Hills Memorial Park

4210 Central Ave
Toledo, OH 43606

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **24**. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Epworth United Methodist Church
4855 Central Ave
Toledo, OH 43615

Memorial Service

FEB **25**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Epworth United Methodist Church
4855 Central Ave
Toledo, OH 43615

Tribute Wall

MF

“ I would love to thank my cousin Derek for introducing me to keep in my dream of martial arts alive to this day peace brother hope you're on a better place Maurice

Maurice Freeman - February 24, 2023 at 09:33 PM

TP

“ A beautiful soul is never forgotten. My sincerest sympathies on the passing of Derrick. Great memories of our high school days with Derrick, playing cards at my parents house and hanging out doing what kids do! So blessed to have our paths cross again when I attended Adrian College. Although we lost touch I kept up on his career through Toledo friends on the police force. Derrick once told me, " your parents are the only ones that let me come over to play cards"...a poignant moment for a 14 year old girl living in her bubble. He opened my eyes at that moment, so much that I remember 50 years later. He has touched so many lives, has left a wonderful legacy and lives on in each one of you.

Tina Prond-Bennett - February 23, 2023 at 02:56 PM

AG

“ Derrick, I want to thank you for all the laughs and the big smile we received every time we saw you out. Live beautifully in heaven , love Amber and Joel George

amber george - February 20, 2023 at 08:12 PM

TC

“ *To the Loving Family of Chief Derrick W. Diggs:*

Please accept my heartfelt condolences on Derrick's untimely passing. He was a terrific police officer, great athlete, consummate gentleman and wonderful friend to all of us in the city of Toledo. He will be greatly missed!

May God be with you all during this time of great sorrow.

Tom Crothers - February 19, 2023 at 11:31 AM

FS

“ *My condolences to the family and many friends of Derrick W. Diggs.*

Derrick was a very accomplished police officer who worked hard to finish his extensive education and police career assignments that led him through the police ranks to Chief of Police for two large police departments. I had the pleasure of knowing him during our Toledo Police days and when we were working part-time as security officers at the Southwyck Mall. Derrick worked in security for the Southwyck mall and I worked for the Lion Store security. All the mall security supported each other when there were problems in the mall.

Derrick's obituary article in the Toledo Blade portrays many of his accomplishments during his much too short life. Derrick will be missed by many, especially his son and long-standing friend Mike Bell.

Rest in peace my friend,

Frank Stiles

Frank Stiles - February 17, 2023 at 03:26 PM

TA

“ *Derrick you were the Best teammate I could have ever had in High School and College. We fought many battles on the football field together. On and Off the field you were and always was the LEADER! Thank You for lots of precious time that we spent together. Go High On That Mountain and Rest In Peace!*

Terry and Kathy Armes

Terry Armes - February 17, 2023 at 07:04 AM