



Erlene B. Wilson

December 28, 1949 - April 20, 2026

Erlene Berry Wilson passed away peacefully on April 20, 2026, surrounded by those who loved her most. Born on December 28, 1949, in Baltimore, Maryland, to Esther and Earl Berry, she lived 76 remarkable years — years marked by intelligence, grace, purpose, and an abiding love for family, faith, and community. She joins those gone before her: Earl and Esther Berry (parents) and Charles Wilson, Sr (husband). Her passing leaves an immeasurable void, yet her spirit endures in all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Erlene excelled from the very beginning, graduating at the top of her class from Carver Vocational Technical High School before going on to earn her degree in journalism from Towson University in 1974. Her academic achievements were a testament to her discipline and drive, and they set the stage for a career that would be nothing short of pioneering.

After graduating, her first stint in the industry was local at WBAL- Channel 11 news and later WMAR- TV Channel 2. Later she set her sights on New York City, drawn by ambition and a vision for what was possible. She went on to become one of the first Black women to work at Glamour magazine, and later at Essence magazine — breaking barriers and opening doors for the generations of Black women who would follow. Her work in advertising, marketing, public relations, and sales was not only accomplished; it was

transformative.

It was in New York that Erlene met Charles Wilson, the man who would become her beloved husband and life's companion. Together, they were a magnetic pair — cosmopolitan, warm, and wonderfully alive. Their apartment on 890 West End Avenue, affectionately known as "the penthouse," became a gathering place for laughter, lively conversation, and unforgettable evenings with family and friends. Throughout their marriage, Erlene was embraced wholeheartedly by her in-laws, who loved her as their own daughter.

Above all of her many accomplishments, Erlene considered motherhood her greatest calling. Her son, Charles "Charlie" Wilson, was among the truest joys of her life. She was a devoted, intentional, and fiercely proud mother who worked deliberately to give him every advantage — exposing him to education, culture, travel, and the wider world, and instilling in him curiosity, confidence, and a deep appreciation for excellence and beauty. Watching him flourish was one of her greatest sources of happiness.

After returning to Maryland, Erlene brought her considerable talents to public service, leading major public relations campaigns for the State of Maryland, including significant work in the Governor's Office for Children and Families. Her creativity and leadership left a lasting mark on all she touched. A published author as well, she wrote *100 Best Colleges for African American Students* (September 1993), a resource born of her lifelong passion for education and empowerment. With that same entrepreneurial spirit, she went on to found E. Wilson Communications, building a legacy rooted in vision, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to excellence.

Erlene was a woman who commanded attention the moment she walked into a room — not through effort, but through being unapologetically herself. She was elegant, sophisticated, vivacious, and wholly original. Rarely seen without

her pearls, she possessed a timeless sense of style that transcended fashion, elevating it into a deeply personal form of expression — a form of artistry she had truly mastered. Her quick wit and unforgettable sense of humor were matched only by the warmth she extended to everyone around her. She did not follow style. She embodied it.

Erlene's strength was quiet but immense. She faced every challenge and pursued every goal with courage, intelligence, and resolve. She was deeply spiritual — a woman whose faith was not simply something she professed, but something she lived daily, with grace and conviction. Her belief in the power of prayer was central to who she was, and it showed in the compassion and steadiness with which she moved through the world.

Those who knew Erlene knew that her love was expansive. She adored great art, music, literature, and travel, and she delighted in a wonderful gathering. She was a gifted hostess who brought sparkle to every room and warmth to every table. Her circle of family and friends was wide and deeply nurtured — she embraced many as extended family and gave generously of her time, her wisdom, and her care.

Erlene had a special gift for seeing the potential in others, and she gave freely of her guidance, particularly to young people finding their way. She championed the gifts of those around her, believed fiercely in what they were capable of, and found genuine joy in helping others pursue their passions and realize their dreams.

Erlene Berry Wilson leaves behind a legacy that is both professional and deeply personal — one measured not only in career milestones and published works, but in the countless lives she touched, uplifted, and transformed through her love, wisdom, faith, and example. She was a loving mother,

daughter, sister, cousin, and treasured friend. She was a force of nature: brilliant, beautiful, fierce, and full of light.

She is survived by her son Charles Willson; her sister Karen Douyon and brother-in-law Guy Douyon; two nieces, Maisha Douyon Cover and Angelique Jessup; five grand-nieces and nephews, Zora Cover, Lena Cover, Morgan Jessup, Brooks Jessup, Hazel Jessup, her beloved cousins Jennifer Harrison, Rudy Dillard; a host of other relatives and friends.

She will be remembered always for her brilliance, her beauty, her laughter, her fierce spirit, and the unforgettable light she brought into this world. Forever Loved. Forever Admired. Forever Missed.

Cemetery Details

King Memorial Park

8710 Dogwood Rd
Windsor Mill, MD 21244

Upcoming Events

Wake

MAY 11. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center, P.A. – Randallstown
5616 Old Court Road
Windsor Mill, MD 21244
(410) 655-0110

Funeral Service

MAY 11. 11:00 AM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center, P.A. – Randallstown
5616 Old Court Road
Windsor Mill, MD 21244
(410) 655-0110

Previous Events

Public Viewing

MAY 9. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

March Life Tribute Center, P.A. – Randallstown
5616 Old Court Road
Windsor Mill, MD 21244
(410) 655-0110

Tribute Wall

PB

“ Erlene, Karen and I were friends as teenagers and I still cherish memories of time spent with them and their family. So sorry that Erlene has left us. She lived a fulfilling life and positively touched many others. Family, you have my deepest sympathy.

Pauletta Carr Bratcher - Yesterday at 05:13 PM

HC

“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



Hattie Carter - May 08 at 07:35 PM

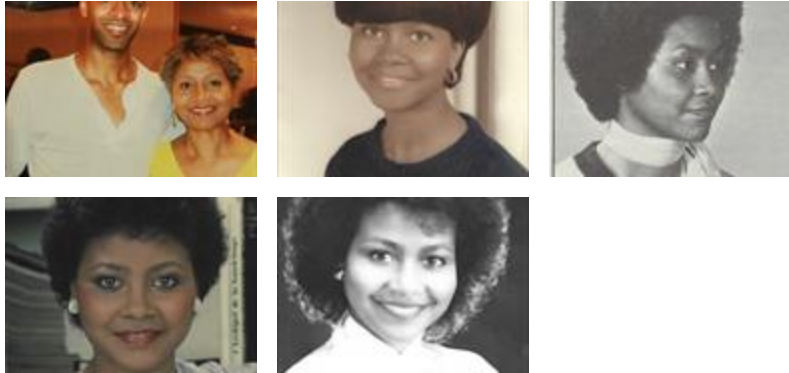
HC

Sweet, sweet memories!💜💜

Hattie Carter - May 08 at 07:36 PM

MA

“ 9 files added to the album Erlene B. Wilson



Maisha - May 08 at 04:20 PM

TT

“ The CareFirst PHCI Team purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Erlene B. Wilson.



The CareFirst PHCI Team - May 08 at 04:15 PM

TT

“ The CareFirst PHCI Team planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Erlene B. Wilson.

The CareFirst PHCI Team - May 08 at 04:15 PM

HC

“ Erlene was a beautiful soul who just happened to be my first cousin! We met in our early elementary school years and went through our teens and twenties. We became a part of the FAB FIVE. The memories of those days will always remain! Family Forever. 💜

Hattie Carter - May 08 at 12:10 PM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Erlene B. Wilson.*



May 07 at 12:30 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Erlene B. Wilson.

May 07 at 12:30 PM



“ *We the March Family and Staff wish to extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathy in the passing of your loved one. Our prayers go out to you and your family in your time of loss. We know and understand that you have received many expressions of love, and we will continue to lift you up in prayer. May the memories you cherish of brighter and happier days help to ease your sorrow and comfort you always.*

March Life Tribute Center - April 24 at 11:35 AM