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Mr. James Leonard Powell, Jr.



James Leonard Powell, Jr. transitioned from life to rest on August 1, 2022. He was born in Fairfax, Virginia on September 23, 1974. James childhood and young adult years were spent in Newport News, Virginia and Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Upon graduation from Largo High School in Maryland, James entered Howard University and earned his Bachelor of Arts in Journalism in 1999. James was a born communicator. He began his career as a general assignment reporter at the Richmond Times-Dispatch before moving on to Knight-Ridder and The St. Paul Pioneer Press - where he was a member of the Minnesota Vikings coverage team. He also completed general assignment reporting at The Kansas City Star.

James landed the position of Sports Editor at The Source Magazine and was eventually promoted to Executive Sports Editor. While employed at The Source, he covered every major professional sport league - including the NFL, NBA, MLB, and professional boxing. James writings included feature stories

on Mike Tyson and Floyd Mayweather. In one of his most memorable stories, he chronicled the absence of Black athletes, a half-century after Jackie Robinson, in professional baseball. James also served as a website columnist and on-air host of the syndicated The Source All-Access television show.

Throughout his career, James covered college sports and wrote opinion pieces “op-eds” in St. Paul, Kansas City, Baltimore, DC and across North Carolina for publications such as The Carroll County Times and the Raleigh News & Observer. He also founded an online news site, called The Journalist Element.

After moving to the public relations side of the news business, James became a communications director in the North Carolina Democratic Party. There, he went into the trenches to fight for underserved populations and became a “man of the people”. He was committed to voter rights, racial injustice and homelessness, and sought to help “level the playing field” for black children through obtaining access to high-speed Internet. He was committed to the rebuilding of roads and sidewalks in black communities...which he called “bridges to food, work and progress”.

James had a big personality and a lot of friends. He was charming, fun-loving and always the “life of the party”. Quick-witted and full of candor, James could speak a word on most topics - especially politics, pop culture and Black history. He was a masterful public speaker.

James is survived by his mother Dr. Dorothy L. Powell of Silver Spring, Maryland; father James Powell, Sr. of Newport News, Virginia; sister Dr. Natasha N. Powell of Washington, D.C.; brothers Steven Block of Durham, North Carolina and Keith Wingate of Las Vegas, Nevada; and aunts and uncles Robert and JoAnne Lewis and Clarence and Carol Powell. He also leaves behind a host of loving cousins, friends and colleagues.