

Ike Nnabuife Ikeme

October 10, 1985 ~ November 1, 2025

In Loving Memory of Ike Nnabuife Ikeme

October 10, 1985 – November 1, 2025

The world lost a rare light on November 1, 2025. Ike, beloved son of the late Dr Alexander Ikeme and Dr Mrs. Patience Ikeme-Ogbuli, was taken far too soon. Yet his impact endures, in the lives he touched, the minds he shaped, and the love he gave without hesitation.

Born in Nsukka, Enugu State, Nigeria, Ike was the son of two accomplished academics and university professors who instilled in their children an unshakable respect for knowledge, purpose, and truth. He followed in their path, carrying their legacy with pride. But more than any title or achievement, Ike was defined by his unwavering devotion to his family. He shared a deep, intentional bond with each of his siblings, relationships he nurtured with fierce loyalty, love, and presence.

Sunday phone calls and movie outings with his brother, Olie, were sacred traditions, their way of staying grounded, no matter how busy life became. He was fiercely protective of his older sister, Obi, “Sister,” as he lovingly called her. He often turned to her for guidance, trusting her wisdom even when it was hard to hear, because he knew it came from love and truth. He looked out for “the baby of the house,” Dera, with equal protectiveness, showing up for him no matter where he was in the world. He held deep admiration for his eldest brother, Uche, whose wisdom he trusted without question.

Ike loved his parents. His mother fondly called him “Nna’m” and he carried that name with pride. He teased her often, playfully challenging her in the way only a son who truly adored his mother could. Her meals were his comfort, and he never missed a chance to brag about her cooking.

He looked up to his father with immense respect and carried a lifelong desire to emulate the man he was. Ike often spoke of his father’s principles, passion, and convictions, and worked to live by those same standards. Losing him in March 2025 shook Ike in ways words can barely hold. That June, all the siblings returned to Nigeria to lay their father to rest. In the face of profound grief, they stood together, united and unbreakable.

If you knew Ike, you knew he was brilliant, endlessly curious, and committed to learning. He was a proud alumnus of the Nigerian Air Force Military School in Jos. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Management from Utah Valley University, followed by an MBA from the University of Utah, and a law degree from the University of California, Irvine School of Law.

His love of education didn't end with his own achievements. As an adjunct faculty member at Utah Valley University and Salt Lake Community College, he poured that passion into his students. Teaching allowed him to honor his parents' legacy by continuing to shape minds and open doors.

But intelligence was only one part of his brilliance. Ike lived with a fullness that couldn't be ignored. When he entered a room, you felt it. His presence was magnetic. His humor was unmatched. His laughter was unforgettable. He loved music, good food, and ice cream, his self-declared shortcut to happiness. He showed up with style: sharp suits, bold watches, confident energy.

He was proudly Nigerian and carried his culture with honor. He was outspoken, bold, and unapologetically committed to justice. He called himself a radical like his father and never stayed silent when he saw people being mistreated. He believed in doing what was right, no matter the cost. He had a heart bigger than most, open and generous, ready to carry the weight of others without hesitation.

Above all else, Ike was a father. His children were his joy, his purpose, and his greatest pride. He never missed a chance to speak about them, how deeply he loved them, and how proud he was of who they were becoming. He lit up when talking about Brayden, "Croco-dile," and Bridger, "Bridger Bear," his beloved sons. He often praised Croco-dile's talent on the soccer field, his drive, and his strength of character. Just as proudly, he celebrated Bridger Bear's kind heart, sweet spirit, their shared love of sports, and how well he was doing in school. He encouraged his boys endlessly, always in their corner, always cheering them on.

His bond with his bonus daughter, Bria, who fondly called him "Mickey A.", was no different. He embraced her as his own and spoke of her with warmth, pride, and deep love. When her son, Enzo, was born, Ike was ecstatic. He shared photos with his siblings like a proud grandfather, beaming with joy over this new life and the growing family he cherished so deeply.

Fatherhood wasn't just a role to him; it was his identity. He often said that everything he did was for his children. They were his world, and he wanted nothing more than to give them the world.

Ike lived boldly, laughed loudly, and loved deeply. Though his absence leaves a silence that echoes, his legacy lives on in his children, his family, his students, and all who were lucky enough to know him.

Ike was preceded in death by his father, Dr Alexander Ikechukwu Ikeme.

Those left to cherish and honor Ike's memory include his beloved children: Brayden Ikeme, Bridger Ikeme and his bonus daughter, Bria Martinez; his mother, Dr Mrs. Patience Ikeme-Ogbuli, and stepfather, Chris Ogbuli; his siblings: Uche Ikeme, Obi Nzeribe, Olie Ikeme, Dera Luce, Ndidiamaka (Didi) Ogbuli, and Ngozi Ikeme; his former stepchildren, Bryton and Alyson Chapman, who remained part of his extended family; and a host of extended family and close friends.

He is also remembered with respect by Robin Derbridge and Shannon Chapman, mothers of his children, with whom he shared the gift of family.

Acknowledgements

Realizing that each tomorrow is not ours to understand and knowing that God never allows hurt needlessly and never wastes our pain, we recognize our gains in you, our friends and loved ones. All whispered prayers and every deed of kindness have been a source of strength and support. We, the family, are eternally grateful.

Services

A memorial service will be held on Tuesday, November 25th, 2025 from 2:00 – 4:00 pm at Larkin Sunset Gardens located at 1950 E. 10600 S. Sandy, UT 84092. For those who can not attend, the service will also be available to watch through Zoom by clicking the "Watch Service" button above.