

William Ballantyne West, Jr.

July 23, 1990 ~ March 1, 2024

Our beloved son and brother, William Ballantyne West, Jr., passed away on March 1st after feeling like he could no longer battle his demons. It is unimaginably heartbreaking, but we have loved remembering how wonderful he was and hearing from many people who felt the same.

William is the second child of Will Sr. and Lisa West. He graduated from Alta High School (2008), BYU (2016), the University of Utah School of Medicine (2021), and was finishing an Ophthalmology surgery residency at George Washington University. His examples of service are too numerous to list, but some include his time in the Milan, Italy mission (2009-2011), teaching at the Missionary Training Center, and helping to lead the Y-Serve organization and adaptive aquatics at BYU. He also worked as an EMT at BYU and the American Fork Hospital and he spent time teaching English to medical staff in the Azores.

He was such a fun spirit and could always make us laugh, loved to have fun and perpetually had a bit of a mischievous twinkle in his eye. He was always up for adventure in his own unique way. As a child, this meant venturing to Video Vern's at 6 am to get free popcorn while the rest of us were still asleep. As an adult, this meant Ragnar and Spartan races, midnight cliff jumping in the Mediterranean, and slack-lining across canyons at Lake Powell.

Another uniquely William adventure was his decision to live in an ambulance for much of medical school rather than spend money on rent. His creativity and McGyver-esque skills led to an amazing setup inside the ambulance and expanded to everything he touched, especially gingerbread. His annual Christmas creations with his sister Lucy were something to behold (this year it was a ski slope, complete with ski lifts and skiers). He loved playing with children; they adored him because he wasn't afraid to be silly.

He had an iron will; there was no stopping William or changing his mind when he was determined to do something. This, along with his dextrous fine motor skills, made him a great surgeon.

One of the best things about William was how much he cared and wanted to help and protect people. Friends of William's from all phases of his life - from the garage attendant in his apartment building, to his medical school classmates and attending physicians, to friends and family from all over the world - have shared memories about all of the caring, sharing, giving things he did that meant so much but didn't necessarily get attention. His siblings all feel grateful for his protective nature; we all experienced him taking care of us when we needed it.

In his final words, true to his character, William wanted to protect other medical students and residents dealing with similar challenges. We hope systemic changes can be made to support aspiring medical professionals better. This is critical. We don't want any other families to experience tragedies like this, and we want more good people to make it in the medical profession without having to sacrifice so much of their well-being in the process.

We know our William has finally found peace, and we look forward to seeing him again. We love him so much.

William is preceded in death by his grandparents Ray and Janet Gardiner, and is survived by 28 aunts and uncles, 61 first cousins and their families, as well as grandparents Hugh and Sue West, parents Will Sr. and Lisa (Gardiner), siblings Jennifer (Becca), Peter (Sierra), David (Ivy), George (AJ), and Lucy, as well as his nephews and niece, Noah, Evelyn, and Archer, and beloved dogs Stanley and Piper.

A viewing will be held on Friday, March 8th from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm at the LDS chapel at 2195 E Pepperwood Drive, Sandy, UT 84092. There will also be a viewing on Saturday morning from 9:30 am to 10:30 am, with the funeral following at 11:00 am at the same location. He will be interred in the Salt Lake City Cemetery beside his grandparents. For those unable to attend, services will be streamed. Please click on the watch services link above.

In lieu of flowers please consider donating to the Dr. Lorna Breene Heroes' Foundation, dedicated to the professional well-being and mental health of health workers. https://drlornabreen.org/donate/