



Bettina (Tina) Atkins, Ph.D.

August 22, 2020

Bettina (Tina) Atkins, Ph.D.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, private family services will be held for Dr. Bettina (Tina) Atkins, 61, of McAllen, TX. A public visitation will be held Friday the 28th from 4 to 8 pm at Kreidler Funeral Home. Burial will be in Valley Memorial Garden Cemetery at a later date. Services will be held on Saturday at 11 am at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church in McAllen, TX. Kreidler Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

Tina passed away of a heart attack in Little Rock, AR, on Saturday, August 22, 2020 while returning from a family vacation.

Tina was born on July 17, 1959, in Des Moines, IA, the daughter of Irwin and Amabile "Mabel" Atkins. She lived in Madrid, IA, before moving to Des Moines. Her family moved to Bettendorf, IA, prior to moving to South Texas arriving in McAllen in 1971.

She graduated from McAllen High School in 1977. Tina went on to Pan American University, TX, where she earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree with Honors in Communication in 1981. While at Pan American University, Tina did a one-woman performance of the Belle of Amherst. She was active in PASS Theater and Theater 3 in Dallas.

Tina taught at Our Lady of Sorrows Elementary School and later she taught English at Lamar Middle School in McAllen.

In 1993, Tina earned her Masters Degree in Educational Leadership at the

University of Texas, Pan American, TX. Tina obtained her Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership from Our Lady of the Lake University, TX, in 2015. Several of her colleagues stated “Leading with a Servant’s Heart” was Tina’s mantra throughout her personal and professional career. With more than 30 years in education, Tina impacted the lives of thousands of students, parents and educators. She advocated for the most underserved and underprivileged individuals in the Rio Grande Valley community by securing millions of dollars in funding during her career. She served as Administrator for the Center for Excellence in College, Career and Life Readiness at Region One Education Service Center. In that capacity, Dr. Atkins led regional college access efforts for deep South Texas, including oversight of three districts, working with Region One ESC GEAR UP partnerships supporting over 25,000 students in 29 school districts, and working with 7 college and university systems. At her core, Dr. Atkins believed that all students have the ability and potential to enter into and succeed in college. Tina was referred to as an Equity Warrior in Education. She was highly respected by her peers and achieved numerous accolades, yet she always remained humble.

Tina’s love was for education, but her passion was her family.

Tina was a world traveler. She owned a home in Tagliole, Italy (Casa Amabile) with her brother Bob and sister Linda. Every year, she traveled with Bob and his son Vladyk to some exciting destination followed by a couple weeks in her beloved Casa Amabile. Many of her friends also traveled with her to worldly destinations. This summer, Tina was extra excited. She was about to purchase her lifelong dream of owning a lake cabin in the woods with her brother Bob. She spent the last two weeks of her life helping to bring a log cabin in upstate NY back to life. Her dream was for it to be a destination for family and friends.

Of all her accomplishments, the most important to her was her role as Zia, sister, and daughter. Her nieces and nephews, brothers and sisters, and her father were her life. Whether it was cooking for family, playing dress-up with her nieces, making plans for travel, or having a happy hour with friends or

family, she was the happy coordinator. Since she never had children of her own, her entire family became her focus and was showered with her overflowing love. She was definitely accomplished in her professional life but remained childlike and lit up a room when it came to the joys of life. Her light and joy will be forever missed. Love you to the moon and back Tina...

She is survived by her father, Irwin; her siblings, Debbie and Joel Garcia, of McAllen, Bob Atkins, of Austin, TX, Jeff and Berta Atkins, of Gruene, TX, Linda and Craig Blackwell, of McAllen; proudest Zia ever of: Nikki, Jason, Tessa, Vladyk, Katie, Molly, Abby, Kelly, Zoey and Conor.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Mabel.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and keeping with social distancing orders, all necessary restrictions will be observed in order to protect the health and safety of those in attendance. Wear face coverings while inside buildings. Continue to practice social distancing while inside the funeral home chapel. Since our father is 90 years of age, if in attendance, please remember to keep social distancing a priority. Additionally, due to limited space at the church, we will be posting a live stream link on social media prior to the service.

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG **28**. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Kreidler Funeral Home, Inc.

314 N 10th St.

McAllen, TX 78501

(956) 686-0234

kreidler@sbcglobal.net

<http://www.kreidlerfuneralhome.com/index.html>

Funeral Service

AUG **29**. 11:00 AM (CT)

Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church

Tribute Wall



“ *Bettina (Tina) Atkins, Ph.D.*

October 08, 2023 at 09:43 PM



“ *Bettina (Tina) Atkins, Ph.D.*

November 29, 2022 at 06:40 AM



“ *Tina, you were one of a kind. You had a servants heart, always had a smile on your face and always gave it your all. You and your Gear Up team changed the lives of thousands of students for the better and encouraged them to attend college. You were considered an Angel here on earth and now you're an angel up in heaven. I have no doubt about that. Your strong faith in God shined through my Bettina. It was an honor to be your friend. Love you always!*

Letty Garza - August 29, 2020 at 06:00 PM



“ *Dr. I. purchased a sympathy card for the family of Bettina (Tina) Atkins, Ph.D..*



Dr. I. - August 29, 2020 at 11:14 AM

DA

“ I worked with Tina while employed with two different nonprofit organizations. She was a treasured colleague and we became friends over the years. I was always mesmerized to hear her speak and share her visions about "what could be" to help students achieve school success. My memories of her are her asking: "Why not? Let's make it happen!" I will miss her dearly. My prayers, love and condolences to her family and colleagues.



Sincerely,
Dr. Ida Acuña-Garza
South Texas Literacy Coalition

Dr. Ida Acuna-Garza - August 29, 2020 at 11:02 AM

RA

“ My deepest condolences to the Atkins family. I met Tina years ago. What a wonderful woman. Always in a great mood, always with a smile, even when I knew she had a lot on her plate. With Tina it was always about what else we could do to better serve our students in Region One. Her hard work through grants brought great opportunities for our high school students. She provided opportunities for students to be the first generation of their family to attend college. She may not have had children of her own, but all the students she opened the doors for were her children, and she did well by them. She lives behind a legacy of a well educated community.

We will miss Tina immensely. I am happy to hear that she was able to fulfill her dream of the joint venture for the family get together. She was so looking forward to that prior to her retirement. Heaven has gained another angel. Rest In Peace my friend.

Rachel Arcaute

Rachel Arcaute - August 28, 2020 at 11:21 PM

AL

“ Tina and I started working at Region One on the same day. We were colleagues, next door neighbors and close friends for many years until I moved. I have many happy and funny memories of times we spent together. She was an angel! James and I will miss her so much. Our condolences and prayers are with the family and Tina will always be in our hearts.

Angie Lehmann - August 28, 2020 at 07:43 PM

Norma McCormick

“ Tina was an amazing person who always wanted to provide the best to our community. I had the privilege to work directly with her for almost 20 years. I will miss her kindness and her powerful advocacy for the underserved.



She led with a servant's heart. Sending our deepest condolences to her family. Know that you are all in our thoughts and prayers.

Thank you for raising such a beautiful person.

May she rest in peace.

Norma McCormick - August 28, 2020 at 02:41 PM

NG

My condolences to the Atkins family. We have them in our prayers. I met Tina over 25 years ago and the last couple of decades worked with her and GEAR UP as a high school principal and then later as a superintendent. Tina was a one of kind human being that would give you her shirt of her back for you especially if it involved children. This world lost an angel but Heaven gained an angel. God bless the Atkins family and may Tina rest in peace

Narciso Garcia - August 30, 2020 at 05:56 PM

JK

“ Please accept our deepest sympathies to your family on this sad occasion. Both Tina and her family are in our thoughts. The Site Team of 512

John Kershaw - August 28, 2020 at 11:44 AM

SF

“ AMAZING LEADER SHE WILL BE MISSED BY THE ENTIRE WORLD!!!

Sal Flores - August 26, 2020 at 06:28 PM

JL

“ My heart was saddened to hear of dear Tina's passing. What a wonderful and beautiful soul she was and will always be. God bless each of you, dear Atkins family!

John L - August 26, 2020 at 05:28 PM

RG

“ Dr. Atkins was one of my professors at South Texas College. She emitted colorful leadership qualities and always reminded me of a beautiful crystal pyramid. We lost a beautiful soul and heaven gained a bright, colorful angel. She taught me that an exceptional leader doesn't take the credit for accomplishments, she credits her team for the hard work because that's the key to staying humble. The knowledge I gained in her class was priceless and it was an honor just to know her. Rest In Peace Dr. Atkins, you left a beautiful footprint in my soul and I will lead by example, just like you did.
Ruby Garcia

Ruby Garcia - August 26, 2020 at 03:24 PM

AS

Tina will be greatly missed especially by her nieces and nephews. I will miss seeing her at the annual Blackwell Christmas parties. I always looked forward to her yummy mushroom soup! My prayers go to all her family and friends! ❤️❤️🙏

Adana Sanchez - August 28, 2020 at 01:34 PM

CV

“ cindy V. purchased a sympathy card for the family of Bettina (Tina) Atkins, Ph.D..



cindy V. - August 25, 2020 at 06:58 PM

JV

“ A beautiful lady with a big loving spirit. You will be dearly missed.

Jim Villarreal - August 25, 2020 at 06:25 PM

LM

“ Beautiful soul. Thank you Tina for your friendship, love of dogs, dedication to children and the example of unconditional love that was given to your family You will be missed.

Linda Diane Myers - August 25, 2020 at 04:47 PM



My only regret is that I didn't have more time to spend getting to know Tina better. What little time I did have (traveling Italy and meeting up in NYC) are times that I'll always remember. Heaven gained an angel. ❤️

Dana Koehn - August 26, 2020 at 05:53 PM