

# Celebration of Life Service for

Sunrise  
April 24, 1938

Sunset  
August 10, 2015

## Cleo Hill Sr.

*Saturday, August 15, 2015 - 10:30 a.m.*

**St. Matthew A.M.E. Church**

336 Oakwood Avenue  
Orange, New Jersey

*Rev. Dr. Lanel Guyton, Pastor*  
*Rev. Rufus McClendon, Jr., Officiating*

# Obituary

**Cleo Hill Sr.**, a product of Newark, New Jersey's South Side (Malcolm X Shabazz) High School, who was acclaimed as one of the best basketball players during the late 50's and early 60's, died Monday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, at home, surrounded by his loving family. He was 77.

After a stellar high school career, Hill went on to Winston-Salem State Teachers College in North Carolina where he led his team to back-to-back CIAA Conference championships and eventually was voted the second-leading scorer in the school's history. Hill scored 2,488 points in his four seasons playing for Coach Clarence Gaines. After graduating in 1961, Cleo was drafted in the first round in 1961 by the St. Louis Hawks but given the tenor of the times, playing in a southern city was no place to be for an African American athlete, even the best. After leaving professional basketball, Cleo played in the old American Basketball League, the Eastern Pennsylvania Basketball League, and the Eastern League. He later became a successful college coach at Essex County College (ECC) in Newark, New Jersey, winning 489 games in his 24 years at Essex County College, amassing three Region 19 championships.

In 1975, Cleo became the athletic administrator at ECC. Under his leadership, the track and field team became one of the nation's best, winning six national championships. Hill also served on the Region 19 committees for soccer, cross country and men's basketball. In 2008, he was profiled in the ESPN documentary *Black Magic*, which chronicled legendary African-American basketball stars from historically Black colleges and universities. Hill's segment dealt with his 1961-62 NBA season with the St. Louis Hawks.

Mr. Hill was inducted into the South Side High School & Malcolm X Shabazz High School Hall of Fame, the Winston-Salem State University Hall of Fame, CIAA Hall of Fame and the Newark Athletic Hall of Fame.

During his later years, he worked with children and young adults as a playground coordinator for the Newark Public Schools' recreation program.

He is survived by: his loving wife of 53 years, Ann Hill; two devoted sons, Cleo Jr. and his wife, Regina and Cleon; his daughter, Kim Taylor; grandchildren, Khyara, Abdul, Ciara, Sanaa, Sage, and Cleo III; two great grandchildren, Mikhaliah and Mariah; and a host of family, friends and former players.

Cleo was predeceased by his parents, Ethel Morrison and James Hill; brothers, Sidney and Willie; and sister, Thelma.

***"IF I CAN HELP SOMEBODY AS I TRAVEL ALONG ... IN A WORD OR A SONG... IF I CAN HELP SOMEBODY FROM DOING WRONG ... MY LIVING SHALL NOT BE IN VAIN."***

# Order of Service

*Officiating: Rev. Rufus McClendon, Jr.  
First-Park Baptist Church, Plainfield, NJ*

Musical Prelude

Processional

Opening Hymn..... “Amazing Grace”..... Michele D. Johnson

Introduction and Welcome..... Rev. Rufus McClendon, Jr.  
First-Park Baptist Church, Plainfield, NJ

Prayer..... Rev. McClendon

Scripture Readings:

Old Testament: Psalm 34:1-8

New Testament: Romans 8:35-39

Prayer of Comfort..... Rev. McClendon

Resolutions and Acknowledgments..... Delores E. Johnson

Obituary.....Dr. Thomas Monterio

Remarks/Reflections

Solo .....Michele D. Johnson

Eulogy..... Rev. Rufus McClendon, Jr.

Hymn..... “Blessed Assurance”..... Congregation

Recessional.....Clergy and Family

## Interment

*Fairmount Cemetery  
Newark, NJ*

## **Repat**

*St. Matthew A.M.E. Church*



### Honorary Pallbearers:

Alumnus, Essex County College Men's  
Basketball Team

### Acknowledgement

The family of **Cleo Hill Sr.** wishes to express our sincere and profound gratitude for all the love, prayers, and acts of kindness shown during our time of bereavement. May the Lord continue to bless each of you.

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