

**PALLBEARERS**

Michael Ken Floyd  
Rufus Hope, Jr.  
James Doss Junior  
Franco Veasley

Aaron Carter, Jr.  
Rico Veasley  
Charlie Weaver  
Dwight Floyd

**FLOWER ATTENDANTS**

Stacey Broadnax  
Celeste Sims  
LaTonya Keeley

Shawanda Simmons  
Demonica Franklin-Webb  
Sherry Terrell

Carolyn Poling

**HONORARY PALLBEARERS**

Barry Elder  
Kendrick Carter  
Carlos Crutchfield  
Eric Benford  
Jamund Sims  
Eric Andrews  
Darrell Hope

Quintin King  
Johnathan Nelson  
Darren Ballard  
James Allen II  
Travis Freeman  
Leroy Elder  
Jeremiah Cobb

Brian Hope

**HONORARY FLOWER ATTENDANTS**

Jasmine Overstreet  
Sharia Walker  
Christina Walker  
Jamisha Allen  
Lavonda Elder

Tiffany Elder Carswell  
Candice Wade  
Lashonda Wade  
Balerie Carter  
Donna Elder

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The family of Rodney Jermaine Andrews extends our appreciation to everyone for your love, prayers, support, and kindness. We extend special appreciation to Jamisha Allen, Dann Arce, Chris Kurz and Mine Senses, Sean Gregory, Trevon Logan, Mike Lovenheim, Isaac McFarlin, Jr., Trey Miller, and Sheldon Danziger. We also express heartfelt thanks to Pastor Robert Terrell, Jr. of Union Springs Baptist Church for officiating and Pastor Samuel Head, Jr. of True Life Ministries for delivering the eulogy. Words cannot express how appreciative we are for everything you have done to assure that our family was loved and supported during this difficult time.



The Eatonton Chapel  
103 Willie Bailey St.  
Eatonton, Georgia 31024  
Phone: 706-485-4494 : Fax: 706-485-4424

The Madison Chapel  
1086 Ward Road  
Madison, GA 30650  
Phone: 706-438-3210 : Fax: 706-485-4424



*Celebration of life for*  
**DR. RODNEY JERMAINE ANDREWS**

**Sunrise: September 27th, 1975**

**Sunset: May 12th, 2023**

**Saturday, May 20th, 2023 | 1:00 pm**

**UNION SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH  
1400 West Main Street, Rutledge, Georgia 30663**

**Pastor Robert Terrell, Jr., *Officiant*  
Pastor Samuel Head, Jr., *Eulogist***

# Obituary

Rodney Jermaine Andrews was called back to his eternal home on Friday, May 12, 2023, at the all too early age of 47. Rodney was a loving and devoted husband, father of four, trusted friend to many, and mentor to all. At the time of his passing, he was a tenured Associate Professor of Economics and the Endowed Fellow, Vibhooti Shukla Professor of Economics and Political Economy at the University of Texas at Dallas. The void left behind by his premature exit will be as large as Rodney's outsized spirit. However, his love for family and friends, and his wonderful children and grandchild, will ever last.

Dr. Rodney Andrews leaves behind a legacy of academic success, mentees, students, colleagues, friends, and inspiration. He is survived by his loving wife of 25 years, Tanya (née Shy) Andrews; his children, Taylor, Radha (Levi Kline), Rodney II, and Brendan; his darling granddaughter, Fallon; his parents, Brenda Lee Wade and Freddie Lee Andrews; his brothers, Eric Andrews, Quintin King, and Jeremiah Cobb; his sister, Jenice Gibbs; his grandmother, Rosa Mae Andrews; aunts, Valerie Wade, Josephine Andrews, Eleith Andrews, Marie Jordan, and Betty Andrews-Williams; uncles, Horace Wade, Jr, Herbert Wade, and Hubert Wade. Rodney is also survived by many nieces, nephews, cousins, as well as brothers- and sisters-in-law. He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Eva and Horace Wade, Sr.; his cousin, Kingsley Gibbs, and father-in-law, Pastor James Shy.

The world received Rodney on September 27, 1975, the son of Brenda Lee Wade and Freddie Lee Andrews. Rodney was a child of many talents and resided in a house full of love in Madison, Georgia, with his mom, grandma, grandpa, aunt, and close cousin, Alex Carter. From the start, Rodney excelled at school, regularly bringing home all A's. Really, he just wanted to make his mother proud, and boy, did he do so.

Academic success, baseball, and football filled Rodney's primary and high school years. His strength and ability to not be pulled down by numerous tacklers would prove a valuable skill as he eventually navigated through the myriad of systemic barriers he faced along the pathway to earning his bachelor's, master's, Ph.D., and postdoctoral fellowship.

Rodney's secondary school achievements, including salutatorian of the Morgan County High School Class of 1994, earned him a full ride to the Georgia Institute of Technology on a DuPree scholarship. The look of awe and joy on Rodney's face when he first set foot on Tech Green in the summer of 1994 will forever be a fond memory for his mother. He had decided to study chemistry, but in a few short semesters—and to the lamentation of his chemistry professors—he pivoted towards economics, which would afford Rodney the opportunity both to study the transformative effects of education and to provide that education to countless students.

A cluster of couches populating the student center at Georgia Tech was a focal point of Black campus life. And during these formative undergraduate years, those who knew Rodney affectionately dubbed him, "Mayor of the Couches," a term of endearment bestowed upon those at the center of conversations, ranging from dating life to integral calculus. It should come as no surprise that Rodney was perhaps the only mayor who achieved a near-perfect grade point average. And speaking of dating, during his final years at Tech, Rodney married Tanya, his high school sweetheart, and witnessed the birth of their first child, Taylor, in 1998.

After receiving a Bachelor of Science in Economics with Highest Honors in 1999, Rodney enrolled in the doctoral program in economics at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. During his time there, he received multiple prestigious fellowships and made indelible friendships and impressed his faculty mentors, all the while diving headfirst into the fields of education, labor, and public finance. Rodney believed strongly in the idea that it was the economist's job to bring hard data to bear on relevant topics. The Department of Economics at the University of Michigan was the perfect place to hone those skills. Rodney was awarded a Ph.D. in Economics in the winter of 2007, an event that his family—now expanded by three—Radha, Rodney II, and Brendan—observed with pride.



Primary school (circa 1980)



Tanya and Rodney, Senior Prom (1994)





Rodney's next chapter took him to Harvard University from 2007 to 2009 as a Robert Wood Johnson Postdoctoral Scholar. After Harvard, Rodney and the family moved to north Texas, in August of 2009, as he continued his research in economics of education as an Assistant Professor of Economics in the School of Economic, Political, and Policy Sciences at the University of Texas at Dallas.



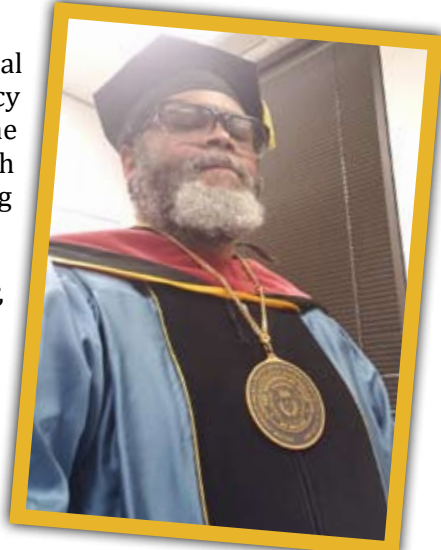
Georgia Tech Commencement (1999)

Rodney's research examined questions at the forefront of higher education policy, and it has been influential to economists, education researchers, and policymakers alike; his work was recently cited in the 2023 *Economic Report of the President*. He was passionate about understanding ways to improve economic mobility—through increased collegiate attainment—for those from disadvantaged backgrounds, which was reflected in his many published papers on this topic. Rodney used his research to advocate for policies that broaden access and inclusion in higher education, driven by his strong belief in the transformative power of education. His scholarship looked beyond the models and brought a much-needed context to higher education on policies aimed at providing incentives to students from first-generation and socioeconomically-challenged backgrounds and whether said policies foster or hinder student success.

For many years, he was the Director and then Research Director of the Texas Schools Project at the University of Texas at Dallas, where his leadership helped provide access to world-class data for scholars across the social sciences. His work generated data and research infrastructure that has led to volumes of important research, which will continue to be an essential resource for scholars in the future.

Rodney's leadership extended to board positions in important professional associations, as well, most notably the Association for Education Finance and Policy and the National Economics Association. He was a very capable editor at the *Economics of Education Review*. Early in his career he became a Faculty Research Fellow at the National Bureau of Economic Research, serving on the steering committee of the Bureau's Race and Stratification Working Group.

As an African-American scholar and faculty member in a field that lacks color, Rodney was a passionate advocate for enhancing diversity and supporting scholars from traditionally marginalized backgrounds. He was a mentor and an empathetic role model who understood their challenges and was always willing to listen and help in any way he could. His mentorship was instrumental in bringing more diverse scholars and voices into the economics profession. He used his various positions and influence to support generations of underrepresented scholars who themselves have had a significant impact on the profession. Through his scholarship, advocacy, and leadership, Rodney's impact on economics will be felt for years to come.



Investiture Ceremony, Vibhooti Shukla Professorship (2021)

Rodney never lost touch with his roots. He was the quintessential family man. His steadfast belief in the importance of family inspired him to visit Brenda and Freddie frequently, and to remain strongly connected with friends and extended family in Madison.

Rodney was a kind being who brought so much love and joy into this world. He deeply loved his wife, Tanya, caring for her when she struggled with health issues. He had four amazing children and one granddaughter, all of whom were fortunate to experience the deep love and guidance of a truly remarkable man. Rodney was a loyal friend to so many people from all walks of life. He listened. He encouraged. He consoled. But most importantly, he always had their backs. Rodney was a wonderful son who called his mom daily to tell her how much he loved and appreciated her. During his final day, on May 12, he was preparing to return home for Mother's Day, so he and Brenda could walk around Madison holding hands once again. His love and care will live on in the hearts of all who were blessed to know him.

*I have a sincere belief that people want to do better and that education is a stepping stone for them to do better. I feel it is my passion in my goal to produce research that allows for access and success for those who put forth that effort.*

Rodney Andrews (July 7, 2021)



# Order of Service

PROCESSIONAL

Family and Friends

MUSICAL SELECTION

Anthony Floyd

PRAYER

Pastor Eddie Chapman

SCRIPTURE READING

Reverend Alfred Murray  
Reverend Aaron Carter, Sr.

Old Testament  
New Testament

MUSICAL SELECTION

Donna Elder-Waller

WORDS OF COMFORT

Anthony Floyd

SPECIAL REMARKS

Chris Kurz and Mine Senses

OPEN REMARKS (The family asks that you limit reflections to 3 minutes)

MUSICAL SELECTION

*"You Know My Name"*

Union Springs Baptist Church

EULOGY

Pastor Samuel Head, Jr.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bernard's Funeral Care Staff

RECESSIONAL

*"I Shall Wear A Crown"*

Tomekia Hawkins

*Please join the family in the Fellowship Hall for Repast*

