



Tonya R. "Coach" Long

July 20, 1967 - May 7, 2024

Tonya R. "Coach" Long, a beloved retired educator who dedicated 30 years to teaching in Appling, passed away on May 7, 2024. Born on July 20, 1967, in Jacksonville, Florida, Tonya was a proud graduate of Appling County High School from the class of 1985. She was a passionate educator and coach who touched the lives of many student athletes across various sports including softball, basketball, golf, track, cross country, and swimming. Tonya coached alongside Kathy Warren and the late Janice Sellers for many years winning several State Championships in girls slow pitch softball and two State Championships in golf. In her free time, Tonya displayed her unwavering support as an avid University of Georgia Bulldog fan. Her commitment to education and sports left a lasting impact on all who had the privilege of knowing her. Tonya is survived by her mother, Merle K. Long; two brothers, Tim Williams and David Williams; a special friend, Bree Bennett; her pride and joy Tyde Bennett; a nephew, Al Williams (Marcie); a niece, Maeson Williams; two aunts, Sally Duke and Susan Deen; and three uncles H.D. Kimberly (Pam), Cecil Kimberly (Pat), and John Irvin Long. In addition to her immediate family members, Tonya is also remembered by many cousins, former students, athletes, and colleagues who will cherish her memory forever. She is preceded in death by her father, James "Toby" Long and niece Tasha Williams. A graveside service will be held on Thursday, May 9, 2024, at 11:00 A.M. from Deen Cemetery on Bill Morris Rd with Reverend Fred Anderson officiating. A visitation will be held one hour prior to the service on Thursday

at the cemetery. In honoring Tonya's wishes, the family kindly request that no flowers be sent. Instead, those who wish to express condolences are invited to donate to one of the many sports Tonya had the honor of coaching. Tonya was passionate about coaching, and we believe this would be a meaningful tribute to her life and legacy. Nobles Funeral Home and Crematory is honored to serve the family of Ms. Tonya R. "Coach" Long.

Tribute Wall

KH

“ *She will never be forgotten, I am grateful for my time with her on the swim team and then to catch up with her years later as an adult. She was truly a great inspiration to me and I know many more!* ”



Kilah Hunter - May 23, 2024 at 06:22 PM

KH

“ *David, I am so sorry for your loss. I send you peace and understanding that passes all understanding for the days to come. Remembering the family in prayers.* ”



Kay Harrelson - May 13, 2024 at 08:18 PM

RB

“ *Merle and David especially, I am praying for you, and all the family. Years ago, Tonya was one of my Acteens (Baptist missions teen girls' group). I remember her fondly.* ”



Renee Bennett - May 12, 2024 at 02:18 AM

AS

“ *Deepest Sympathy* ”



Amanda Smith - May 11, 2024 at 11:56 AM

JC

“ My deepest condolences, David. My heart goes out to you. Thinking of you and your family. Keeping you close in prayer.



Jennifer (Stuckey) Collins - May 10, 2024 at 11:43 PM

JM

“ Tonya and David both taught my kids swimming lessons. She was small in stature but tall on commitment to teaching children and young people of all ages. It was an honor to know her. Applying county has lost a jewel.

Jane Manning Miller - May 10, 2024 at 07:25 PM

MW

“ David, I am so very sorry about the loss of your sister. You, your mom, and the rest of the family are in my thoughts and prayers.

Marian Brigman Wharton - May 10, 2024 at 03:54 PM

RD

“ We had known Tonya for years as an avid golfer and friend and was a great person. She will be missed. Our hearts go out to her family.



Randy/JoAnne DEWBERRY - May 10, 2024 at 03:16 PM

JH

“ Our Prayers go out to the family during this time



James Hutcheson - May 10, 2024 at 01:38 PM

DP

“ Our prayers are with the family! We know that Tonya will be missed by many.

David & Cheryl Pittman - May 10, 2024 at 02:11 AM

JG

“ She was a kind person,always made me laugh ,we will miss her very much.

Janice Gilliard - May 10, 2024 at 12:58 AM

CH

“ So sorry for your loss. Praying for peace and comfort for all the family. 🙏🥲

Cynthia Howell - May 09, 2024 at 08:26 PM

SW

“ Kaleb and Kyle were your students at the Primary School. They both enjoyed your PE class and always had a funny story to tell. Kyle could do the entire exercise routine and knew the names of each exercise. Thanks for loving and caring for my boys. Prayers for you family.

Simikia Wright - May 09, 2024 at 03:54 PM

VR

“ This memorial picture looks as if she's about to break in to her wonderful laugh. I met Tonya early in her first year. What a treasure she was! Not sure whether she wanted to continue in education or pursue some other career. But, stay she did, and how lucky we all were. Very sorry to hear the sad news this week and relieved that the precious loved ones have each other to lean on. She will be greatly missed by many, many folks.



Valerie S Rump - May 09, 2024 at 02:58 PM

SH

“ Merle, Dave and Tim I am so sorry for the loss of Tonya. My heart breaks for you all. You all will be in my thoughts and prayers. May God comfort you as only he can.



Shirley Hall - May 09, 2024 at 01:20 PM

MT

“ Coach Long, so many memories on the Barracuda Swim Team, ACCHS Tennis Team, ACCHS Softball Team and just being the best PE teacher around. She always had an open door and was there for us on and off the field. I'll remember that whistle twirling around and knew the run wasn't complete until you heard that sound of relief. You will be missed in Appling County, sending prayers to your family and friends.

Michael Tanner (Class of 2001)

Michael Tanner - May 09, 2024 at 11:06 AM

CS

“ Tonya was a very special friend! We worked together at ACPS for decades. She always loved to have fun. Her passion was in helping students to stay healthy and to love athletics. She had lots of patience and taught students to have fun but be competitive. Her compassion for others was enormous. She favored the underdog and created an environment where all students were successful. To know Tonya was to love her. I feel blessed to have been her friend and I personally know that she changed students' lives for the better! I will forever remember Tonya twirling her whistle on her hand and saying "ahh"! I will miss my friend!



Cindy Stewart - May 09, 2024 at 01:58 AM

SZ

“ Love You Always My Friend and Classmate. ❤️🙏❤️

Sabrina Zinamon - May 09, 2024 at 01:57 AM

AC

“ Praying for the family love you'll may God be with you 🙏❤️

Ann carter - May 09, 2024 at 01:40 AM

J8

“ I am so sorry to learn of Tonya's passing. She was a great person and I'm glad I got to know her in school. Praying for family and loved ones.

Janice Wilson- Class of 85 - May 09, 2024 at 12:57 AM

KT

“ I have wonderful memories of playing Lady Pirate Softball 🏈. The funny banter and competitiveness between Coach Long and Coach Serrano was always priceless. Tonya always gave 100% of herself to each player and to Appling County sports. Rest easy Coach! My prayers continue to go out to Coach Long's family, friends, and to our community.

Karen Tharpe - May 09, 2024 at 12:31 AM

AH

“ i remember being in gym nd having the time of my life bc she was the coach, she will be dearly missed 🍷

annalyn hand - May 08, 2024 at 10:27 PM

JM

“ I am so sorry to the family I remember coach long because she was my PE Teacher when I was little in primary and elementary school and all times she measured me and measured how tall I was and timed me when we had to run was some tough times but now they are memories I'm deeply saddened for your loss but rest in peace coach long



Jaydah Mims - May 08, 2024 at 09:47 PM

AC

“ I was one of her students and she was such an inspirational person I will be praying for your family ❤️



Autumn Crapps - May 08, 2024 at 09:21 PM

RR

“ Blessings and prayers being sent to all.



Rose Royal - May 08, 2024 at 09:19 PM

BM

“ What great memories you gave me to cherish along side so many others. Rest easy and thank you for touching my life in such a positive way!

Brandon J. McDonald - May 08, 2024 at 08:58 PM

JH

“ Praying for the family.. So very sorry reading this about coach Long.. Coach Long was my P.E teacher when I was in school.. Coach Long will be missed by man.. R.I.P COACH LONG



Jamie Page Holland - May 08, 2024 at 08:37 PM

JY

“ Prayers for all who new coach....may she rest in peace



Jeff Yeomans - May 08, 2024 at 08:31 PM

CW

“ *Carissa Weaver. So Sorry for the loss of Mrs. Tonya Long . Praying for the family. I remember Mrs. Tonya long . Long time ago when I was in PE. I'm primary school gym .*

Carissa Weaver - May 08, 2024 at 08:17 PM

LH

“ *Tonya well be missed.we Graduated together and nineteen eighty five .we had some good times.she will be missed alots .she had a heart of gold.praying for all of the family and Friends and class of 1985.*

Linda Lord Hamm - May 08, 2024 at 08:11 PM

TO

“ *Sending Condolences to Mrs. Merle, and the family. I am so sorry to hear of Tonya's passing . She and my younger sister Paula were classmates many, many years ago. Occasionally, our paths would cross and we both were always eager to catch up on the other's life events. She was a wonderful person, and dedicated coach to so many. I know she will be deeply missed by all who knew her.*

Tammie Orvin - May 08, 2024 at 08:00 PM

MR

“ *It was an honor to know and to be coached by Coach Long. Sending my condolences to the family.*



Mia Ridley - May 08, 2024 at 07:48 PM

SH

“ To the Long and Williams family my condolences. Love y'all

Stephanie Hayes-Jackson - May 08, 2024 at 07:46 PM

AM

“ You are going to be missed, we are praying for your family 🙏.
Wilton and AmyLee McCall

Amy McCall - May 08, 2024 at 07:43 PM

BR

“ She was one of the best to ever do it.
Truly one of a kind. Thanks for all the life's lessons Ms Long.

BryanHayes - May 08, 2024 at 07:10 PM

MB

“ What an honor to know and be coached by Coach Long! She will always have a special place in my heart and I will never forget everything I learned from her as a coach and friend. She taught me the value of relationships in the coaching world! RIP coach, and Mr. David and the rest of the family ya'll are in our thoughts and prayers!

Matt Beecher - May 08, 2024 at 07:09 PM

KR

“ I just recently was blessed with getting to love her. Amazing woman . Thank you Tonya.

Kristy - May 08, 2024 at 07:04 PM

LA

“ My condolences to her family and friends.

Lara Allen - May 08, 2024 at 07:02 PM

BH

“ David so sorry to hear this our thoughts and prayers are with you and your. Mother. You are so precious to me

Betty Hyatt - May 08, 2024 at 05:59 PM

MM

“ Oh my word - I'm so saddened by the passing of my dear friend - Tonya! She always made each and every person who she came in contact with laugh and smile! One of my fondest memories was taking tennis lessons with her in our youth. We both were given great nicknames as our tennis skills were not quite up to par. Coach Long was nicknamed "Bird Long" and I was "Tiger Morris." I hope you rest in peace "Bird" and that you know you made a difference in so many lives. You will be missed!

Michael Morris - May 08, 2024 at 05:47 PM

JC

“ Coach Long
It was a privilege to work with you at ACP school. I remember we started the same year! New kids on the block! Never a dull moment. I'll never forget the passion that you had for our sweet special children. How exciting to go to PE. And those faculty meetings! Lol You will never forgotten. Prayers to the family. Love you all. Jane Causey



Jane Causey - May 08, 2024 at 05:42 PM

GR

“ So sorry to hear of Tonya's passing!!
I had the privilege of driving the bus for the
Lady Pirates softball team for many years. I
enjoyed my time with Coach Tonya, Coach
Warren and Janice!
Love and prayers for Ms Merle, David and Tim!!



Glynda Reeves - May 08, 2024 at 05:35 PM

NE

“ One of the best coaches ever

Nicole Eason - May 08, 2024 at 05:35 PM

RD

“ Coach Long
You were a special coach and teacher that I had the honor of
working with at ACPS !
You made P.E. fun for the students and paraprofessionals that came
through the gym each day ! (You Loved Our Special Students) that
made me admire you even more. I am heartbroken for all your
sweet family! With Love And Admiration. 💖Rebecca Dennis

Rebecca Dennis - May 08, 2024 at 05:28 PM

MR

“ Tonya, YOU made a difference in the lives of so many
children...thank you for your exceptional patience with my special
needs students...you will be missed❤️❤️

Margaret Redman - May 08, 2024 at 01:13 PM

DM

“ You were a great mentor and role model for so many of us. Your passion for teaching and coaching was evident in everything you did. Your memory will live on in the hearts of everyone you touched. Rest in peace, Coach Long. You will be deeply missed. I'm going to miss you



Deneisha Moore - May 08, 2024 at 04:58 AM

JB

“ Thank you, Coach Tonya. The world was a better place because of you.

Jon Beck - May 07, 2024 at 11:21 PM

RH

“ The world has one less chief.

Randy Hourigan - May 07, 2024 at 11:13 PM

TH

“ You will be missed coach Long 🏀



Tomarrow Holmes - May 07, 2024 at 11:06 PM

TF

“ Merle and David, we are so sorry to hear about Tonya's passing. Prayers for the family.

The Beck family - May 07, 2024 at 10:55 PM

JN

“ I am so sorry to hear of this. I enjoyed working with Tonya for many years. I am especially thankful she and David taught both of my sons how to swim. Prayers for the family during this difficult time.

Jackie and Jerry Norris - May 07, 2024 at 08:08 PM

HO

“ This breaks my heart so bad. I enjoyed working with Tonya at the Primary School. We sure had a lot of laughs, and those pickles she made were out of this world. She was such a good spirited, kind hearted and loving person. She will always hold a special place in my heart. My condolences and prayers are with the family during this difficult time and in the future.
Holly O



Holly OBerry - May 07, 2024 at 07:09 PM

SM

“ I am so sorry to hear about Coach Long. She had an amazing way of making everyone feel happy when she was around & we had the best time playing ball for her. She's one of the good ones. Sending prayers & love to your family. Please let me know if we can do anything for you all.



Sarah Warren Miller - May 07, 2024 at 06:47 PM

MH

“ Mrs. Merle , Tim and David , I'm so sorry to hear of Tonya's passing, pray for comfort and peace for your family in the days ahead...
Hugs 💔



Marilyn Hall - May 07, 2024 at 05:40 PM