



Genevieve Charlene Smallwood Brown

January 6, 1942 - September 27, 2025

Genevieve Charlene Smallwood Brown departed this life at the age of 83 on September 27, 2025.

Growing up in rural West Virginia (b. January 6, 1942), and daughter of Charles and Genevieve Smallwood, Charlene Smallwood Brown was “born on the Pew,” as she described it, meaning that the church and God were a big part of her upbringing and her family life. She held tightly to the value of education for her entire life, always seeking to learn new things and meet new people. She cherished her upbringing around Glen Ferris and Gauley Bridge and described her family as always feeling rich because they had everything they needed.

From the time she graduated high school, she began working and found herself venturing to Connecticut and Westchester and Orange counties, New York in her summers. In order to help finance her education, she also spent summers in Long Island, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., where she was employed as a laundry and dry cleaning worker, catalog publishing clerk, retail clerk, and junior budget analyst. During the school years, she worked as administrative assistant and math tutor. Charlene studied mathematics, physical science, and biology at the West Virginia IT satellite school and went on to be a successful career woman in multiple industries (finance, insurance, and systems development) thanks to her drive and determination. Through what she believes to be divine transformation, she evolved from the little girl

who grew up in a small 1-mile town in West Virginia to a fast-tracking career professional in the adolescent years of information technology. She later attended graduate school at the University of Hartford, where she earned a Masters Degree in Organizational Development.

Throughout her educational and professional careers, she was often the first. She was the first African American to graduate with honors from her high school. She was the first Black computer science officer of the Hartford Insurance Group. The first Black woman to become alumna of the year at her college. The first Black person and first female in management in the IT department at another one of her jobs. And that's just to name a few. Following an astounding career festooned with milestones and successes, Charlene retired in May 2008, as Director – IT Systems Development at Long Island Railroad.

A constant in her life was the love of family, friends, her posse, and her community. Everywhere she lived she had a group of devoted friends that she was devoted to in return. A dedicated member of her church, prayer groups, and a pillar of her various communities, Charlene had a wide, strong, and loving social network. She was a caretaker for her mother, husband, and brother and was a matriarch of the family. She loved deeply. She enjoyed her dinners and movie nights together with her friends and holidays with family. Always proud of her family, pictures of them lined her walls and tables and she welcomed the next generation of great-great nieces and nephews she looked forward to loving on. From her childhood, Charlene described her life as happy, with the only sadness she remembered was when somebody they loved died. This is a feeling we all know too well as of her passing.

While petite in stature she was larger than life in her presence. She could take command and get things done. She was a two-time cancer survivor. She was loved by all. Ask any niece, nephew, or cousin and they will tell you how

special and dear to their heart she is. She took time to get to know each of us and make us feel special. She will be remembered for her laugh, smile, and sense of humor. Everyone who knew her had a kind word to say and a funny story to recall. She touched the lives of people in such a way that everyone who knew her would say that her 83 years on this Earth was still not enough.

Charlene is predeceased by her father Charles Walker Smallwood Jr., mother Genevieve Smallwood, sister Cora (Smallwood) Shelton, grandniece Corinne Ogiste, and loving husband Daniel Brown. She leaves behind family including her "little brother" whom she adored, Charles Walker Smallwood III, niece Sydney Smallwood and grandniece Penelope, aunt Dorothy "Dottie" Gardner, niece DeBorah Shelton Ogiste-Satyagraha, great grandnephew Elian Ogiste-Williams, nephew Roland Eugene "Gene" Shelton Jr. (Lee), grandniece Phoebe Shelton Rolland (Taylor), grandniece Zoë Shelton Corato (Marissa), family, and a plethora of loving friends who felt like family.

A service will be held at 11:00am on Thursday, October 9, 2025 (viewing at 10:00am), at Centreville Methodist Church in Centreville, MD and is open to the public. A burial in West Virginia will take place October 10th at Meadow Haven Memorial Park.

Previous Events

Viewing

OCT **9**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (est)

Centreville Methodist Church
608 Church Hill Road
Centreville, MD

Funeral Mass

OCT **9**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (est)

Centreville Methodist Church
608 Church Hill Road
Centreville, MD

Tribute Wall



“ *Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Genevieve Charlene Smallwood Brown*



Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam Funeral Home - October 08, 2025 at 03:49 PM

SR

Char you helped me so much. Rest in peace.

Suzanna Kathryn Reiff - October 09, 2025 at 07:28 AM

DR

To my special friend who was a part of my life since 1981. She gave me wonderful memories that was a blessing. I am so glad you was a part of my life.

Denise Robertson - October 09, 2025 at 12:10 PM

LR

“ *Charlene was my amazing supervisor in the late 60's and early 70's. Early IT folks worked and played together and remained friends forever. I always looked forward to lunches with Charlene while visiting the eastern shore. She was a great friend and will be missed forever.*

Lynda Russo

Lynda Russo - October 11, 2025 at 12:39 PM

GB

“ I had the privilege of working closely with Miss Charlene over the last few years and we’ve become great friends who share the love of the 3F’s: faith, family, and food.

Her faith in God never wavered as she fought valiantly against the many sicknesses she’s encountered. Even though she needed prayers herself, she was a steady prayer warrior for the intentions of the people around her.

Our love of family was very evident everytime we chat about how are families are doing: she talked lovingly about her brother in MD, her family in NY, WV, and NC, even the big family reunions she couldn’t attend the last few years because of her difficulties. She was very proud of her family everytime we spoke about them.

Lastly, our love of food brought us close together. She laughed about how I like food: how I like talking about it, thinking about it, and of course eating it. I’ve driven to restaurants she has recommended and never regretted it.

Miss Charlene, thank you for all the memories and the friendship we’ve shared. I pray you are running around in heaven without worrying about breathing or falling. Don’t worry, I’d get on that quest to eat a West Virginia hotdog you rave about, and I will think of you. May you rest in peace.

- Ginno

Ginno B - October 09, 2025 at 08:45 PM

SA

“ Mrs. Smallwood Brown was a wonderful and thoughtful person whom I am glad to have spent several years with. She always had a kind word for you and you could talk with her about anything. I will miss our conversations at Bayleigh Chase. May she rest in internal peace--Love Shi

Shi Allen - October 06, 2025 at 04:07 PM



“ Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Genevieve Charlene Smallwood Brown.



October 06, 2025 at 03:21 PM

GP

“ Gene And Lynda Palmatary sent a virtual gift in memory of Genevieve Charlene Smallwood Brown



Gene and Lynda Palmatary - October 02, 2025 at 12:56 PM

GP

Many prayers during the loss of Charlene. She was a great lady and always a pleasure to chat with. Enjoyed her so much in church. Blessings at this time. God bless. Gene and Lynda Palmatary, Centreville.

Gene and Lynda Palmatary - October 02, 2025 at 12:57 PM

CW

“ *Centreville Methodist Women sent a virtual gift in memory of Genevieve Charlene Smallwood Brown*



Centreville Methodist Women - October 01, 2025 at 07:25 PM

CW

Our prayers and blessings are with the family at this time. Charlene was an awesome church member in our church and loved the Lord so much. She will be missed by many and her love for others will never be forgotten. God Bless. Centreville Methodist Women

Centreville Methodist Women - October 01, 2025 at 07:27 PM

KC

“ *Dear Mrs Charlene's family,
What a sweet, kind, gentle soul who lived her life for her Lord and Savior. Our lives went in different directions but she was very special to us and we are keeping all of you in prayer during this time.*

*Sincerely,
Karen Colley and Emily Parry*

Karen L Colley - October 01, 2025 at 06:18 PM