



Mr. James Darnell "JD" Davis

March 18, 1940 - October 5, 2025

When the sun rose on March 18, 1940, a bright light entered the world in the person of James Darnell Davis, born in Arkansas to the loving union of Lila and Jim Davis. From his earliest days on the old Grimm Farm, young James displayed a remarkable sense of curiosity, discipline, and intellect. Even as a boy, he balanced his studies with hard work in the fields, helping his family with sharecropping while maintaining his commitment to education.

Though he sometimes missed classes to tend to the land, his determination never wavered. He caught up on lessons, excelled in his studies, and proudly graduated from Lincoln High School—a testament to his steadfast will and perseverance.

Affectionately known as “J.D.”, he continued his educational journey at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB), where he earned a Bachelor’s degree in Mathematics. While at UAPB, he pledged the illustrious fraternity Alpha Phi Alpha, Gamma Delta Chapter, an affiliation that deepened his lifelong devotion to leadership, service, and brotherhood.

Ever ambitious, J.D. set his sights higher—both literally and figuratively. He relocated to Los Angeles, California, where he pursued and obtained a Master’s degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Southern California (USC).

A man whose mind was filled with brilliance and innovation, J.D. made significant contributions to the field of aerospace technology. While working with the companies TRW and ASG, he played an instrumental role in the development of the Hubble Telescope and contributed to the design of the Space Station that continues to orbit the earth today. His genius, humility, and tireless work ethic left a lasting imprint on the scientific world.

Over forty years ago, James met the love of his life, Rosia, and together they built a marriage grounded in faith, partnership, and joy. Affectionately called “The Dynamic Duo,” the couple blended their lives and families with love and harmony—raising two cherished children, Marcus Davis and Kimberly Autry-Peoples, and nurturing a home filled with laughter, learning, and the presence of God.

After retiring from his distinguished aerospace career, James and Rosia relocated to Forrest City, Arkansas, where he fulfilled his lifelong dream of becoming a farmer. With the same dedication that defined his professional life, J.D. applied his intellect and discipline to the land. The couple purchased acreage on Linden Island, cultivating soybeans, winter wheat, and milo, while encouraging others to rediscover the beauty and value of farming. His passion for agriculture even inspired his daughter to begin raising Black Angus cows, continuing the Davis family’s connection to the earth.

James began his farming career alongside his close friend Dr. Calvin King at ALFDC in Fargo, Arkansas, where he quickly became a leader in agricultural advancement. His vision extended beyond his own fields—he worked diligently to write grants, support Black farmers, and establish youth agricultural programs such as Youth Enterprise Agriculture and Entrepreneurship, empowering future generations with the tools and confidence to succeed.

Always motivated by his love for community, James's vision helped birth tangible progress across Eastern Arkansas. The development of The Stonebrook Houses in Forrest City, Marianna, and Wynne stand today as monuments to his faith-driven commitment to creating opportunity and stability for others.

J.D. was known for his green thumb and his deep connection to the land. He planted a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, often sharing his harvest with neighbors and friends. His passion for growing led him to construct a hoop house on his property, symbolizing his endless belief in cultivation—both of the soil and of the human spirit.

Those who knew J.D. will remember his sharp wit, storytelling charm, and laughter that could fill a room. He possessed a unique gift for turning ordinary moments into unforgettable memories. Whether in the field, at church, or among family, his humor and wisdom uplifted everyone in his presence.

Beyond his many accomplishments, James Darnell Davis was first and foremost a man of God. He was a devoted husband, loving father, proud grandfather, and great-grandfather who lived with humility and grace. His faith guided every decision, and he found joy in studying and teaching the Word of God. He was a respected leader in his church community, faithfully teaching Men's Sunday School and Bible Study, helping others grow spiritually as he himself walked closely with the Lord.

He was an active member of Light of the World International Church in Sarasota, Florida, under the leadership of Senior Pastor Kelvin Lumpkin and Executive Pastor Peter Greenidge. Upon returning to Arkansas, he continued to serve faithfully at Beth Salem Missionary Baptist Church under the

leadership of Pastor Eric Holloway, where he remained active until his transition.

When the sun set on October 5, 2025, heaven gained a servant whose work on earth was complete. J.D. was preceded in death by his beloved parents, Lila and Jim Davis, and two sisters, Bernice Smith and Gladys White.

He leaves to cherish his memory his devoted wife Rosia Davis of Forrest City, Arkansas; one son Marcus (Catrece) Davis of Marion, Arkansas; one daughter Kimberly (Lenard) Peoples of Memphis, Tennessee; two granddaughters Ebony Davis (Kenneth Cauley) and Loren Davis, both of Memphis, Tennessee; one grandson Julian (Brittany) Hughes of Forrest City, Arkansas; five great-grandsons Asa Brown, Honest Davis, Kenneth Cauley, III "Tres", all of Memphis, Tennessee, Loyal Davis of West Memphis, Arkansas, De'Mario "DJ" Westbrooks, Jr. of Forrest City, Arkansas; one great-granddaughter Serenity Julia-Rose Hughes of Forrest City, Arkansas; two sisters Lucille Strong of East Palo Alto, California, and Emmer Price of Forrest City, Arkansas; and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives, and friends.

He will forever be remembered for his intelligence, compassion, humor, and unwavering faith—a man whose legacy continues to inspire all who were blessed to know him. His life was a living example of what it means to walk with purpose, serve with heart, and live as a true reflection of God's workmanship.

Cemetery Details

Forrest Park Cemetery

2605 South Washington Street
Forrest City , AR 72335

Previous Events

Visitation (Final Viewing)

OCT 18. 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM (CT)

Beth Salem Missionary Baptist Church
835 East Garland Street
Forrest City , AR 72335

The family kindly announces that there will be no public viewing on Friday at the funeral home. All viewing and services will take place at the church on Saturday, October 18, 2025.

Omega Service | Gamma Delta Chapter | Alpha Phi Alpha

OCT 18. 10:45 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Beth Salem Missionary Baptist Church
835 East Garland Street
Forrest City , AR 72335

Service

OCT 18. 11:00 AM (CT)

Beth Salem Missionary Baptist Church
835 East Garland Street
Forrest City , AR 72335

Live Stream Information: For family and friends who are unable to attend in person, the services for Mr. James Darnell "J.D." Davis will be live streamed on the Beth Salem Missionary Baptist Church Facebook page.

Repast

OCT 18. 1:30 PM (CT)

Beth Salem Missionary Baptist Church
835 East Garland Street
Forrest City , AR 72335

The repast will take place immediately following the interment at approximately 1:30 p.m., though the exact time is not guaranteed. The family appreciates your understanding and invites everyone to join them for fellowship and a meal following the services.

Tribute Wall



“ *Miles J. Kimble Mortuary & Cremation created a Funeral Service of Mr. JD Davis in memory of Mr. James Darnell "JD" Davis*



Miles J. Kimble Mortuary & Cremation - October 13, 2025 at 01:26 PM

CS

“ Goodbye Note to My BFF, J.D. Davis
In Loving Memory

Dear J.D.,

Saying goodbye to you feels impossible. I never imagined I'd have to write these words so soon, and my heart aches at the thought of your absence. You were more than just a friend, you were my best friend. You were a source of laughter, comfort, and support through nearly every chapter of my life, starting in 1961, my Sophomore year at UAPB (some 60+ years)...you were already a Junior, which means you were at least two years older than me (smile)!

I will miss your kindness, your quirky sense of humor, and the way you always knew how to make even the toughest days a little brighter. The memories we made together are treasures that I'll hold close forever—weekly golf games (although, we were both merely hackers...and may have forever blemished the game, I shall always smile when I think about “How well you could hit your 2 iron, back when you lived in L.A. California”, long talks, shared secrets, spontaneous adventures, evenings we spent together with our wives, Rosia and Jewel, and quiet moments just enjoying each other's company.

Though you're no longer here, your spirit lives on in everyone who knows you. Thank you for the love and friendship you gave so generously. I promise to carry your memory with me, to live with the same warmth and compassion you showed the world, and to honor your life in all that I do.

Goodbye, dear friend. I'll miss you always, but I'm grateful for every moment we shared. Rest peacefully.

With all my love,

Chet Thompson

10/18/2025

Chet & Jewel Thompson srqchet@gmail.com - October 18, 2025 at 09:50 AM

DB

“ *Sending Condolences, Love & Prayers, to Aunt Rosia, and All of Family. Demetria & Sam,*



Demetria Bolden-Coleman - October 18, 2025 at 08:33 AM

AJ

“ *Albert Jones lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Darnell "JD" Davis*



Albert Jones - October 18, 2025 at 05:11 AM

JM

“ *Sending our love to Rosia & family and remembering all the great times we've shared over the years.*



James & Shirley McGee - October 17, 2025 at 09:33 PM

RM

“ *Richard & Alma McNeary lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Darnell "JD" Davis*



Richard & Alma McNeary - October 17, 2025 at 08:52 PM

ST

“ Davis family and friends, Sincere Condolences to you in this time of bereavements My thoughts and prayers are with you. His Legacy will live on and a Jewel in your hearts . God's Blessings 🙏.



Shirley Williams Thorn - October 17, 2025 at 07:46 PM

BR

“ Just an acknowledgement of a kind, supportive, good sense of humor and enjoyable man to visit with. Our deepest condolences to Rosia, Kim and the entire Davis family. RIP cousin 🙏🙏🙏. Mark & Gloria G. Broom

Broom - October 17, 2025 at 06:17 PM

BE

“ JD was an inspiration to everyone who knew him and will always be remembered. He was a steadfast to the commitment of service. From coworkers ALCDC/ALFDC

Barbara Erby - October 17, 2025 at 03:55 PM

AM

“ AMM lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Darnell "JD" Davis



AMM - October 17, 2025 at 11:00 AM

AM

To the Family:

My deepest and sincere condolences. Rosia take solace with beautiful memories. Psalm 91:4a KJV

4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust:

May God's peace keep you sustained!

Your Homer Ford Tennis Family - Mrs. Anita Martins

AMM - October 17, 2025 at 11:15 AM

LH

“ *Lovie Hardrick sent a virtual gift in memory of Mr. James Darnell "JD" Davis*



Lovie Hardrick - October 16, 2025 at 07:02 PM

JM

“ *Sincere condolences to Rosia and the remainder of J.D.'s family. J.D. was a special person who brought wisdom, humor and compassion to every encounter. Our lives were enriched having known him and sharing so many great times. His passing is a loss for all of us and his memory as a great man will live on.*
Shirley and Jim McGee

James D. McGee - October 16, 2025 at 06:20 PM

RJ

“ Rev. Gwendelyn Jones lit a candle in memory of Mr. James Darnell "JD" Davis



Rev. Gwendelyn Jones - October 16, 2025 at 12:03 PM



“ Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Mr. James Darnell "JD" Davis.



October 16, 2025 at 05:33 AM

KL

“ Katherine Lyons sent a virtual gift in memory of Mr. James Darnell "JD" Davis



Katherine Lyons - October 14, 2025 at 02:37 AM

JW

“ My condolences to Mr Davis family.



Jackie White - October 13, 2025 at 10:01 PM

JH

Praying for the wife & family and the repose of the soul of Mr. James Davis. ☐

Janis Haynes - October 14, 2025 at 07:56 AM

DM

“ *A word of comfort and of hope, that in your deepest sorrow, you will find new strength and peace of mind and courage for tomorrow.” Please know that you are in our prayers.*



Sending condolences to the family of James "J D" Davis on behalf of The Lincoln High School - Maroon & Gold National Alumni Association, Inc. (MGNAAI), Forrest City, Arkansas. J D was a member of the Lincoln High School Class of 1958.”

*Delores Farr Morelon
President, MGNAAI*

Delores Farr Morelon - MGNAAI - October 13, 2025 at 03:30 PM

GA

“ *J.D. and Rosia were beautiful and kind human beings and wonderful neighbors. We were so sad to see them leave our neighborhood in Lakewood Ranch. His loss will touch many, now and in the future. We feel privileged to have known him.*
Glenda and Jay Anthony

Glenda and Jay Anthony - October 13, 2025 at 02:06 PM