



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Funeral Slated for South L.A. Presidential Citizens Medal Honoree

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(SOUTH LOS ANGELES) Myrtle Faye Rumph founded a youth center in 1990 in South Los Angeles and named it after her son, killed in a drive-by shooting. Twenty years later in 2010, President Barack Obama presented the then-Inglewood resident with one of 13 Presidential Citizens Medals, our nation's second highest civilian honor, for her work providing education and recreation for more than 5,000 youth in grades 3-12.

Rumph, founder of the Al Wooten Jr. Heritage Center, passed away on Wednesday, January 7, 2015, at Community Hospital Long Beach after suffering cardiac arrest. She was 83. She was living in Long Beach with her son-in-law and daughter Michael and Barbara Clark.

"My mother was a quiet but passionate woman filled with compassion for all people," Barbara said. "She dearly loved God, her family, and the children at her center. Her life has left me with such a legacy of how to live life to the fullest."

A memorial with family and friends, Wooten students and alumni will be held on Monday, January 12, 6 p.m., at the Wooten Center at 9106 S. Western Ave., Los Angeles. Participants are planning a lively home going with candles, posters, horns and a flower-planting in front of the center.

Funeral services will be held on Friday, January 16, 11 a.m. at Faithful Central Bible Church, 400 W. Florence Ave., Inglewood. Rumph will be buried at Inglewood Cemetery Mortuary next to her husband Harris Rumph and eldest son Al Wooten, Jr., who died on January 19, 1989.

Myrtle Faye Rumph was born on February 21, 1931 on the Griffith League sharecropping farm in Chisholm, Tex. She was the fifth of 10 children born to Rev. Enoch and Adell Ross.

Rumph worked as an independent seamstress for many years as a single parent in Watts, where she lived in the Imperial Courts Housing Project with her three children after a divorce to Al Wooten, Sr., an Air Force lieutenant. She witnessed the beginnings of the Watts Riot in 1965 across from her business on 103rd and Central. Two months later, she married sanitation worker Harris Rumph and moved to a home in South Los Angeles. The couple owned and operated several businesses, including a lawn service, coin-operated laundry and 28-unit apartment building.

The Rumphs were owners of H&M Moving and Storage on 91st and Western when gang members murdered Al, a reported innocent victim of a gang initiation. After a year of meetings and planning with family and friends, Rumph rented a storefront next door to H&M for \$400/month. Within a year, she sold her Inglewood home to help pay the center's bills.

The Wooten Center opened in 1990 with four pre-teen boys, taggers who used to hang out on the corner in front of the Rumph's business. The four boys now ages 30-plus are expected to attend the memorial and funeral.

Today, the Wooten Center provides afterschool, summer, gang prevention, SAT-prep and other college readiness programs for more than 500 students in grades 3-12 at the center, local schools and other community sites. For more information, call executive director Naomi McSwain at (323) 756-7203, x28, or visit their Website at www.wootencenter.org.

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