

*In Memoriam*  
**James Rufus Stevenson (1925- 2022)**



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James "Jim" Rufus Stevenson of Atlanta, GA, passed away on July 6, 2022. He was predeceased by his wife Adelyn Portis Stegall Stevenson of TN. Since 1955 they lived in the Atlanta area and were members of St. Mark United Methodist Church.

Jim was born May 19, 1925 in Trenton, NJ, to Eugene Hendrix Stevenson and Helen MacElree. Upon seeing his red hair, his mother gave him the middle name of "Rufus" which became his family name. Jim and his sister "Mardie" were blessed with parents and family who instilled a love of learning. Despite being orphaned at young ages, they both became educators as were their parents.

In 1943 Jim enlisted in the Merchant Marines, henceforth adopting "Ahoy!" as a personal greeting. He trained out of Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, NY, and served as an ordinary seaman from Newport News to Philadelphia before joining the George W. Woodruff ship to Casablanca. In 1944 he was inducted into the U.S. Army and completed training stateside in radio communications, radars, and navigational equipment. He then served for 6 months in Italy. In 1946 he traveled to Kwajalein to support the airplane electronics required in testing an atomic bomb on the Enewetok Atoll. During downtime in his service years, Jim enjoyed exchanging letters with family, correspondence courses, chess (even by mail), bridge, and poker.

Jim spent his first 2 undergraduate years at Arkansas Tech and then Louisiana State before transferring to MIT where he completed his B.S. in Physics. In 1958 he completed his PhD in Physics at the University of Missouri. While in Columbia he met Adelyn and they married June 14, 1955, in Nashville, TN.

Jim began his professorial career in the Physics Department at Georgia Tech in 1955. During his 1965-66 sabbatical, he taught at the University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana on a Fulbright Scholarship. His administrative service at GT includes: Director of Physics, 1968-78; Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs, 1979-81; and various roles in the Office of the President, 1981-88 and 1994-96. From 1988 to 1991, he was President of Ionic Atlanta. After retiring, Jim

recorded his recollections of many GT physics professors and the Physics Department. Jim and Adelyn found much pleasure in the GT community and were grateful for the many lasting friendships and opportunities extended to them. Over the years, the family ties to GT grew: Adelyn was recognized as an honorary GT alumna; all 3 daughters, a son-in-law, and a grandson received GT degrees; another son-in-law worked at GTRI.

Jim was a trustworthy listener and though his words were few he "said as much as everyone else!" He enjoyed socializing and loved using his network to help others. Jim was also known for his integrity and generosity. Together with Adelyn, he made a difference in the lives of many. He loved his family immensely and delighted in taking them on adventures around the world and involving them in home renovations. Making up mathematical word problems for his daughters and then his grandchildren was a "Fafa" tradition.

Jim is survived by his sister Margaret MacElree Stevenson of Dover, AR; daughter Alicia Love Stevenson Steele (Rob) of Stow, MA; daughter Maryhelen Stevenson (Lloyd Waugh) of Fredericton, NB; daughter Jana Lyn Stevenson-Waln (David Waln) of Atlanta, GA; grandchildren: Corre Steele, Emma Duttweiler (Luke), Hannah Steele, Jamie Waugh, Charles Waugh, Carson Waln (Holley), Davis Waln, great-grandson Sebastian Duttweiler, and many dearly loved cousins, nephews, and nieces.

A memorial service is planned for 2pm on November 12, 2022 at Woodfin Chapel in Murfreesboro, TN.

Donations can be made by check payable to the Georgia Tech Foundation Inc. and mailed to 760 Spring Street NW, Suite 400, Atlanta, GA 30308. Please indicate on the memo line "Physics Endowment in memory of Dr. James R. Stevenson". Or, donate online at <https://mygeorgiatech.gatech.edu/giving/special> to the School of Physics Endowment in memory of Dr. James R. Stevenson.