



## Edward Earnshaw Gardner

December 15, 1986 - April 24, 2020

### Edward Earnshaw Gardner

A bright, beautiful soul left this Earth on April 24, 2020. For more than fifteen years, EDWARD EARNSHAW "TED" GARDNER, born December 15, 1986, fought valiantly against the disease of addiction. Ted had amazing resiliency and always found the strength to pull through and get help, no matter how close he came to losing the battle. But on April 24, 2020, he lost his battle and crushed the hearts of all of us who love him.

Any attempt to describe Ted's personality, his brilliant mind, his personal charisma, his sense of humor, and his kind, loving heart will fall short, no matter what words are used. Ted had a presence that filled the whole room with fun and joy and laughter. Loaded with charm and with that beautiful smile, he was able to make friends wherever he went. His vast expanse of knowledge and interests ranged from science to music to philosophy to political and international history. Music was one of his true passions and his 25,000-plus song collection included every genre from rap to folk.

He graduated from George Washington High School, attended the University of Kentucky, and graduated with honors from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles with a degree in psychology and spent a summer studying at Oxford University. As a senior in college, he decided he wanted to be a doctor, and began the arduous process of seeking admission to medical school. He went to Georgetown University where he earned a post-baccalaureate certificate in pre-medicine. He scored in the 91st percentile on the MCAT test

and was awarded a full scholarship to the Marshall University School of Medicine. In the gap year before entering med school, he lived in Chicago where he worked as an EMT and a fund-raiser for Greenpeace.

During undergraduate school, he spent a summer volunteering in Tanzania, Africa, sleeping under mosquito nets with a student group, doing HIV education and working with children who were homeless and in orphanages. Also while a student at LMU, he established a student volunteer program at Wright Elementary in inner-city Los Angeles called Read Right at Wright, where college students tutored students at an inner-city school who were struggling with English and reading comprehension skills.

During his two years of medical school at Marshall, he compiled a high B average and passed step 1 of the national USMLE. He loved medicine and dearly wanted to become a physician. Because addiction issues put his continued medical education in jeopardy, he developed plan B by taking the LSAT test without any preparation and scored in the top 25th percentile. On the day before he died, he had just been chosen as a Sandra Day O'Connor Honors Scholar at New England Law in Boston and awarded a full scholarship for three years. He would have made a great ACLU lawyer or a trial litigator. From the time he was a little boy, when he got interested in something, he was intense. He devoured everything he could find on his latest interest, whether it was his shark period, his Titanic period, his amateur magician period, or his movie directors period. If you lived with him, you also became an expert, because his enthusiasm was contagious.

He was always a voracious reader and a true intellectual. He studied science, philosophy, current events, international issues, sports, fashion, music, and so much more. Some of his favorite writers included Noam Chomsky, Steven Pinker, and Yuval Noah Harari and his home library holds hundreds of books. He was an excellent writer and speaker. Whether he was debating who won the east/west 90's rap war or the parameters of the Fourth Amendment, Ted could make strong, persuasive, impassioned arguments, but was also open-minded to other perspectives. Perhaps his greatest passion was the fight for

civil liberties and human freedom.

Always on the lookout for new experiences; he loved to travel, eat gourmet food, see live theater, and watch movies and stand-up comedy. He had a dark, witty, unapologetic sense of humor. However, his eternal search for new experiences and that "something more" ultimately led to his death. Ironically, although he lived in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and Chicago, he never used opioids until he returned to West Virginia.

He was preceded in death by his sister, Lindsay Elizabeth Gardner. Lindsay and Ted shared a deep and abiding love for one another. They were truly kindred souls, sharing the same sense of humor, kindness, and zest for life and adventure. The loss of Lindsay cast a dark pall over the spirits of all those who loved her and Ted was one of the people in life who loved her most.

Ted was the beloved son of Margaret Workman of Charleston and E. Ty Gardner (Liza) of Bradenton, Fla. He is also survived by the love of his life, Cynthia Nava Chavez, his loyal and loving companion for the last five years. He is also survived by his brother, Christopher Workman Gardner (Mary), and two nieces, Lilly and Emily, of Murrells Inlet, S.C.; his aunt, Deborah Walker of Charleston, and her daughter, Amanda of London, UK; his aunt, Mimi Gardner Gates (Bill) of Seattle, and her son, Casey Neill (Tracy) of Portland, Ore.; his aunt, Janet Gardner of Princeton, N.J., and her son, Karl Debreczeny (Tita); his aunt, Rosie Braden (Helge) of Tucson, Ariz., and her children, Laurel Workman (Brad) of Phoenix and Ben Workman (Sosha) of Tacoma, Wash. And of course, Ted's beloved dog, Frank.

He was also preceded in death by his uncle, Tim Workman.

The emptiness and heartache that his death brings to those who loved him most is unbearable. The void in our worlds left by the loss of his spirit and soul will never be filled. We love you dearly, Ted, and will always grieve that your life was so short when it should have been long, productive, and beautiful in every way.

Due to the Coronavirus, a memorial service will be held at a later time. Those

who wish to honor Ted's memory may make a gift to the ACLU-WV Foundation, the Manna Meal, or the Kanawha Humane Society. We deeply appreciate all the loving messages of sympathy and gifts of food we have received.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Edward Earnshaw Gardner*

October 08, 2023 at 12:10 PM



“ *My condolences to all of Ted's loved ones!*



**Margaret Kerr Beckwith** - May 12, 2020 at 12:00 AM