



# A Celebration of Life

for

## Joseph Evan Lefft

July 18, 1989 - August 28, 2024



In lieu of flowers, the family plans to establish a scholarship fund in Evan's name at Morehouse College and at St. Mark's United Methodist Church. To donate to Morehouse College, scan the QR code below.



### Arrangements Entrusted To:

**Simmons Funeral Home of Orangeburg**  
*Paul A. Simmons, Founder and President*  
2868 Columbia Road, Orangeburg, SC 29118  
803 -534- 2646  
[www.simmonsfuneralhome.com](http://www.simmonsfuneralhome.com)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2024  
Twelve O' Clock P.M.

ST. MARK'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
917 Clanton Road  
Charlotte, NC 28217

REVEREND ALDANA ALLEN, *Minister*  
REVEREND DAWN M. HAND, *Eulogist*  
FERNANDO LITTLE, *Minister of Music*



# Obituary

Joseph “Evan” Lefft, son of Joseph “Ricky” Lefft and Benita Evans Lefft, was born on July 18, 1989 in Fairfax, VA. He departed this life on August 28, 2024 in his home in Atlanta, GA.

At an early age, he was baptized at Francis Burns United Methodist Church in Columbia, SC and was later confirmed as a member of St. Mark’s United Methodist Church in Charlotte, NC on April 27, 2003. He was an active member of the St. Mark’s Children and Youth ministries, regularly attending Harambee. At the time of his death, he remained a member of St. Mark’s and attended services weekly at a local church in Atlanta.

A native of Lake Wylie, SC, Evan graduated from Clover High School in 2007. During his time at Clover, he was a teacher cadet and a member of the varsity men’s basketball team. He received numerous awards including the Clover Men’s Basketball Team’s “Best Defensive Player Award” and “Academic Award.” In his senior year, he was voted Best Dressed by other members of his class.

After high school, Evan pursued his B.A. in History at the historic Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA, where he graduated *cum laude* and as a member of the Phi Alpha Theta History Honors Society. While at Morehouse, Evan interned with the Minnesota Vikings under the tutelage of Kevin Warren, who has just been appointed the first African-American president of an NFL Franchise. He also interned with the Duke University Athletics Program.

Upon his graduation from Morehouse, Evan was accepted and matriculated to the University of South Carolina School of Law. However, he soon realized that his passion was for entrepreneurship. In 2012, Evan founded Sporrty, a website designed to aggregate sports content from various publications to create a one stop shop for sports fans. In a desire to monetize the data he collected, he formed an athletics apparel company called The Made Brand, later changing the company’s name to Athletic Apparel Without Limits, also known as AAWOL. Evan was uniquely talented in storytelling and his designs gained wide appeal from the public at large, the professional sports leagues and intercollegiate athletics.

As CEO and Founder of AAWOL, Evan forged partnerships with professional teams including the Chicago Bulls, the Atlanta Hawks, the Minnesota Timberwolves, the Minnesota Lynx, the Oklahoma City Thunder, and the Pittsburgh Penguins. The Chicago Bulls fans were especially excited about AAWOL’s partnership, noting that AAWOL’s designs and quality were the best the Bulls had in over twenty years. As a result of his entrepreneurship, Evan was selected as a finalist for the Forbes 30 under 30 list in 2018 and 2019.



## pallbearers

Cousins  
Morehouse Men

## Floral Bearers

Cousins

## In Appreciation

With gratitude and love, the family expresses appreciation for the many kindnesses experienced during their bereavement.

## Special Thanks To:

St. Mark’s United Methodist Church  
Fulton County Medical Examiners  
Jeremy Ochieng and Family  
Glennith Johnson  
Arthur Johnson  
Optus Bank







*You did not say I'm Leaving  
 You did not say good-bye  
 You left before we knew it  
 And only God knows why  
 In life, we loved you dearly  
 And in death, we love you still.  
 You will always hold  
 a place in our hearts  
 That no one else can fill.  
 It broke our hearts to lose you  
 But Evan you did not go alone  
 For part of us went with you  
 When God took you home  
 "We shall meet again"*

In July 2023, Evan launched Win., also known as the Win Brand. In the time since, Win. has been immensely successful, selling its apparel both domestically and internationally. Over the course of his career, he procured over ten trademarks including Win., Secure the Win, and Atlanta by Nature, to name a few.

Throughout life, Evan was an avid sports fan. Each year, Evan and his father, Ricky, would travel to the NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four. He passionately supported his sister Gadson's basketball career, both in her time as a NCAA Division One women's basketball player and later in her roles as a coach. A loving and protective older brother, Evan was present for every move-in date, game, and family celebration. He was very proud of his sister Alexis's academic accomplishments, and he wore his Andover and Stanford t-shirts with pride.

He is survived by his parents, Ricky and Benita Lefft (Lake Wylie, SC); his two sisters Gadson Lefft (Providence, RI) and Alexis Lefft (Los Angeles, CA); his grandmother, Winifred Gadson Lefft (Orangeburg, SC); his aunts and uncles, Valerie and Gerald Harrison (Florence, SC), Aundra Dingle (Hartsville, SC), Joyce and Ronald Jones (Cleveland, OH), Kela and Darrin Thomas (Columbia, SC), Charmaine and Pete Wilkes (Conway, SC) and Crystal Evans (Columbia, SC); cousins, Gerald and Gerrin Harrison, Todd and Garrsion Thomas, Danielle, Donald and Emily Jones, Brantley Evans, III, India Wilkes, and Kori Joelle Hearst; four especially close grand aunts and uncles, Madge and Wesley Hanson and Louise and Eugene Cleckley; a special friend, Neena Kinsey; five other grand aunts and uncles; and a host of extended family from the Robinson, Gadson, Evans, and Lefft families.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Joseph Daniel Lefft, Brantley Edward Evans, Sr., and Josephine Robinson Evans, as well as his uncle, Brantley Edward Evans, Jr.

*That man is a success...  
 Who loves life and lives it to the fullest;  
 Who has discovered and shared the strengths and  
 talents that are uniquely his own;  
 Who puts his best into each task and leaves each  
 situation better than he found it  
 Who seeks and finds that which is beautiful  
 in all people... and all things;  
 whose heart is full of love  
 and warm with compassion  
 Who found joy in living and peace within himself.*

Barbara J. Burrow (paraphrased)





# Order of Worship

**PRELUDE**..... Fernando Little and St Mark’s Music Ministry  
**GREETING AND WELCOME**..... Rev. Aldana Allen  
**MUSICAL SELECTION**.....St. Mark’s Music Ministry  
**PRAYER OF COMFORT**..... Rev. Dr. Stephanie Moore Hand

**AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**  
**GLORIA PATRI**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING**.....Ecclesiastes 3:1-8  
 Rev. Paul Milton

**NEW TESTAMENT READING**.....Matthew 5: 15-16  
 Rev. Dr Otto Harris

**GOSPEL**.....Luke 6:43-45  
 Rev. Dr. Otto Harris

**MUSICAL SELECTION**.....St. Mark’s Music Ministry

**REFLECTIONS**.....Walter Chip Hand, Friend in Faith  
 Justin Major, Friend  
 Jeremy Ochieng, Friend and Business Partner  
 Gerald J. Harrison, Jr, Cousin  
 Alexis J. Lefft, Sister

**MUSICAL SELECTION**.....St. Mark’s Music Ministry

**EULOGY**.....Rev. Dawn M. Hand

**SOLO**.....“How Great Thou Art”..... Stephanie Massey

**BENEDICTION**.....Rev. Aldana Allen

**RECESSIONAL**..... St. Mark’s Music Ministry

**INTERMENT**  
 Belleville Memorial Gardens  
 2900 Belleville Road  
 Orangeburg, SC 29115



# Memories

