

## Drum Major for education

Written by Al McFarlane, Editor in Chief  
Tuesday, 09 November 2010 15:38

---



Major Topps Jr., 61, of Minneapolis, died Tuesday at North Memorial Medical Center, in Robbinsdale, MN. He was a drum major for education.

Born on Sep. 11, 1949 in Detroit, Michigan Topps was one of four children of Delores and Major Topps Sr.

Topps founded the organization Education is our Goal, which focused on the betterment of youth and Black youths get high school diplomas and pursue college degrees.

He created and led several youth drum and dance corps, commanding the attention of children and their families with precision drumming and drills. He commanded the attention of the entire neighborhood on warm pre-dusk summer evenings. The joyous cacophony of Africa centric drum lines spoke distantly to all corners of the community. Even if you didn't know exactly where they were holding practice, their rhythms infused the air with purposeful vitality, letting the elders know that the youth were ok.

Topps is survived by one sister, Sharon Pierson, one brother Aaron Kellum, four children, Quantrell Fields, Kortne Morrow, Major Topps III, and Kyra Topps, five grandchildren along with legions of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

The wake will be held 5-8 pm Tuesday Nov. 9, 2010 at Estes Funeral Home, 2210 Plymouth Ave N., in North Minneapolis.

The homecoming funerary celebration will be at 11 am Wednesday, Nov. 10, at New Salem Missionary Baptist Church, 2519 Lyndale Ave. N. Burial is at Crystal Lake Cemetery, 3816 Penn Ave N., Minneapolis.

Here's how friends are remembering Topps in Facebook posts:

## **Drum Major for education**

Written by Al McFarlane, Editor in Chief  
Tuesday, 09 November 2010 15:38

---

### **Terra B. Cole via Northside Arts Collective**

Anyone remember growing up in North Minneapolis in the late 80's and 90's and hearing the drum core and later the step team walking up and down the street or in some parking lot practicing? That was Major Topps. For all of his colorfulness, craziness and love for youth and this community he will be sorely missed. Rest in peace Major...

### **Zachary L. Metoyer Sr.**

RIP Major Topps. I got the news this morning that Major Topps has passed away. I knew that he was sick and we talked for a while whenever I saw him. People never gave him credit for the positive things that he did in the community. I will miss Major every time I see a parade, thanks for the memories!

### **Aki Jaheed Abdul-Malik**

R.I.P Major Topps a real northside leader. May Allah show his grace on you on judgment day. If I had to tell it, I'd say you were a great man and beautiful father. PEACE

### **Menia Formey Buckner**

One, of many things, you could say about Major Topps is he always tried to do something positive.

### **Chrisita 'MS Chris' Green**

To All past and present members of First Step, Unity an U.N.L., this is a sad time for the Drill Team community. We have lost a great leader: Mr. Major Topps. There will be a mass Grand March in honor of Major Topps. If you would like to participate please contact Stephan Graham, myself or Jelisa Burns.

### **Asia Ford**

RIP TO MY OLD DANCE INSTRUCTOR MAJOR TOPPS, IMMA MISS YOU MAJOR, DANCIN FOR YOU WAS SO HARD BUT IT WAS WORTH IT

### **THE OFFICIAL 1ST STEP DANCE CREW PAGE**

Funeral arrangement for Major Topps Jr. will be as followed: This Saturday 11/6/10 a benefit for him at the Luxe Club 3836 4th Ave S. 8-until. There will be a \$10 donation at the door, all the proceeds will go to the Memorial Trust of Rev. Major Topps at Wells Fargo Bank. 11/9/10 the Wake at Estes at 5-8pm. The funeral will be held at New Salem Missionary Baptist Church on 26th & Lyndale at 11am 11/10/10

### **Bryson Ciolkosz**

To my uncle: you can never be replaced, you were a man with many words and wisdom, and was willing to share with anybody, there will never be another like you unc, we all love you and you will be missed be all. RIP

Pete Rhodes, WRNB Radio

Major was genuine a person. He will be missed by many. Rest in peace Major.

### **Mark.Stenglein, Hennepin County Commissioner**

This is very sad news, Major Topps had a HEART!

## **Drum Major for education**

Written by Al McFarlane, Editor in Chief  
Tuesday, 09 November 2010 15:38

---

### **Louis King, CEO Summit Academy OIC**

All of us knew major. Regardless of what some may have thought of him, he was always there. I watched his kids grow up.