



Jacquelynn Puriefoy-Brinkley

April 21, 1936 - November 20, 2025

Jacquelynn Puriefoy-Brinkley, a devoted public servant, respected nonprofit executive, and tireless crusader for the rights and dignity of all, died peacefully at her home in Yeadon, PA, on November 20, 2025. She was 89 years old.

Born in Philadelphia on April 21, 1936, Jacquelynn—or Jacquie, as she was known to all— was the eldest daughter of Carson and Betty Puriefoy. From an early age, she exhibited a strong commitment to advancing justice, bettering communities, and educating children, which defined her long, impactful life and her unyielding voice. She was a devoted and loving older sister to Carson (Calvert) Puriefoy, Dale Puriefoy, and Wendy Puriefoy, all of whom predeceased her.

At age 11, Jacquie moved with her family to Yeadon, then a predominantly white gateway suburb to Philadelphia. Here she first discovered her future as a fighter. Jacquie watched her father, denied membership at the local restricted swim club, respond by co-founding the nation's first Black-owned private swim club, the Nile Swim Club, which thrives to this day. This memory remained a North Star for Jacquie, who would return home following her parents' passing, run a grassroots campaign for Yeadon Borough Council, get elected by record margins, and serve two terms—almost all of that time as President of Council. In retirement, she joined her brother Dale as a volunteer leader of the Nile, where she served as Vice President.

As a younger woman, Jacquie eagerly honed her own crusading spirit and made lasting imprints on every city where she would live, often with her dear husband, Leon Brinkley, who passed away in 1982, and her only child and the light of her life, Noel Brinkley. From Irvine, CA, where Jacquie was an outspoken activist in the birthplace of the John Birch Society, to Wilmington, DE, where she ran her own independent newspaper until the powers-that-be threatened her family, to Boston, MA, where her organizing activities involved with Boston public school busing forced her to ride through certain neighborhoods on the floorboards of cars, Jacquie forged a steely yet compassionate determination to change the world. And indeed, she did.

Education was an abiding passion for Jacquie. She was a public school teacher, earned her master's degree in education from the University of Pennsylvania after graduating from the nation's first HBCU, Cheney University, and marched alongside her sister, Wendy, the long-time president of the Public Education Network, and esteemed peers like Marian Wright Edelman in advocating for greater equity and opportunity in public education and for specific issues like early childhood education. For a decade, Jacquie was President and CEO of Educating Children for Parenting (ECP), a program first developed at Germantown Friends School in Philadelphia that teaches young children, beginning as early as kindergarten, what it takes to be an excellent parent.

Reproductive rights were another of Jacquie's battlegrounds and most cherished freedoms. As Public Affairs Director of Planned Parenthood Southeastern Pennsylvania (PPSP), she was on the frontlines of the fight to protect access to safe, legal abortion for every woman and girl—and, more recently, she mourned the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, which she had staunchly defended in 1992, as a central voice in the struggle leading up to the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark *PPSP v. Casey* decision. Jacquie also

showed how to mobilize a volunteer army to march on Washington, D.C., when needed, and to defend her clinic and others in Philadelphia on a weekly basis. She is remembered to this day for loudly playing John Lennon's "Imagine" on repeat most Saturday mornings in the face of those who would intimidate and physically block clients from accessing basic health care, abortion, and contraception.

Imagine is a word Jacquie loved. She named ECP's annual awards the Imagine Awards and, even in the darkest times, she never stopped imagining a more peaceful, more equitable, ethically better world—as long as she could speak out, act, and help to inspire others. Forever a woman of profound strength and compassion, Jacquie has passed this legacy to her loving family: her son, Noel, his wife, Juliana, and their children, Naomi and Harper; her niece, Kia Puriefoy, and her children, Sydney, Dakota and Christian and his wife, Sarah; her nephew Carson Puriefoy, Jr and his wife, Vanessa, and their children, Jamar and Carson III and his wife, Sabrina; and their children, Amaya and Carson IV; her sister-in-law, Barbara Puriefoy; her cousin Dolores Nichols; and a host of family and friends.

A singular leader, mentor, and trailblazer, Jacquie left an indelible mark on all who knew her. In her absence and in her memory, her family and many, many friends and colleagues will now carry forward her unwavering dedication to fight for the inherent worth of all people, starting with the youngest and most vulnerable among us.

Donations in Jacquie's honor can be made to either the Nile Swim Club (513 S. Union Avenue, Yeadon, PA 19050) or to the Wendy D. Puriefoy Fund, at;

Education Redesign Lab Fund, in Memory of Wendy D. Puriefoy
Harvard Graduate School of Education

Development Office
c/o Brady Sullivan
13 Appian Way
Cambridge, MA 02138

Cemetery Details

PRIVATE

Tribute Wall



“ *I had the honor of serving with Jacquelyn on the YEDC Board and on behalf on the current Board we are sending on sincere condolences to the Family. Yeadon has lost a true leader and may she rest in peace!*
Homer Marion

Homer Marion - December 18, 2025 at 12:10 PM