



## Ms. Rehana K. Whatley

March 20, 1943 - June 16, 2020

Rehana Khan Whatley 77, left this world on Monday, June 15 2020 in Nashville, Tennessee surrounded by her loved ones. She was preceded in death by her husband Charles Luther Whatley Jr. who passed only 8 months prior on November 5, 2019, her older sister Zia Younus, and parents Zubaida Begum and Mohammed Younus Khan. Rehana, or Ameer Gee as she was fondly known as, is one of 6 surviving children- Mahmuda Chaudhry, Munir Hassan, Shahida Malik, Shaista Zaid, and Mahmud Hassan. Ameer Gee is survived by her two children Saadia Parker (Andy), Hamzah Whatley (Katy), and her adored grandson Cameron Luther Whatley, as well as her three stepdaughters Gale Gould, Iris Whatley, and Paula Jackson.

Rehana "Nina" as she sometimes liked being called by friends and colleagues was born in Nizamabad, Punjab-later to become Pakistan post partition. Growing up in Pakistan, she was educated in Christian day schools, St Joseph's, St Mary's, St. Patrick's and more. Part of the education was catechism class, of which from the earliest times Ameer loved the message of Jesus and His love. "Love is the most important thing in the world", she used to say. Rehana finished her Bachelor of Arts degree in West Pakistan and her Masters in English in Bangladesh which at the time was part of Pakistan. She always had a long-time dream/desire to come to America, and in her 20s she went on to achieve great educational milestones – one of which was to receive a full scholarship through the American Association and University of Women (AAUW) to Ann Arbor Michigan University where she got her Masters in Art in English Literature. The letter with the notification for scholarship was actually found in a ditch very serendipitously by a neighboring little boy, and delivered by hand to her childhood home! The mailman had lost it en route. Ameer did not stop there, she applied for teaching fellowships to Canada, and got an offer in Quebec, but knew no French, so she chose Saskatchewan. Her exploratory nature led her to another part of North America known for its wilderness and beauty, to the English-speaking central province of Saskatoon, Canada.

But the story does not end there, Rehana completed her Doctor of British Literature degree at Ann Arbor, with her thesis on the writer Joseph Conrad, where she delved into his fiction which portrayed the struggle with the idea of loyalty and morality. She was always intrigued by moral principles, which were often depicted in Greek Mythology,

another subject that inspired and fascinated her. In her words she captured her own “Golden Fleece” in 1976 when she finished her PhD and became a Doctor of British Literature. Her teaching career expanded from the University of Alabama, Birmingham (where she met her future husband Charles, her illustrious Driver’s Ed instructor and owner of A-1 Whatley’s Driving School), to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia where she taught at the King Saud University and later gave birth to her son Hamzah. Soon after, her travels and drive took her to United Arab Emirates, where she taught English literature at a women’s college in Al Ain for a year in the mid-90’s. In 2000 she began teaching at Oakwood University in Huntsville, Alabama; a private, historically black university. Even though this would be where she would later retire as a full professor, her whirlwind journey did not end there. Through the help of a cultural exchange program called the Friendship Force and the Fulbright Scholarship Program where she received a post doctoral scholarship, Rehana was able to study abroad in Thailand and Myanmar( formerly Burma) for a month with a group of fellow scholars and colleagues. Her Asian adventures continued to China, where she and her husband were able to watch the Olympics.

Dr. Whatley, PhD retired in 2014 after 48 years of teaching. For the last 21 years, she has been part of the “transmission of love” with the Sahaj Marg system- a spiritual path with its ashram centered in Bangalore, India. She became a preceptor for “ Heartfulness”, part of the meditation performed by 200.000 people worldwide. Her teaching didn’t end really, for she was able to meditate with and for others on request in person and eventually through the magic of technology, through an app online. Her impact on others continued in another mission when she was recently asked to lead a class at the Nashville YMCA about loss, called “Journey to New Beginnings.” Life would take an unfortunate turn in the form of a cancer diagnosis last year, which was eventually put in remission through surgery and chemotherapy. Rehana forged ahead with true grit, always proclaiming that “God only gives or sends what one can bear”. With this sentiment held dear to her heart, she left this earth with a message of love. In her own words, “I rejoice in loving my siblings, my parents, and my husband more completely. To my son and his wife and my grandson, my daughter, her husband and my coming grandchild, and to all our family of the future- I send you all kisses, a fruit of the seeds of love. May it grow and grow, like the beautiful lotus.”

Rehana's Graveside service will be held at 12:00 PM Friday, June 26, 2020 in the Historic Spring Hill Cemetery at 1225 Gallatin Pike South, Madison, TN.

# Cemetery

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## Spring Hill Cemetery

5110 Gallatin Pike S  
Nashville, TN, 37216

# Events

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**JUN**  
**26**

## Graveside Service

12:00PM

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Spring Hill Cemetery

5110 Gallatin Pike S, Nashville, TN, US, 37216