



Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress

June 1, 1977 - October 17, 2023

Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress was born on June 1, 1977, in Jackson, Tennessee, to Vera Fentress and Earlie Hugh Cheairs. Our beloved father, son, brother and friend transitioned on Tuesday, October 17, 2023.

At an early age, he joined Blairs Chapel C.M.E. Church in Jackson, Tennessee. He later moved his membership to New Tribe Church in Mount Juliet, Tennessee.

He started his educational journey at Toone Elementary School and later graduated from Bolivar Central High School in 1995. His post-secondary education started at Tennessee State University where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology in 1999. He went on to pursue a Ph.D. in neuroscience and pharmacology from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in 2005. Hugh later completed his post-doctoral studies at the University of Michigan as a Research Fellow from 2005-2008 and as a Scientist- Educator Fellow at Vanderbilt University from 2008-2011.

After completing his formal research training his official career began at Fisk University where he was an Assistant Professor in Biology (2011-2013). He then returned to his alma mater, Tennessee State University, where he was as Assistant Professor of Biology starting in 2014 and earned tenure in 2019 as an Associate Professor of Biology where he was currently employed

alongside his contract work as an instructor at Meharry Medical College. In addition to his collegiate level work, he also served in a part-time capacity as an educator at Gateway Academy in Brentwood, Tennessee.

As an accomplished scientist, he used his gifts in many ways. Some of those included: publishing many scientific articles and recordings, mentoring undergraduate and graduate students, sharing his love for brain research at local K-12 public schools, and serving as a volunteer in the community as well as on numerous committees and boards.

While Hugh was definitely intentional about his academic endeavors, he always made time for his family and his hobbies like hunting with Pops, fishing with anyone who had a boat and was ready and willing to cast a reel.

He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Sam and Lessie Fentress, Isaiah and Mae Emma Cheairs, and William H. and Lessie Merriweather and also a brother, Terrence Merriweather.

He leaves to cherish his memory two children: Harmony and Hudson Fentress of Nolensville, Tennessee, Loving and devoted parents: Vera and Clifford Merriweather of Medon, Tennessee and Earlie Hugh Cheairs of Whiteville, Tennessee; four sisters: Latina (Mario) Mathes of Cordova, Tennessee, La Tonya (Christopher) McCarley, Yolanda (Antonio) Cobb and Renada (James) Raine all of Bolivar, Tennessee, five brothers: Steven (Tiffany) Fentress of Smyrna, Tennessee, Lamont Crisp, Demetrick Crisp, Tuaterio (Amisha) Crisp and Cedric (Tam) Harris all of Bolivar, Tennessee. He shared a special bond with nieces, Karrington Fentress, Mh'nyjeia Merriweather, and Tramauryia Mathes, and a host of aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends

Cemetery Details

Ebenezer Baptist Church Cemetery

3830 Ebenezer Road
Toone , TN 38008

Previous Events

Family Hour

OCT **27**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Stephenson-Shaw Funeral Home, Inc.
807 N. Hays Avenue
Jackson, TN 38301
(731) 427-7411
info@stephenson-shaw.com
<https://www.stephenson-shaw.com>

Celebration of Life

OCT **28**. 12:00 PM (CT)

Blairs Chapel C.M.E. Church
2293 Steam Mill Ferry Rd.
Jackson, TN 38301

Tribute Wall



“ *Stephenson-Shaw Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress*



Stephenson-Shaw Funeral Home, Inc - October 23, 2023 at 08:11 PM

EB

Love you cousin, 💔💔💔💔😭😭😭! Rip! I'll never forget the time you came up here (late 90's), and we had a ball! I was so happy to see you this past May. My heart is broken and you will be missed "immensely"!!! Love you 💔😭😭💔!

Erica Banks - October 26, 2023 at 10:36 PM

WT

“ *Wanda Thomas lit a candle in memory of Hugh Fentress*



Wanda Greer Thomas - October 28, 2023 at 03:36 PM

DT

“ *Rest well brother. I remember great memories together growing up in Toone. You always had a great spirit and everyone knew you were destined for greatness. Your mark on this world won't be forgotten.*

Demetrius Theus - October 28, 2023 at 01:54 PM

ZM

“ Thank you, Dr. Fentress! I will forever be grateful for your guidance, encouragement, and help. You will be missed! Condolences to the family.



Zeljka ML - October 27, 2023 at 09:44 PM

ZM

“ Zeljka M. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.

Zeljka M. - October 27, 2023 at 09:37 PM

GL

“ Gateway Academy/Learning Lab purchased the Sweet Tenderness for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.



Gateway Academy/Learning Lab - October 27, 2023 at 06:02 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.



October 27, 2023 at 01:23 PM

SJ

“ You will be missed! I will never forget your smile and kindness! Your class of NURO PhD students will always be my favorite. God bless this family and wrap them in your arms.

Stacy Johnson - October 27, 2023 at 10:21 AM

KM

“ Katina Mays lit a candle in memory of Hugh Fentress



Katina Mays - October 27, 2023 at 12:05 AM

CC

“ Clint Canal lit a candle in memory of Hugh Fentress



Clint Canal - October 26, 2023 at 09:23 PM

CC

“ I remember Hugh's smile, his warmth and kindness, and his generous spirit. 🙏

Clint Canal - October 26, 2023 at 09:22 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.*



October 26, 2023 at 05:17 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.

October 26, 2023 at 05:17 PM



“ *Callie Fentress & Family- Saginaw MI purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.*



Callie Fentress & Family- Saginaw MI - October 26, 2023 at 12:01 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.*



October 26, 2023 at 10:11 AM

LC

“ Larry, Deon , Deidra Conway. sent a virtual gift in memory of Hugh Fentress



Larry, Gwen, Deon , Deidra Conway. - October 26, 2023 at 01:48 AM

NH

“ Natalie Hooper-Sowder lit a candle in memory of Hugh Fentress



Natalie Hooper-Sowder - October 25, 2023 at 10:38 PM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.



October 25, 2023 at 10:37 PM



“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.



October 25, 2023 at 09:42 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.*



October 25, 2023 at 06:55 PM



“ *My prayers and condolences to the Fentress family.*



Andrea Bond - October 25, 2023 at 03:19 PM



“ *My prayers and sincere condolences goes out to my Aunt Vera and his entire family.*



Shauntel Vaughn - October 25, 2023 at 09:46 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.*



October 24, 2023 at 09:30 PM



“ Gwendolyn Wright lit a candle in memory of Hugh Fentress



Gwendolyn Wright - October 24, 2023 at 09:14 PM



“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.



October 24, 2023 at 04:44 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.

October 24, 2023 at 04:44 PM



“ Lakitta Reaves lit a candle in memory of Hugh Fentress



Lakitta Reaves - October 24, 2023 at 02:26 PM

TC

“ *Teresa Conner lit a candle in memory of Hugh Fentress*



Teresa Conner - October 24, 2023 at 02:25 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.*



October 24, 2023 at 12:58 PM

DM

“I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”
— Maya Angelou

This quote reminds me so much of Hugh. He always, always left you feeling brighter in spirit, especially if he gave you one of his beloved hugs!

A kind and genuine man, quick to smile and laugh, even spending just a few minutes with him left me happy. I knew him back in his PhD days from the ESB lab and the Brain Institute. One of my all time favorite grad students.

The world is a sadder place without him in it. Sending my heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, and colleagues.

We will keep his legacy going - every hug I give will have a memory of Hugh in it. And I hope I can bring a fraction of joy to this world that he did.

Denise Malone - October 24, 2023 at 09:22 AM



“Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Dr. Hugh Montrell Fentress.



October 23, 2023 at 09:07 PM

LC

“ *Montrell was one of the coolest friends and classmates. His kind heart, intelligence, and easy smile made him such a bright light and an all around great guy. I will pray for his family's peace and comfort.*

Lisa Cothran - October 23, 2023 at 07:27 PM

SB

“ *Prayers and condolences to the family during this difficult time. He was such a sweet soul and always smiling through school. Rest in Peace*

Stacey Black - October 23, 2023 at 12:35 PM

JB

“ *My prayers and condolences to the family.*



Jessica Bolden-DeBerry - October 23, 2023 at 12:07 PM

LM

“ *My condolences to his family. Praying for strength for everyone* 🙏



Lyrae Morrow - October 22, 2023 at 10:30 PM

CL

“ *Cristis Lockridge lit a candle in memory of Hugh Fentress*



Cristis Lockridge - October 22, 2023 at 01:28 AM

MF

“ *We're going to miss you Cousin. We promise to keep your dream of a family reunion alive and to make it happen. No more headaches. Rest well.
Mark Fentress & Family*

Mark Fentress - October 21, 2023 at 07:44 PM

CA

“ *My prayers and condolences to the family. God will give you the strength you need !
Love you*

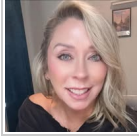


Constance Avent - October 21, 2023 at 02:51 PM



“ *Trell and I went to State in undergraduate school!! He was so kind and motivating! He encouraged me to graduate in the 3 years that I did. I'm deeply moved to learn of his transition and prayers are sent to his bereaved family.*

Jerri Muhammad - October 21, 2023 at 12:04 PM



“ *My memories of Hugh include him being very active in the Nolensville community. I served on the Nolensville board with Hugh and he was always willing to lend a helping hand. He always talked about how proud he was of his children and that he wanted his children to be proud of the legacy he had built for them. Hugh, you will be missed by so many.*

Michelle Copeland Rice - October 21, 2023 at 08:42 AM



“ *Dr. Fentress was my general biology professor during my sophomore of undergrad at TSU. He was very motivating and encouraged me to not be afraid to ask for help, whether it was in lectures or lab. He also offered me private tutoring sessions which were very helpful after midterms. I will never forget his lessons and advice as I continue my education/career. My condolences to his family and friends.*

Gerald Hill - October 20, 2023 at 10:09 PM



“ *Rest easy friend! Sending love, prayers, and strength to the family.*

Ashanti Joy-Murphy - October 20, 2023 at 08:12 PM



“ *Montrell was from my hometown and was a little younger than I! Same high school and he & I were at Tennessee State University together! Such a great person! Accomplished in his field & in life!*

Corey J Walker Sr - October 20, 2023 at 06:21 PM

AS

“ *Ann Stewart sent a virtual gift in memory of Hugh Fentress*



Ann Stewart - October 20, 2023 at 05:19 PM



“ *Thanks for being our Tiger brother, and always being a kind friend to me. Thanks for teaching our students. Thanks on helping me with the grants and working hard beside us...We will miss you Dr.F.*

Chris Stewart - October 20, 2023 at 05:12 PM

MS

“ *Monsheel Sodhi lit a candle in memory of Hugh Fentress*



Monsheel Sodhi - October 20, 2023 at 02:53 PM

MS

“ *I am so saddened to hear about Hugh. He was a good friend and colleague in the Sanders-Bush lab when I first came over to America from England. He always offered help. He was friendly and patient despite how frustrated I became with all the weird obstacles I was navigating after my move. Rest in peace Hugh, and lots of love to your family.*

Monsheel Sodhi - October 20, 2023 at 02:51 PM

PL

“*Hugh was an amazing and inspiring partner, working with me to develop a new summer research program for TSU neuroscience students to come to Los Angeles, stay at the University of Southern California, to work on lab research projects and interact with grad students to learn more about graduate degree opportunities. Hugh had boundless enthusiasm and commitment to students - wanting the very best for each and everyone. I will really miss Hugh. Pat Levitt*

Pat Levitt - October 20, 2023 at 02:41 PM

US

“*Hugh was always willing to help you, even when you didn't realize that you needed help.*

Uade da Silva - October 20, 2023 at 01:18 PM

US

“*Uade Silva lit a candle in memory of Hugh Fentress*



Uade da Silva - October 20, 2023 at 11:04 AM

MB

“*Rest easy my friend, you touched so many people. You're better than us, great heart my guy.*

Marcus Brewster - October 19, 2023 at 11:05 PM

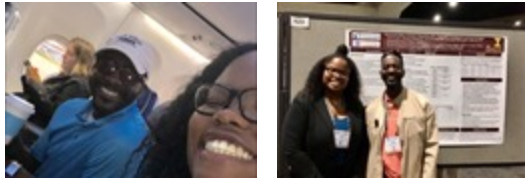
SF

“ Thank you Dr. Fentress for being such a genuine professor and mentor. We will miss your lectures and teaching. I am proud to call you my TSU & Meharry professor.

Shania Ferguson - October 19, 2023 at 09:31 PM

EL

“ Hello, I am Elyse Lang and I was one of Dr. Fentress's many mentees and students. He was my introduction to biology and neuroscience during my undergraduate career. Words cannot describe the amount of academic knowledge and guidance he provided me and my cohort over the years. Whether it was help with General Biology exams or learning about grants and laboratory etiquette. Dr. Fentress was there with open arms, even when his health wasn't in his favor. I pray for peace and comfort to his family during these times.



elyse - October 19, 2023 at 07:45 PM



“ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8YWtRU00OA4>

John Robinson - October 19, 2023 at 07:40 PM

BW

“ I will always remember his smile and how mannerable he was. God got another of His very best. Richard & Beulah wooden

Beulah wooden - October 19, 2023 at 07:33 PM