



Alonzo DuBois Gaston

June 27, 1940 - September 17, 2025

In Loving Memory - A Celebration of Life and Home Going for Our Beloved Father Alonzo Dubois Gaston, 85yrs

Sunrise - June 27, 1940 - Sunset - September 17, 2025

As a brilliant fireball streaked across the evening sky on September 17, 2025, the world lost a remarkable educator, musician, and beacon of light - Dr. Alonzo Dubois Gaston, known affectionately to generations of students as "Doctor G." He was 85.

Born under the summer sun of 1940, little "Angel Eyes" came into this world alongside the rising waters of the Tennessee River, where his father helped build the Kentucky Dam. The youngest of five, Alonzo – known variously as "Little Red," "Big Al," and "Zo" – brought an irrepressible spirit to everything he touched. In Sheffield, Alabama, where cotton fields stretched endlessly under azure skies, young Alonzo and his brother Berdell wrote the first chapters of their legend, turning even the grueling work of cotton-picking into an adventure with their mischievous schemes to "enhance" their daily haul (by peeing on the cotton bags!).

His early years in Sheffield, Alabama, were filled with the kind of adventures that would later become cherished family stories - from crafting June bug kites

to attending the family Baptist church where his grandfather served as founding preacher.

Educated in the rural southern school system, his unquenchable thirst for knowledge led him to Kentucky State and Xavier University where he received his terminal degree in educational psychology. This academic journey would shape his life's mission of transforming young lives through education. In Cincinnati, Ohio, he served as Director of the Upward Bound program, a federally funded, pre-college initiative helping low-income and first-generation high school students prepare for college. His dedication to education continued when he relocated to Washington, D.C., where he was appointed professor and Director of Scientific Studies at Howard University Medical School.

His philosophy was simple yet profound: by projecting honorable values to his students, they would never have to question their potential or their path in life.

When he stepped into a classroom, magic happened. "Doctor G" didn't just teach – he transformed. Every lesson was infused with the rhythm of his soul, every word carried the weight of his journey. His students didn't just learn; they awakened. They discovered not just facts and figures, but their own unlimited potential.

"Dad had this way of making you believe you could touch the stars. And somehow, when he believed it, you believed it too," his daughter Ami Gaston, a Cultural Arts Ambassador for the State Department and professional jazz singer, shares with emotion. His son Damon Gaston, a captain and pilot for NetJets Airlines adds, "Teaching wasn't his profession – it was his calling, his breath, his very heartbeat."

But perhaps his greatest revolution was in the quiet moments – helping a

struggling student find their path, showing his children the constellations of possibility, or letting his fingers dance across conga drums in a jazz-filled room. His laughter was thunder; his smile was sunshine; his love was the gravity that held his universe together.

Dr. Gaston's impact extended far beyond the classroom. He was a self-taught bassist and accomplished drummer who shared stages with legends like Miles Davis and Mongo Santamaria. In the crucible of the Civil Rights Movement, Alonzo stood tall alongside giants. He marched with Dr. King, exchanged ideas with Muhammad Ali, and faced down injustice with unwavering courage. When the police raided Fela Kuti's compound in Nigeria, Alonzo was there, bearing witness to history while making it himself.

He extended his reach once again by helping to co-found TransAfrica, a non-profit that touched countless lives by providing aid and assistance to predominantly Black nations in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean - especially during the Free South Africa movement.

Dr. Gaston's dedication to education earned him numerous accolades from the Ohio Teachers Organization, but his greatest achievement was the impact he had on his students and family. He worked tirelessly to ensure his children's education and understanding of life's profound truths.

Now, as we stand in the lengthening shadow of his absence, we remember the man who turned cotton fields into classrooms, who transformed percussion into poetry, who saw in every student a universe of potential waiting to explode into brilliance. We remember the father who taught his children not just how to succeed, but how to soar. We remember the warrior who fought not with fists but with knowledge, dignity, and an unshakeable belief in the power of education to light the way forward.

As the evening sun sets on Doctor G's final chapter, we hear the echoes of his drums, the ripples of his wisdom, the thunderous applause of all the lives he touched. He leaves behind his surviving brother Berdell Gaston, ex-wife Marilyn Gaston, children Damon and Ami Gaston, and a host of nieces, cousins, and friends who will carry forward his legacy of education, music, and unwavering dedication to uplifting others.

As we bid farewell to this extraordinary soul, we remember his own philosophy: "Miss me a little - but not too long, and not with your head bowed low. Remember the love that we once shared, miss me - but let me go."

Remember him when you hear the drums, when you open a book, when you dare to dream impossible dreams. Remember him not with tears, but with the same fierce joy he brought to every moment of his eighty-five years. For as he would want us to know: this is not an ending, but a transformation – like that fireball across the sky, burning bright, lighting the way, showing us all how to turn our lives into art, our struggles into strength, our existence into excellence.

Miss him, yes – but let him go. For Doctor G has one last lesson to teach us all: how to turn grief into grace, and loss into legacy.

Dr. Gaston's life was indeed big and bright, and his light will continue to shine through the countless lives he touched and transformed. His gifts of passion for education, music, and justice will resonate through generations to come.

Tribute Wall

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“*Dr. Gaston left positive life long impact on my life. His words inspired me to be great and carved what that means in my spirit. A legend for sure.*”

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