



## Desiree Michelle Santana

April 10, 1986 - September 13, 2021

### Desiree Michelle Santana

Our little miracle, “Cool Breeze”, was welcomed April 10, 1986 to Rafael (Ray) Santana and Carolyn Moore Santana, taken unexpectedly into the arms of angels & flown quickly to heaven September 13, 2021. Born at Southside Hospital in Bay Shore, Long Island, NY, Desiree had a rough beginning coming into this world: within 24 hours of birth, she suffered a seizure-like episode & ischemic hypoxia, resulting in low muscle tone & a small vocal cord scar from emergency treatment that left her with a quiet voice, repaired via minor surgery @ age 9. Once she heard her “new voice”, she never stopped talking!

Desiree flourished with early infant intervention therapists (always crying seeing her PT arrive!) & later diagnosed with Myotonic Dystrophy, receiving an IEP with speech services throughout her school years. She attended Mark Country Day, Fifth Avenue, & Gardiner Manor elementary schools, & Bay Shore Middle/High schools. She graduated from Apopka HS, class of 2004.

Mostly surrounded by her father’s family, she always considered herself a “Puerto Rican Princess” & held a special place in the hearts of all her family, friends, co-workers, & neighbors. Desiree was a kind, gentle, sweet, innocent, giving soul. She loved animals, adult dot-to-dot/coloring books, lazy rivers, Harry Potter, \*NSync, Brittany Spears, Selena, Jackie Chan, Jet Li, Will Smith,

Yin Yang symbols, watching Dancing With The Stars, “Big Trouble In Little China”, Fast & Furious/Indiana Jones movie franchises, getting up for “Waffle Wednesdays” & her free Birthday Slam breakfast @ Denny’s. She would be happy to eat daily from the following food groups: Pizza, hot dogs, chicken nuggets, French fries, Pop-Tarts, Kit Kats & Twix bars! Desiree earned her black belt in Shaolin Kempo Kung Fu (Villari’s, West Islip) and her blue belt in Isshinryu (Powerhouse, Apopka) karate disciplines.

Desiree was a good, listening friend & felt privileged & honored to know her NY/SC BFF Tianna Harper, FL BF Marie Kaleel Pringle, & Alexandria Christie: always grateful for any bit of time they could spare for her no matter how their lives diverged. After her father’s passing in Feb. 2010, she took on his role of family “Town Crier”, keeping in touch & texting everyone with news & holiday greetings.

Her mother will forever regret being unable to afford health insurance for Desiree, all while she stepped up as caregiver/nurse during Mom’s own health crises, learning her tender skills assisting with care of her beloved maternal grandparents. She enthusiastically volunteered at Lovell Elementary, Habitat for Humanity, worked as an OCSO School Crossing Guard for several years & was honored after the loss of her father with personal condolences from then-Sheriff Jerry Demings. She also enjoyed supporting staff/students at Sheeler Charter HS by assembling enrollment applications, graduation info packets & supplies, serving students pancakes & chicken wings, filing, making copies, etc.

She was an organ donor & her corneas will be gifted to someone blessed to see all the good in the world through her eyes.

She is pre-deceased by her Grandparents Leonor & Rafael Santana, Mary & James Moore; Father Ray Santana, Aunts Maria Acosta, Nidia Tirado, &

Mildred Vasquez; Cousins Rosie Acosta & Jennifer Parisella; her beloved dog, Jenna. She leaves behind countless family & friends touched by her quiet grace, cherished memories: her Mom, Carolyn; Godparents (Aunt) Susan Moore & Joseph Parisella (who named her "Cool Breeze", which she had tattooed on her left arm in Chinese calligraphy); Aunts Leonor Hunter, Gladys Jackson, Lisa Moore, Helen Santana; Uncle Natalio Santana; honorary "Aunts" Ina Schmidtke & Venus Williams (Mom's BFF's); "Cucamonga" Ed Cordoves (Dad's BF); & countless cousins who were like brothers & sisters to her, too many to name.

She will forever be the "Cool Breeze" welcoming all who knew her when they join her in Heaven. There will be no services at this time. Mass will be celebrated in her name @ 11:00 a.m. Sunday, April 10, 2022 @ St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church 834 South Orange Blossom Trail, Apopka, FL 32703, Livestreamed on [facebook.com/StFrancisApopka](https://www.facebook.com/StFrancisApopka).

In lieu of flowers, please consider becoming an organ or bone marrow ("Be The Match") donor, or donate in her name to endometrial, ovarian cancer, or Myotonic Dystrophy research, your local ASPCA, Humane Society, or other favorite charity. Please think of her & say her name when you hear/play these songs: "See You Again" (Wiz Khalifa), "This I Promise You" (NSync), & "How Will I Live Without You" (Trisha Yearwood). Rest in peace, my little miracle, forever in my heart.

Arrangements under the direction of DeGusipe Funeral Home, Maitland, FL.

# Previous Events

## Mass

APR **10**. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church  
834 S. Orange Blossom Trl.  
Apopka, FL 32703  
(407) 886-4602

# Tribute Wall



“ *Desiree and I had so many memories together. We talked about our futures when we were kids. When life had its highs and lows we supported each other. I love you Desiree and I know you loved me back through our whole friendship.* ”

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**Marie Pringle** - September 24, 2021 at 08:06 PM



“ *Venus W. lit a candle in memory of Desiree Michelle Santana* ”



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**Venus W.** - September 22, 2021 at 03:24 PM