



## Vincent Carlo DeLusia

March 25, 1943 - January 5, 2023

Vincent Carlo DeLusia, 79, Minneapolis, an Educator and Mentor, was a teacher by heart and storyteller by nature. He died peacefully on January 5, 2023. He was preceded in death by his parents, Lenore and Frederico, and sister, Lenore. His mother, a nurse, instilled the value of education, the principles of health and safety, and the recognition of quality in a well-constructed garment. His Trinidadian father, a former merchant marine, nurtured a global perspective, learning, appreciation of diversity, and the people-skills of entrepreneurial negotiations. Vincent learned storytelling and humor from his elders, sitting on the front porches and stoops of his Morris Park neighborhood in the Bronx with its diversity of Italian, Jewish, Irish, and African American families. He contracted polio in childhood during the 1948-1952 epidemic and worked hard throughout the rest of his life to maintain his fitness. He graduated from Cardinal Hayes High School for Young Men (as did Regis Philbin, George Carlin, and Martin Scorsese), where he excelled and became a lifelong learner and responsible citizen. During the 1960's, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Fordham University and two Master degrees from Columbia University, including an MBA; attended the renowned March on Washington, made famous for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech; as well as many civil rights meetings with historical figures most of us only read about. All of this made Vincent part of the world history he continued to study and teach throughout his lifetime.

In 1973, Minneapolis community leader, Theartrice (T) Williams, connected

through a friend, encouraged Vincent to make a move to Minneapolis with his MBA degree. He braved the westward journey from New York and started his career at General Mills and then International Multifoods. Within a few years he left the business world to work at the University of Minnesota as an administrator in the Education Career Development Office from 1975-1983. T. Williams then hired him as assistant director in the housing division of the Minneapolis Community Development Agency. He later started his own consulting business DeLon Associates, using his degrees in International Affairs, History, and Business, which led him to adjunct teaching at Minneapolis Community College, eventually becoming full time faculty teaching some business courses but primarily history courses until his retirement. His life was dedicated to promoting education as a ticket to rise both personally and professionally. An awarded member of the Minnesota Alliance of Black School Educator and the Sons of Bransford, he mentored countless students at during his twenty-plus years at Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC). His storytelling and ability to connect with his students was remarkable. He understood food could be a great inclusive denominator and his annual international potluck project was always well received. Vincent also developed and advised the “Heroes Club” at MCTC, for helping to build character and leadership skills in African American students. He did further outreach through Mankato State University’s Pan-African conference, presentations at Hamline University, and programming at Penumbra Theatre Company that promoted the history and culture of African Americans—all with a youth focus. His generosity for supporting his students’ success and spirit was significant and unparalleled. In addition to education, he appreciated great food and dining experiences, with special affection for Christos and Cov. Music was a cherished part of Vincent’s life, from taking drum and guitar lessons, to listening to Cuban rhythms. He enjoyed nights at the Dakota Jazz Club, or just singing a variety of songs—from folk tunes to Doo Wop—learned on the front stoops of the old neighborhood. He was fond of drives around town and in the country, and found many interests her

enjoyed from dogs, birds, flower gardens, baking (as a Minnesota State Fair ribbon winner), reading about a variety of subjects including Celtic Studies, and having long conversations sitting on a bench on a sunny day. He served as a tour guide at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, for the African and Pacific Island collections, and served with the Restorative Justice Action Committee, to support and shift the choices and circumstances of others to a more positive and hopeful future. His lifelong legacy impacts the world through his students and their ability to pay-it-forward and help future generations rise through education and opportunities.

He is survived by his wife, Jeanene; nephew, Neil; niece, Angelique; great nieces and nephews; and cousin, Connie. He will be deeply missed by family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and former students. Perhaps each of us can sit on our porch, or a park bench and sing a little song. He will be listening. A celebration of Vincent's life will be held at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Sunday, March 26, 2023 at 11 am to 2 pm. Interment of Vincent's ashes, along side his mother and father, will take place in New York City.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR **26**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Minneapolis Institute Of Art  
2400 3rd Ave S  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

## Memorial Service

MAR **26**. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Minneapolis Institute Of Art  
2400 3rd Ave S  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

# Tribute Wall

LF

“ *Latika Archuleta & Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Vincent Carlo DeLusia.*



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**Latika Archuleta & Family** - March 24, 2023 at 12:52 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Vincent Carlo DeLusia.*



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March 21, 2023 at 06:35 PM

CJ

“ *Vince was very instrumental in shaping my son's character and life focus. Although he lived in Minneapolis, Vince would call my son often during his formative early teen years and share his wisdom and wise counsel. I will always treasure him and be thankful for his guidance. Carolyn James, San Antonio, Texas*

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**Carolyn James** - March 15, 2023 at 01:18 PM

RC

“ I was sorry to learn that my old grad school buddy, Vinny, recently died. I was the Columbia roommate of Bill Sales, and it was through Bill that I met Vinny 59 years ago. The three of us had lots of laughs together, as I did with Vinny myself in the early 2000s when I visited Minneapolis on business. What a great friend! What a great wit! Although we spoke by phone in recent years, and although he always promised to visit New York City again, I guess seeing him again face to face was not to be. I will always miss him.

Through Vinnie and Bill, I met Charlie Lynch at Columbia too. Vinnie always knew where the parties were, and one enduring memory I have is of the four of us, underdressed, freezing our butts off on a street corner somewhere trying to find a taxi back to campus after a party. I guess we found the cab because I lived to tell the story, but that night I remember thinking that I might not survive. Fortunately, Vinnie’s wry commentaries on girls, Columbia, and the state of world affairs kept us laughing and energized. I will always miss him.

And what a storyteller! (Charlie, in his comments, calls him a raconteur, and that may be a better word to use, Charles.) Vinnie had funny things to say about seemingly everything. Even about the use of salt as a food preservative in many cultures. He delved into that topic at a Sri Lankan restaurant when I was in town -- the same Sri Lankan place he took you to, Charles? – and, out of an abundance of caution, I ordered the mild version of something, so as not choke on a dish that was super hot. When the food arrived, I found myself gulping down water after every bite, nonetheless. The waitress thought it was funny. Vinnie did too. In fact, all three of us had a good laugh about it. I will always miss him.

Robert Carpenter.

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Robert Carpenter - February 28, 2023 at 11:24 PM

CL

“ I met Vince in September 1964 when he began Columbia University's School of International Affairs and I had entered its School of General Studies, intent upon studying French and German to get a degree in Comparative Literature. A Bronx native, he was extremely generous in introducing students not from New York City to his friends and acquaintances. Our lives were enhanced by his being a liaison. In fact, my first girlfriend in the city, and five years later, the woman I married were both made possible by Vinny. I valued our 25 years of friendship, and although we became estranged, in part due to our own stubbornness and heat, I learned so many things from him as a peer. In retrospect, he was the first person to introduce me to some complexities in Latino and West Indian cultures. I learned to be more conferring and genial and forthright in expressing my knowledge after observing him. He was very perceptive and funny, at times due to his power as a raconteur whose facts at his fingertips and anecdotes could be puffed with some yeast and air. My wife Gayle and I visited with him and Jeanene in the early 1980s in the Twin Cities and he drove us to see Prince's childhood home, Hubert Humphrey's grave, the Henepin Avenue entertainment strip, and a Sri Lankan restaurant. Also, we toured areas my wife had lived in as a child. Vince and I both became college educators (I in English) and I regret that there was a breach. However, he is well remembered and appreciated. Truly a unique spirit and accomplisher. We send our sincere condolences to Jeanene and those who loved him dearly.--  
Charles (and Gayle) Lynch, Brooklyn, New York

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**Charles H. Lynch** - January 25, 2023 at 04:52 PM

PM

I remember his work with the Heroes Club. The club meant much so much to students, including mine, at Minneapolis Community and Technical College. Phil Martin, English instructor

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**Phil Martin** - March 18, 2023 at 09:02 PM

JB

*Vince was a good friend. He was like a brother to me. He was always there for my family and I, to give us advice and to help us navigate through this complicated life. I will miss my dear friend. June Bouye*

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**June Bouye** - March 21, 2023 at 06:19 PM

KS

*Vincent has been a mentor and teacher throughout my life. I met Vince when I was a graduate student at the U of MN and began working for Education programs at Penumbra Theatre Company. He was my supervisor at that time. His mentorship continued throughout my graduate school days and professional career. Some of the best memories include him facilitating a panel discussion at the Walker Art Center where I used to work and giving me a way at my wedding. It was a blessing for me, my husband and my daughter to know Vince. His guidance made a huge impact on my life. His wisdom and words will stay with me for the rest of my life. Thank you, Vincent and we will miss you. - Kiyoko Sims*

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**Kiyoko Sims** - March 24, 2023 at 11:50 AM

KF

*While he left the college with a bit of a cloud over his head, he was always one to speak up about things when others would or could not and people listened to what he had to say. He was a mentor to many - student, staff and faculty alike.*

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**Kent Fritz-Smead** - March 31, 2023 at 02:04 PM