



Mr. Manuel Virata

July 3, 1944 - November 16, 2022

It is with a heavy heart, we announce the passing of our beloved Manny. Manuel passed away on November 16, 2022. He was born July 3, 1944 in Washington, DC. He attended elementary and junior high there and graduated from Ballou High School in 1962. After a short stint in the Army, he worked and attended college. Graduating from Bowie State in 1972. Shortly after college he moved to Merritt Island, FL to pursue an amazing career with NASA in Personnel and Public Affairs. He had a wealth of knowledge about the Space Center and its operations. He toured statesmen, foreign dignitaries and in the "90's" was liaison to the movie crews and actors filming at Kennedy Space Center. He personally met and interacted with the likes of Tom Hanks, Jodi Foster, Bruce Willis and Clint Eastwood. During his days in recruiting, Manny hired an extraordinary group of hispanic engineers. They came here with their families to begin a whole new adventure for their lives. We quickly became family, too. That time of sharing was very special to us. Manny served the Florida College Placement Association (FCPA) for many years, helping young people begin their futures. He was a faithful member of the American Legion Post 332, serving in every office for over 20 years. Manny loved sports. He played football, softball and tennis over the years. He followed all sports, but his challenge was to see every college game aired. We smile. He loved going to the movies and playing cards with his buddies. But most of all he loved his family. He is survived by his wife Cathy of 52 years - daughter Angela Baker, husband Chris and granddaughter Addie - son Jonathan, his

wife Michelle and grandchildren Nathan, Ava, Gavin and Ethan. His siblings Patsy, Ellie, Donna, Lucy and Roger are still with us. Many nieces and nephews will miss him terribly. A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, January 7, 2023 at 3pm. Coastal Community Church, 5795 Falcon Blvd, Port St. John, FL, 32927. To honor Manny a donation may be sent to the charity of your choice. He was particularly fond of St. Jude, Shriners and Feeding America. Condolences may be made at mannyandcathy@gmail.com. Thank you to all that have sent their heartfelt prayers and concerns.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JAN 7. 3:00 PM (ET)

Coastal Community Church
Port St. John, FL 32927

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Manuel Virata*

January 30, 2023 at 03:36 AM



“ *Manny recruited a large number of engineers from the University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez starting in 1975. Thanks to him, I was able to move from Huntsville, Alabama to KSC in 1979. He was respected and admired by the Hispanic community. I certainly owe him for all his support and friendship. May he Rest In Peace!*

Miguel A. Rodriguez - November 23, 2022 at 09:20 PM



“ *Manny had a saying posted on his office door that read, "It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice." He was the embodiment of that saying. He was great at his job, which included corralling the media when they got out of line, but he always did so with a graciousness that is seldom found anymore. I am proud to say he was my friend.*

Walt Lindblom - November 23, 2022 at 10:32 AM

WJ

“ I worked with Manny at KSC for 25 years. Nearly everyone knew Manny including many astronauts. He was known to many in the media: writer journalists, photo journalists, television newscasters, videographers, authors, artists, movie actors, Hollywood production company crews and many other entities too numerous to name. Because of his upbeat nature and always willing to help with any task no matter how difficult, he was revered, respected and loved by all whose lives he touched. Manny loved movies. After retirement, we went to the movies together every Friday until he couldn't go anymore. He will be sorely missed by many. A piece of my life has left me (until we meet again). RIP Manny



William R. Johnson - November 22, 2022 at 03:01 PM