

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Laughter and Tears for Heavy D

Stars fill NY church for rap pioneer's funeral

(AP) — Heavy D was remembered with laughter and tears Friday during a star-studded funeral service that included Jay-Z and Will Smith, humorous anecdotes from longtime friend Diddy, and words of encouragement for the late rapper's family, delivered in a letter from President Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama.

"We extend our heartfelt condolences at this difficult time. He will be remembered for his infectious optimism and many contributions to American music. Please know that you and your family will be in our thoughts and prayers," read the note from the Obamas, according to the Rev. Al Sharpton, who quoted from it during the service.

Grace Baptist Church in Mt. Vernon, N.Y. was filled to capacity for the two-and-a-half-hour service, which was also streamed live on the



Heavy D

Web. It was so crowded, an overflow area was set up. Among those in attendance were Usher, Queen Latifah, Don King, Q-Tip, John Legend and Rosie Perez.

Heavy D died last week in Los Angeles at the age of 44. His family said the death was due to complications from pneumonia.

Sean "Diddy" Combs talked about how Heavy D helped give him

his start in the music industry, and how their decades-long friendship continued up until his death.

"He became my friend. He became my brother, and I'm not talking about friend-brother like we cavalierly use the word, I'm talking about a real friend, a real brother," Diddy said. "Somebody I shared my dreams and my secrets with, somebody that's been there for me at my lowest point, my darkest hour when nobody wanted to be beside me."

Sharpton drew laughter when he noted that James Brown "made us black and proud; (Heavy D) made us fat and proud."

Heavy D, whose real name was Dwight Myers, was influential in the development of rap as it grew into a phenomenon in the late 1980s and 1990s.

His hits included "Now That We've Found Love" and "Nuttin' But Love"; much of his music marked the "New Jack Swing" era in urban music, and he stood out from the pack with his rhymes, typified by a positive vibe and a lightheartedness that endeared him to so many.

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Community Christmas Tree Lighting - Tues, Nov 29, 6 p.m. -- Join the CU campus community and the Concordia neighborhood for the official kick off to the Christmas season.

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CALENDAR for November 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
20	21	22	23	24 Thanksgiving Day Free Dinner Celebration Tabernacle Church 8131 N. Denver Portland, Or 97217 12:00pm until 4:00pm Come one come all	25	26 Islamic New Year
27	28	29	30	Multicultural Film Festival Every 2nd Tuesday Each Month		