Celebration of Life

JaVonn Owen Safford

Sunrise Aug 24 '01 - Sunset Sept 6 '24

Vonn was born August 24, 2001 in Seattle WA to the union of Van Owen Safford and June E. Sanders.

Van took care of him at home for his first five years of life. This is where he honed the skills of fixing and making things with his hands. Unfortunately, his father passed away from COPD before Vonn entered kindergarten.

Vonn attended Hawthorne Elementary and moved on to Orca K-8 for middle school. At Orca K-8 (formally Whitworth Elementary) Vonn joined JazzEd and learned to play the trombone. He loved jazz and had the opportunity to jam with Wynton Marsalis at the Triple Door as a fundraiser for the school and the grand finale as his exit from middle school.

In 2016 he entered Grover Cleveland Stem High School choosing the School of Engineering and Design (SoED) program and experienced many opportunities and firsts.

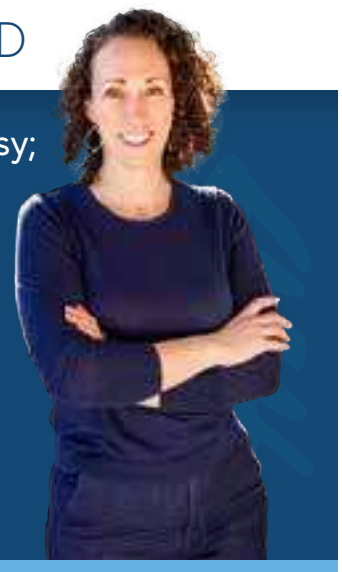
1. Summer of 2017 he was one out of 15 of 500 chosen to intern with King County Metro Wastewater to study how wastewater is processed for over two million households.
2. He was the first Black person of the Major Taylor/Cascade bicycle club at his school and participated in bicycle runs which took him to places throughout the city such as the 2019 Seattle to Portland run.
3. He was a member of the Young Shakespeare Workshop and developed a love for the arts and he performed in many plays at Cleveland High School.
4. He was the first graduating class of the school during Covid. His graduation and accolades were celebrated in the school parking lot and on the sidewalk in front of his home.

We will remember Vonn for the relentless passion he had for his pursuits in life. He was passionate about gaming, his favorite game being, "Monster Hunter". He wanted to tell stories and build worlds through gaming design and his dream was to build his own independent gaming company. To pursue that passion, Vonn went to AIE (Academy of Interactive Entertainment) after high school. He graduated from his program in 2022 with an Associates in Advanced Professional Game Development, specializing in Game Design and Production.

Vonn was passionate about building and making things, especially classic cars. He bought a 1996 Acura Integra (his first car), replaced parts, and made it his own. He even formed a car group named Evergreen Synchro with the concept of hosting events and filming the process of restoring late-model cars. To fund this passion, he worked at Home Depot throughout college and most recently took on new jobs as an employee of Zimmer Biomet in Bellevue and O'Reilly's Auto parts in Renton.

Vonn had a big heart and was protective of his many nephews and nieces. Vonn leaves to cherish his memory: his mother, June. His siblings, MarCe'al: Bella, Christian and Aajiyah. Jhinea: Gesani, Jherrico, Najeh, Reign and A'Raya. Kiersa (Jonathan): Joelle. And several aunts, uncles, and cousins. He will be sorely missed.

ELANA FOR N & NE PORTLAND



"Working to move progressive issues is not easy; it takes a balanced and even approach. **I have worked with Elana on some of those hard issues** — she stays calm, stays focused on solutions and can be trusted to follow through with what she says she will do. **Elana leads with values and integrity.** We need that on the City Council."
- State Rep. Tawna Sanchez

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