



## Ryan Harrison Stripling

April 22, 1983 - December 4, 2019

Ryan Harrison Stripling (affectionately known to many as Jamal), 36, of Lowell, Ark., passed away Wednesday, December 4, 2019. He was born April 22, 1983, in Fayetteville, Ark., to parents Jeff Stripling and Barbara Stripling. He was a National Board certified English teacher at Bentonville High School, where he also created and mentored his students in producing Impressions, a literary magazine. Ryan was the author of a young adult novel, Nephilium. A consummate gamer, he won awards in a number of national gaming competitions. He was deeply spiritual and established strong mentoring relationships with the youth at Vintage Fellowship.

Ryan was a devoted husband to Sara Lynelle Stripling and father to Eli James Stripling. Other survivors include father Jeff Stripling and wife Doris Patneau; mother Barbara Stripling; brother Thomas Stripling and wife Evelyn Skye; stepbrother Brian Patneau and wife Jennifer; stepbrother Kyle Patneau; numerous aunts, nieces, nephews, and cousins; and the many students whose lives he touched.

Visitation will be Friday, December 6, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Sisco Funeral Chapel, 705 W. Meadow St., Springdale. The memorial service will be 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 7, at Sisco Funeral Chapel with Pastor Robb Ryerse officiating. Vintage Fellowship will be live streaming the service at [www.vintagefellowship.org](http://www.vintagefellowship.org).

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Single Parent Scholarship Fund of NWA, [www.spsfnwa.org](http://www.spsfnwa.org). Online condolences may be left at [www.sisc](http://www.sisc)

ofuneral.com.

# Previous Events

## Memorial Visitation

DEC 6. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Sisco Funeral Chapel  
705 West Meadow  
Springdale, AR 72764  
(479) 751-4577  
siscofuneralchapel@gmail.com  
<https://www.siscofuneral.com>

## Memorial Service

DEC 7. 10:00 AM (CT)

Sisco Funeral Chapel  
705 West Meadow  
Springdale, AR 72764  
(479) 751-4577  
siscofuneralchapel@gmail.com  
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# Tribute Wall



“ I was a student of Jamal’s for three years, including as a member of the Impressions staff. It is not exaggeration to say that he saved a lot of lives, including mine, with his warmth and understanding. A large group of queer students, myself included, used to eat lunch in his classroom. Though we must have been a handful and definitely intruded on his own prep periods, he always held space for us. When I was unable to complete my coursework due to an unstable household, he made sure I had all the support he could give me. He was the first adult in my life who made me believe that I could write. Three years on, the grief gets easier to carry. When I remember Jamal now, it is with fondness and warmth and only a slight tinge of sadness.

Two days ago, reading my poetry to a small group at my college, I dedicated the last poem to him. Because of Jamal, I am still alive. I will always be grateful for that gift.

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**Elliot Jackson** - February 04, 2023 at 06:43 PM



“ *Ryan Harrison Stripling*

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January 21, 2023 at 02:29 PM

PB

“ *The timeworn image of a shooting star is appropriate: Ryan flashed into our family’s lives during his high school years. The day we met, he invited me (Patty) for a walk. Off we went down Dickson St., Ryan stylishly dressed in my floppy gardening hat which he had grabbed as we walked out the door. Many more outside the box visits followed before he was off to college. Now he has left us again, completing the trajectory of his life on this earth. And we remember.*

*Patty And Bob Besom*

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**Patty Besom** - December 08, 2019 at 02:51 PM

AM

“ *So sorry for the untimely passing of this talented and intelligent young man and for the pain his departure causes to his parents, spouse and other loved ones.*

*-Alex & Hana Mironoff*

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**Alex Mironoff** - December 07, 2019 at 03:20 PM

KM

“ *I met Jamal at the SCBWI writer event in fall of 2017. We immediately bonded over a love of books and laughter. He joined our critique group and I was honored to read parts of his lovely young adult fantasy. Jamal had sick joy for everything he loved, from books to students to gaming. Even though our paths only crossed briefly, I miss him. I know he is wrapping loved ones in his beautiful words in heaven.*

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**kimberly mitchell** - December 07, 2019 at 10:07 AM

KM

*That should say deep joy!*

kimberly mitchell - December 07, 2019 at 10:08 AM



“ It was a heartbroken little circle around Jamal's bed at the ICU. My three older kids there to say goodbye to their friend and mentor. He had been more faithful than family to them, spending one on one time with each of them, cultivating friendships with them that were their own, not just their parent's friend. They were nervous in such a serious space but brave. I stood close to one side of the bed and my husband on the other. "We're here." I said too cheerfully to actually cover my sadness. Jamal's eyes slowly panned the circle and then he spoke, "Is something going on?" I assumed the toxins were built up in his brain and that he was confused. Of course I didn't want to say we were there to say goodbye. So I stammered, "We're just here... we're just here to say we love you." He blinked slowly, letting the perfect timing build before whispering, "That. Was. A. Joke." Laughter filled the otherwise dark room.

Vanessa Ryerse - December 07, 2019 at 08:56 AM

LR

“ Ryan was the life of a space. Hilarious and fun. He was also a loving friend.



Lyndsey Randall - December 07, 2019 at 07:31 AM



“ 127 files added to the album *Memories of Ryan Album*



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Sisco Funeral Chapel - December 06, 2019 at 03:26 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of *Ryan Harrison Stripling*.



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December 06, 2019 at 02:21 PM

SS

“ Some students are memorable because of achievements. Some students are memorable because of character and integrity. Some students are remembered because of personality. Some students are creative in thoughts, words, and deeds. Some students have exceptional curiosity and persistence in the pursuit of knowledge. Some students are memorable because of a kind, tolerant, accepting spirit that embraces, and even celebrates, individual differences. Ryan Stripling is memorable for all of these reasons.

*I taught school for forty years. Ryan was a student in my AP European History class. His fun loving spirit was infectious without being a distraction (most of the time). Ryan Harrison "Jamal" Stripling was one of a kind. He was special. He was unique. And he will be remembered for all the right reasons.*

*Susie Stewart*

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**Susie Stewart** - December 06, 2019 at 01:50 PM

MY

“ Every 4 weeks I would cut Ryan's hair and we would talk about which books we were each reading, writing and about how smart and funny and amazing Eli is. Ryan had his reading club read a few of the books I recommend -which always blew my mind because he was so incredibly smarter than I am, I never understood why he would take my advice. Ha! He loved his beautiful wife as we talked of her often (both of us in adoration). He was so humble, creative and deep but never arrogant. An intellectual Jesus lover. He will be missed.

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**Melissa young** - December 06, 2019 at 01:42 PM

MT

“ I have fond memories of Ryan as he would swing through the library in the mornings during the quiet of zero hour ,and we would catch up on the latest Marvel, Star Wars, or Fantasy Sci-Fi news. We would share excitement over the latest buzz and newest trailers, and he was always ahead of the game (and me) when it came to reading the newest YA Fantasy reads. He told me he wept as he watched *The Rise of Skywalker* trailer; the upcoming film will always carry a new significance for me. He was passionate about fun and life. His face always lit up when he talked about what he loved, but he absolutely radiated light and joy when he talked about his son, Eli. I was blessed to hear of their adventures with boy scouts, learning to read, starting Kindergarten, and others. Ryan, you are missed.

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**Mary Thicksten** - December 06, 2019 at 12:42 PM

KF

“ My heart hurts for family left behind. My head hurts with all the questions that start with Why? and My eyes hurt from seeing all that joy dwindle down to such much pain and suffering...

Nevertheless, I give thanks for a God that embraces all of that "suck", and gives us the confidence to boldly proclaim his love, with the knowledge that he has this covered. To a God that has Ryan resting pain-free in his arms, and for a church, along with the friends from near and far, that will blanket everyone that needs to be blanketed with love, support, and comfort.

I remember the day that Jamal came to Vintage. I remember the day he got baptized in a hot tub. And I remember the day he announced with great joy, when I saw him last, that everyone was doing well, their son was growing up quickly, but all was good with Vintage and life etc. And now, I regret not having seen him again. Still, I followed closely on FB his life journey with his family, Vintage family, trips to play quirky strategy games for a whole weekend, and his battle with cancer that had us all praying fervently for a miracle. I was glad that we stayed connected, even in this small cyber-way, and now I grieve his loss and mourn for those left behind.

RIP Brother!

Kevin Fitzpatrick

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Kevin Fitzpatrick - December 06, 2019 at 12:27 PM

JW

“ I went to Jr high and High School with Ryan graduating class of 2002 Purple Dawgs. Ryan was always a great friend to me as well as many others. I am saddened to hear of his passing and send my love and prayers to his family during this time. Jamie (Mayes) Wood class of 2002

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Jamie Wood - December 06, 2019 at 11:46 AM

LP

“ Ryan's asking became demanding as spring turned into summer. He wanted to join me at one of my sand volleyball pick up games. I saw Ryan compete in faculty student basketball games, striped crew socks pulled up to his skinny knees and matching bandanna round his large head. I saw his enthusiasm and, at times, his successful three-point launches. I knew Ryan thrived on competition, with...or without skill. And, I knew he could handle the trash talking that would most definitely occur.

So, after relentless, "When can I show you my skills?", I caved. I texted him the night before, gave him the time and place, and told him to wear sunscreen and bring a water bottle, which he promptly forgot the latter the next morning and therefore used mine. And, I even placed him on my team, the kind friend that I was; after all, if he were on my oldest daughter's team, she would brutalize him if he didn't call the ball, or worse, didn't make an attempt for the ball. He knew that - I mean, he had taught her in class. He appeared pleased that now he could spar with her through the net.

And, well, he surprised us. And not just with his blue bandanna. He actually served...decently. And, he only contacted the ball with his forehead once. It only took a couple times of my plowing into him for him to understand this eyes-in-the-sky, sand dance that occurs among players. By the third game, he began to impress.

And, he thrived with the trash talking. My oldest relished that.

This may not be my best memory of Ryan, but it's one many may not know. Ryan loved life, he loved people.

And, they and I loved him.

Lora

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Lora Pate - December 06, 2019 at 10:23 AM