



## Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza

June 6, 1952 - May 4, 2025

Loudonville, NY-Dr. Joseph Banyanga Rukanshagiza entered eternal life on Sunday, May 4, 2025.

Joseph was born on June 6, 1952, in Kabale town, Kigezi District, Uganda, to Tadeo Banyanga and Rose Mukaira. He attended Muchahi and Kashaki primary schools, completed junior secondary at St. Mary's College, Rushoroza, and senior secondary at St. Leo's College, Fort Portal. He earned his undergraduate degree from Siena College in Loudonville, New York, before pursuing graduate studies at the State University of New York at Albany, where he received a master's in sociology with an emphasis on political sociology, a Master of Regional Planning (MRP), and a PhD in Political Development and Africa.

Though he lectured and traveled widely, Albany was home for more than 50 years. His journey to Siena College was made possible through the patronage of Robert Reilly and the Brothers of the Holy Cross, who had been his teachers in both Uganda and life. Known affectionately as "Joe Ruk" he became the most decorated runner in Siena College history, earning four All-American honors—two in cross country and two in track.

Dr. Rukanshagiza was a scholar, teacher, author, and lifelong advocate for African studies, dedicating his work to critical issues of race, politics, and

development. But he was just as well known for his warmth and generosity—welcoming many into his home, never knowing a stranger, and always putting others before himself, especially his family. He touched the lives of students, colleagues, and countless international students whom he helped to feed, house, and mentor as they adjusted to life in the United States.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Tadeo and Rose, as well as his sister and five brothers. He is survived by his children, Jacqueline Busingye, Emmanuel Bakarema (Jewel), and Derrick Kihembo (Gabriella); and by his beloved grandchildren, Tara, Theeran, Freddie, Eva Rose-Marie, and Luciana.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the staff at St. Peter's Hospital and Our Lady of Mercy Life Center. In lieu of flowers, contributions in memory of Dr. Joseph Rukanshagiza may be made to the Cross Country – Coaches Discretionary Fund or to Siena College for The Joseph Rukanshagiza Fund for International Students.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with Joseph's family Sunday, May 11, 2025 11:00 am to 2:00 pm at McVeigh Funeral Home, 208 North Allen Street, Albany, NY 12206. Please enter the funeral home from the rear parking lot entrance only.

Funeral services Monday, May 12, 2025 at 12:00 pm at St. Pius X Church, Loudonville, NY where his Funeral Mass will be celebrated.

To leave a message for the family, please visit [www.McveighFuneralHome.com](http://www.McveighFuneralHome.com)

A celebration of life will be planned at a later date.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY **11**. 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM (ET)

McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc.  
208 N Allen St  
Albany, NY 12206  
(518) 489-0188  
info@mcveighfuneralhome.com  
<http://www.McveighFuneralHome.com>

## Funeral Mass

MAY **12**. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Pius X Church  
23 Crumitie Rd  
Loudonville, NY 12211  
(518) 462-1336

# Tribute Wall



“ McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - May 10, 2025 at 10:24 AM

DM

*I have known Dr Joseph B Rukanshagiza since 1989. Joseph and I have been great friends in every aspect. I have known Joseph as a great humanist, kind and very generous to all manners of people. He has been a family man and very accommodative. He leaves an invaluable impression on me and my wife Catherine. May Joseph's soul rest in eternal peace. Rest in peace my everlasting brother and friend, Joseph. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. That is the way of our world. Praise the Lord and until we meet goodbye my dear friend and brother, Joseph.*

Dr Jotham Musinguzi - May 11, 2025 at 10:57 AM

OJ

*Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza your life was a blessing, and your memory is a cherished treasure. You are loved beyond words and missed more than I can express. You were the first person to embrace me as a brother when I arrived in Albany, NY. Friends are the family we choose, and losing you feels like losing a part of myself. Your laughter still resonates in my heart, but I long to hear it in person again. In the Book of Life, you were my favorite chapter. As you depart, my brother, I will always remember, honor, and carry you in my heart. Saying goodbye isn't for us; instead, I will say that I miss you and look forward to the day we meet again. Rest in Peace my brother.*

*Dr. Otolorin Jones*

Otolorin P Jones - May 13, 2025 at 06:00 AM

RA

*Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord. Let perpetual light shine upon him. Mhis soul rest in peace. Amen.*

**Rugyema Augustine** - May 14, 2025 at 08:33 AM

JB

*Another "Kabale Kid" gone way too soon. We join the Bikanshagiza family in bidding farewell to a giant - Kabale & Uganda's gift to the world. Fare thee well omusigyi owakarambo ka Nyabwana. John Bigyemano in Kampala*

*John Bigyemano & family*

**John Mujinya Bigyemano** - May 18, 2025 at 03:11 AM

HT

*He was a father I never had growing up. Months later but I still fail to believe that he is gone. I will forever be thankful to God for him. Words cannot explain how impactful he was/is in my life. Continue to rest peacefully Uncle Joe*

**Hildah Tusiime** - December 07, 2025 at 02:55 PM

DK

“ *His son, Bryan Julius Kiano born December 3rd 1991, in Schenectady NY.*

**Damari Kiano** - June 10, 2025 at 01:08 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.*

May 12, 2025 at 03:15 PM

KF

“ Kakumba Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.



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**Kakumba Family** - May 11, 2025 at 12:26 AM

KF

“ Kakumba Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.

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**Kakumba Family** - May 11, 2025 at 12:26 AM

CO

“ Cynthia Okot-Kotber planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.

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**Cynthia Okot-Kotber** - May 10, 2025 at 08:24 PM

CO

“ Cynthia Okot-Kotber purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.



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**Cynthia Okot-Kotber** - May 10, 2025 at 08:24 PM

EG

“ E G. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.

E G. - May 10, 2025 at 07:40 PM

HF

“ Harris & Family purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.



Harris & Family - May 10, 2025 at 02:42 PM

HE

“ My Brother Joe  
You promised that when I come back to Albany, I will meet you, but you passed on to the land of the ancestors, the day I arrived. As they send you off today, be comforted that you championed the cause of Africa in the United States through your kindness and open-mindedness. In the midst of Japhet Zana, Mary Amuge, Elizabeth Essien, Languida, Boji Jordan and Barbara, Grandpa and Grandma Boyd, Coli Clark and others, you made life meaningful to us here in Albany. Now that you have joined them, we now know that when we join all of you, we will at least have a place to stay. Fare thee well my brother I will meet you soon. Please, tell them that I am on my way. It is just a matter of time. Our ancestors will find a place for you in their midst

Goodbye My Dear Brother Rukanshagiza!!!! May the Lord be with you.

Henry Elonge

Henry Akwo Elonge - May 10, 2025 at 10:51 AM



“ 17 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - May 10, 2025 at 10:20 AM

IG

*Am called Ishimwe Gloria. I can't believe it's going to a year since you passed away and I didn't get to know....I kept calling your number when it was off....🥹🥹 I wish I knew at least I wud have come on your burial....Soo much in pain since I knew your death... you were Soo good to me and my family.. keep resting in peace...*

Ishimwe Gloria - April 27 at 07:58 AM

SW

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Serena White-Lake - May 10, 2025 at 01:51 AM

DG

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Dhesha Govender** - May 09, 2025 at 07:58 PM

DG

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Dhesha Govender** - May 09, 2025 at 07:49 PM

DG

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Dhesha Govender** - May 09, 2025 at 07:48 PM

DG

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Dhesha Govender - May 09, 2025 at 07:47 PM

DG

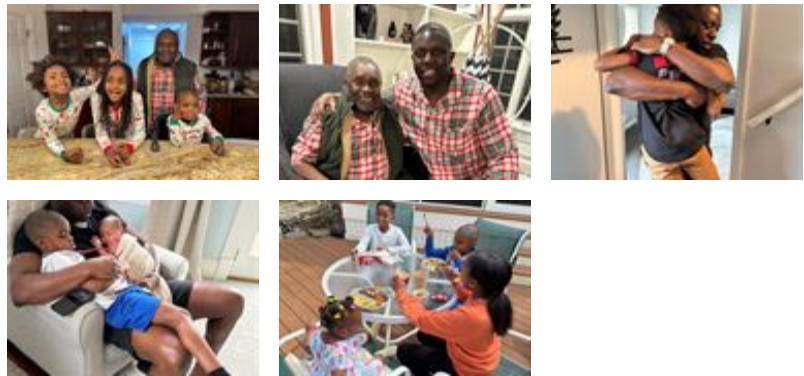
“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Dhesha Govender - May 09, 2025 at 07:46 PM

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“ 160 files added to the album LifeTributes



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - May 09, 2025 at 04:21 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.

May 09, 2025 at 01:23 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.

May 09, 2025 at 01:21 PM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.



May 09, 2025 at 01:21 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.



May 09, 2025 at 01:15 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.

May 09, 2025 at 01:15 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.

May 09, 2025 at 01:05 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.



May 09, 2025 at 01:05 PM



“ We will definitely miss Joseph 🙏



Serena White-Lake - May 09, 2025 at 11:49 AM



“ We will always remember Joseph 🙏



Serena White-Lake - May 09, 2025 at 11:44 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.



May 09, 2025 at 10:22 AM



“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Annette Sebuyira - May 08, 2025 at 08:29 PM



Thank you Uncle Joe for you and for all your presence. Kindness, wisdom, friendship. You are family RIP. 🙏 The Elonge Family

Annette Sebuyira - May 08, 2025 at 08:32 PM



“ I have fond memories of competing against Joe in x-c and track while I attended college at Oswego State. He was a tough competitor and a gracious competitor whether winning or losing a race. His life is surely one that has contributed positively and greatly to the world.

My condolences to his family,

Fran Verdoliva

NCAA All American X/C and Track 73/74

Francis Verdoliva - May 08, 2025 at 05:59 PM



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Derrick Christopher - May 07, 2025 at 01:57 PM

CA

*Lovely photo of the family. I M very sorry for your loss. May he sleep well and his spirit live on in you both . My condolences.*

Carmen Allen - May 08, 2025 at 10:17 AM

CO

*My deepest sympathy is with you all. We are grateful for the lives he touched. May he rest with the angels. Connie.*

Connie - May 09, 2025 at 03:19 PM



“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Derrick Christopher - May 07, 2025 at 01:56 PM

DM

*We shall miss our handsome Joe. Rest in peace my mentor.*

David Makumbi - May 08, 2025 at 02:33 PM

TF

“ *The Led Duke family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.*

The Led Duke family - May 07, 2025 at 01:53 PM

TF

“ *The Led Duke family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Dr. Joseph B. Rukanshagiza.*



The Led Duke family - May 07, 2025 at 01:53 PM

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“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - May 07, 2025 at 09:34 AM