



# Alice Peale Pierce Thomas

AUG 25, 1946 - NOV 3, 2022



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# **Alice Peale Pierce Thomas**

AUG 25, 1946 - NOV 3, 2022

**A**lice Peale Pierce Thomas, beloved mother, grandmother, sister, best friend, and wife, passed away quietly and peacefully on November 3, 2022. She was surrounded by family.

Alice was the founder, president, and CEO of the Center for Development and Learning (CDL), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (also known as the Center for Literacy and Learning). A core mission of social justice drove her strong belief that all children, regardless of how they look, where they come from or how they learn, can and will achieve school success when provided with highly effective teachers and positive, supportive learning environments. In founding and growing CDL, Alice changed the lives of countless tens of thousands by permanently changing the nature of education at a local, national, and international level - and by reforming the very way that teachers teach.

A career educator for 30+ years, Alice had been a teacher, counselor, and intervention specialist in inner city, suburban and rural public schools, and served as a co-instructor for graduate level courses at Louisiana universities. She was the author of numerous education articles, the lead author of Right from Birth© parent training curriculum and the Learning Profiles: Differentiated Instruction for Diverse Learners© professional development curriculum, and was the creator and director of the Plain Talk About Reading Institute.

Alice delivered hundreds of sessions on learning and teaching and presented at national and international conferences. For over 20 years, she assembled and directed CDL's annual Plain Talk education and literacy conferences where international thought leaders disseminated best practices and trained thousands of local, national, and international educators. Through her efforts of assembling the best minds and educational leaders from around the world, Alice pioneered fundamental changes in education and literacy, and she taught thousands of teachers how to better recognize and better serve students with dyslexia and alternative learning styles.



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More than anything else, Alice loved her children, Scott Thomas, Amanda L. Thomas, and C. Russell Thomas, and her beloved husband and best friend of 46 years, David C. Thomas. With an unbreakable will, Alice moved mountains to ensure her family's wellbeing and happiness, and she succeeded. She would often say, "I love you, as big as the sky!", and she did.

Alice was predeceased by her parents, Dr. Ludwell Cowan Pierce and Tessie Day Pierce, her sister Merrie P. Osborn, and her beloved daughter, Amanda Louise Thomas. Alice is survived and will be greatly missed by her husband, David C. Thomas, their sons Scott Thomas and C. Russell Thomas (Kasia), her stepdaughter Tara Thomas Bourgeois (Craig), her stepson Trevor Thomas (Clare), her grandchildren Brynn Bourgeois, Braden Bourgeois, Ellie Thomas, Holly Thomas, Phinneas Thomas, and Maya Thomas as well as by her brother Ludwell Pierce (Bettye), her nephew Andrew Pierce (Candace) and her great nephew, Grayson Pierce.

Alice was born on August 25th, 1946 in Vicksburg, Mississippi. She will live on forever in our memories and in the countless lives that she touched.

Services will be private as per her wishes. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to the Center for Literacy and Learning or the charity of your choice in her name.

E.J. Fielding Funeral Home has been entrusted with funeral arrangements. Please sign the guestbook at [www.ejfieldingfh.com](http://www.ejfieldingfh.com).



## Tribute Wall

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TB

**Tanya Becnel** posted:

My heart is tender at this time. I am sending LOVE to David and Lud and everyone in their families. I was blessed to have met Alice Pierce in college; to have been roommates often; to have traveled together; to have giggled often; to have "decorated" and cooked together; to have shared the joys and sadnesses of Life as we knew them then; to have been "sisters" when our spirits needed one another — endless memories surfacing still . . . and I treasure each one. You accomplished so much. Rest now, dear Alice. With admiration, respect, gratitude and love, T.

December 6 at 10:00 AM

LS

**Laura Stewart** posted:

Alice was an inspiration to me and a friend. She was always a fearless champion for children and left a legacy of compassion and dedication to what really mattered. Alice had the biggest heart and the kindest smile; she was a bright and shining light. My condolences to her family and all who were blessed to know her. I count myself as one of those fortunate people.

November 30 at 9:50 AM

LP

**Lucy Hart Paulson** posted:

Heavenly Thanksgiving to you Alice! I am so grateful for your inspiring and tireless work to make an important difference in the lives of others!

November 27 at 10:36 AM

CR

**Carol Rolheiser** posted:

Alice was the kind of person who made each and every person she engaged with feel like they were special. She was devoted and tenacious about doing what is right for children (and all learners!) and bringing others along with her in that quest. I first met Alice when she attended our conference session in the early 90s. She approached us to inquire as to whether we would work with her -- and so began a great connection with our group of Toronto, Canada colleagues. In 1999 I joined the CDL Professional Advisory Board -- and the range of interactions and collaborations we had over many years after that will always hold a special place in my heart. I was always amazed that in the busy life of Alice that she took the time to inquire about our personal lives and to do small things that meant a lot. Alice Thomas was a life force -- she will be dearly missed and never forgotten.

November 24 at 11:31 AM



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JS

**Jonnie Share** posted:

My words cannot express the surprise and shock at Alice's premature passing. Diane and I send our deepest sympathies to David, kids, family, and friends. Her loss will be remembered by all and I pray for your strength to go on with your lives, as Alice would have wanted. Deeply saddened, Jonnie and Diane Share, Michael and Kimberly.

November 22 at 8:01 AM

RB

**Robert Brooks** posted:

I was very saddened to hear of Alice's passing. I will never forget the first time I met Alice about 25 years ago when I was speaking at a conference about children and teens with LD that was held at the main branch of the NY Public Library in Manhattan. She came up afterwards and asked if I would present at a conference her group was sponsoring in New Orleans. I immediately said yes. I spoke at many of her conferences and was always impressed by her warmth, her humor, and her devotion to enriching the lives of children and teens with LD and providing information and strategies to their parents, teachers, and community to be advocates in this effort. She has truly left a beautiful legacy for future generations and I feel very fortunate that our paths crossed on many occasions. She will be missed. Bob Brooks

November 22 at 6:10 AM

MH

**Michael Hunter** posted:

Alice Thomas was a charming, delightful, irrepressible Southern woman with big hair and an even bigger heart who changed the lives of educators, parents, and most importantly; children with her tireless devotion to education and reading. We will miss her in countless ways.

November 22 at 5:23 AM

LM

**Louisa Moats** posted:

I am saddened by this news! Alice was a determined, tireless, enterprising, and effective advocate for kids, teachers, and families who were dependent on skilled teaching to make it life. I attended and spoke at many CDL conferences over the years and each one showcased Alice's passionate commitment to improving and supporting teacher education. Everyone loved her and her amazing conferences. She had a special knack for engaging the community she served. Every event she organized was a celebration of kids, schools, teachers, and learning. Her achievements will live on and on through all those she taught, helped, supported, and led. My heart-felt condolences to all family and dear friends.

November 21 at 4:39 PM



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JS

**Joan Sedita** posted:

I am so saddened to hear of Alice's passing. I first met her many years ago before she started CDL when she came to Landmark School to learn about learning disabilities and dyslexia.... I was a young teacher back then and was so impressed with her desire to learn. Fast forward years later when she asked me to present at one of the PlainTalk conferences, and then many others after that. I felt so honored that she thought enough of my work to want me to share it a, what over time, became a premier conference in our field. She was a beautiful woman, inside and out. Joan Sedita

November 21 at 1:17 PM

JG

**Judge John W. Greene** posted:

I have great memories of working with Alice when she created CDL. What a dynamo. She had endless energy and enthusiasm and brought together so many fields of learning, consisting of the latest nationally recognized medical and educational experts to impart their breakthrough research into the field of education. Her symposiums in New Orleans where innovative teaching methods developed by these experts were presented to teachers and educators from all over the country. This cutting edge of discovering the many ways our minds assimilate information has changed the ways our students are taught. Alice has truly been a God's gift to advancing how teachers reach all students. She will be missed. Judge John W. Greene

November 20 at 4:29 AM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Alice by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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