



Richard Toraine Bartell

April 27, 1974 - January 7, 2026

Richard “Rich” Toraine Bartell, 51, of Charlotte, North Carolina, passed away suddenly on January 7, 2026 at the young age of 51, leaving behind a powerful legacy of service, creativity, education and a lasting impact. As a Grammy-nominated music producer and executive who has sold millions of records, an awarded and recognized veteran, devoted husband, father, grandfather and loyal friend, Rich lived a full and exciting life whose reach was far and wide.

Rich was deeply cherished by his beloved wife, Keema, of 22 years; the many family, friends, colleagues, veterans and artists whose lives he touched through both his generous spirit, his kindness and care, his unwavering loyalty and his extraordinary talents.

Born on April 27, 1974, in Ramseur, North Carolina, Rich was the son of Richard Louis Bartell and Hattie Cheek Bartell. He graduated from Eastern Randolph High School. He attended North Carolina A&T State University, Norfolk State University and graduated with his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Organizational Communication and General Psychology from Queens University. He earned his Masters Degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Pfeiffer University. He was pursuing his Doctoral Degree from Wingate University when his health began to fail.

Before graduating college, Rich was drafted to play minor league baseball with the Seattle Mariners. He honorably served in the United States Navy as an Air Traffic Controller. He earned Junior Sailor of the Year because he ascended the ranks in record time and a Medal for his leadership and organizational expertise during a Florida hurricane. He later served as an Aviation Engineer for NASA/DOD.

After becoming a Disabled Veteran, he served veterans and their families through a variety of community organizations and state-wide institutions like the North Carolina Assoc of Coordinators of Veterans Affairs. He also served his community through the veterans programs at Pfeiffer University, Goodwill and Central Piedmont Community College, where he served as the Director of Military Family and Veterans Center.

Rich was a change agent. Whenever he entered a space to touch others, they were forever impacted and changed. His wisdom, generosity, quick wit, infectious sense of humor and unwavering kindness made a lasting impression on those around him. His presence brought joy to every room he entered and his talent spoke volumes. A giver and creator, he poured his heart into his work, shaping stories, sounds and lives that will continue to resonate for generations. To know Rich was to be inspired by his authenticity, warmth and deep passion for people and the people he loved.

Rich Bartell was a multi-platinum, Grammy-nominated music producer/songwriter and executive. Throughout his career, Rich worked with numerous major music artists including Beyonce', N'Sync, Destiny's Child, Gucci Mane, Rihanna, Jamie Foxx, Ludacris, Madonna, Missy Elliot, 2 Chains, Teddy Riley, Nipsey Hussle, Little Brother, Sybil, Lute, Emanny, amongst others. As a music executive, he started his own independent music label called The Nukez Muzik. On the grassroots level, he generously shared his mentorship and creative vision to help develop and launch the careers of

numerous singers, rappers, songwriters and music producers.

Beyond music, he was a foodie who enjoyed traveling, creating, researching and learning, having deep conversations, spending time with those he loved, laughing and storytelling. He was admired for his loyalty, humility and ability to uplift others.

Rich was an only child and has lost both of his parents, the aunt who raised him and grandparents. He is survived by his loving wife, Keema Mingo; his biological children Vanessa Bartell and Sean Mancini; his bonus children Tyler Mingo and Caleb Mingo; his grandchildren Aubrey Nelums, Kh'Amari Brewster, Ky'Mani Brewster, Kh'Alani Brewster and Kha'Omi Brewster; his maternal Aunt Tometta Walker and Uncle John Cheek; paternal Uncle Victor Bartell, Aunt Mary Bartell, Aunt Geraldine Garner, Aunt Eva Bartell-Cheek, Aunt Minnie Bartell Turnage, Uncle Keith Bartell and Uncle Kenneth Bartell as well as a host of extended family members, close friends, collaborators and loved ones who will forever treasure his memory.

Cemetery Details

Salisbury National Cemetery

501 Statesville Blvd.
Salisbury, NC 28144

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN **26**. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

A.E. Grier & Sons Funeral and Cremation, LLC.
2310 Statesville Avenue
Charlotte, NC 28206
(704) 377-4243
info@aegriersonsfcc.com
<https://www.aegriersonsfcc.com>

Celebration of Life Service

JAN **26**. 10:00 AM (ET)

A.E. Grier & Sons Funeral and Cremation, LLC.
2310 Statesville Avenue
Charlotte, NC 28206
(704) 377-4243
info@aegriersonsfcc.com
<https://www.aegriersonsfcc.com>

Interment

JAN **26**. 12:30 PM (ET)

Salisbury National Cemetery
501 Statesville Blvd.
Salisbury, NC 28144

Tribute Wall



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Richard Toraine Bartell.*



January 27 at 02:25 PM



“ *Condolences to the family of Richard. I had the opportunity to get to know him through our military affiliation and our roles of working with veterans in higher ed. He was truly a dedicated person who gave his all to make a difference. It was always great to talk with him as we always found so much that we had in common. He will truly be missed by many. May he sleep in peace.*

Darryl White

Darryl White Sr. - January 26 at 07:24 PM

DC

“ *Losing you hurts in a way that words can't fully explain. We played together, chasing the same dreams, spending countless hours on the field, and eventually sharing the privilege of playing college baseball side by side. Those years weren't just about the game, they were about friendship, growth, and a bond that felt more like brotherhood than anything else.*

You had a way of bringing light into every room. Your personality, your humor, and that unforgettable laugh could instantly lift the spirits of everyone around you. I'm going to miss that laugh the most, the kind that stayed with you long after the moment passed.

I'm grateful for every memory, every inning, every conversation, and every laugh we shared. You weren't just a teammate—you were family. Rest easy, my brother. You'll always be a part of me, and you'll never be forgotten.

Dr. Ezra Cowan

Dr. Ezra Cowan - January 26 at 12:14 PM

JT

“ *Jacqueline Thigpen lit a candle in memory of Richard Bartell*



Jacqueline Thigpen - January 26 at 11:05 AM

MC

“ Dyno as he was called, spent a lot of time with his cousins growing up in Ramseur NC and Durham NC. He went on vacations and a lot of Family events with his cousins as a young fellow. Always a joy to be around Him. He came by to visit his cousins after his eye surgery at VA Hosiptal in Durham NC. We have fun memories of Dyno. He will be missed. Aunt Marcia, Durham NC

Marcia Cheek - January 26 at 09:29 AM

MC

“ Sending love to Kema and all the Family. I know you all have precious memories to live forever! God will take care of all your needs! Love and blessings from Aunt Marcia

Marcia Cheek - January 26 at 09:21 AM

MC

“ Marcella C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Toraine Bartell.

Marcella C. - January 26 at 08:35 AM

JA

“ Richard Bartell - Back to back Randolph County Middle School Football Champions 1986 and 1987

Johnny Alston - January 25 at 08:02 PM

JA

“ *RIP - Richard Bartell, you were a great man and I will always cherish the special memories of getting to know you and work with you. You were an awesome person and a great athlete. Blessings to the family and my heartfelt condolences to you for the loss of a great man, father and husband.*

Johnny Alston - January 25 at 07:56 PM

RB

“ *Richard will be missed! He loved family and was protective over us. I love you forever cousin and pray you know how much of an impact you had on everyone especially me. I'm thankful to God that I got to know you when I was younger. As I speak about you to some of our younger cousins, I realized they missed out on knowing a great Bartell man. Rest peacefully cousin Rich!!!!*

Rashada Bartell - January 25 at 07:18 PM

MM

“ *... oh cousin, you know what they say, 'never disregard your small beginnings & always remain humble during every step as you crawl, walk, run, skip, or kick rocks as you grow forward on this life's journey'...I love how you branched off, buried your seed into the ground, & grafted your limb into the vision you believed God for...I have so many fond memories of our youth, especially 'the hill community summer football league' (twkk - lol)...I'm so glad we survived the military & shared a bit of our adulthood together as veterans, friends, & family... peace my dear cousin, peace 🦋🙏🦋*

Ms. Marcella - January 25 at 11:55 AM

VB

We have very fond memories of Richaard (better known as Richie to us). Still remember inf that infectious smile from last year's Christmas Celebration at our home. Prayers for Keema, his chi, grandchildren qnd rhe rest of family as well as friends. To God be the Glory for his legacy. Blessings! Uncle Vic and Aunt San and family!

Victor and Sandra Bartell - January 26 at 07:44 AM

MC

Have great memories of Dyno spending time with his cousins , traveling with us on vacations and other Family outings. Always glad to have him around! He came yo the house and spent time with his cousins after his eye surgery at VA hospital in Durham NC. Thanks for all the MEMORIES! Aunt Marcia, Durham NC

Marcia Cheek - January 26 at 09:00 AM

1T

“ 1993 Aggie Baseball Championship Team planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Toraine Bartell.

1993 Aggie Baseball Championship Team - January 24 at 11:26 AM

1T

“ 1993 Aggie Baseball Championship Team purchased the Ocean Breeze Spray for the family of Richard Toraine Bartell.



1993 Aggie Baseball Championship Team - January 24 at 11:26 AM

MO

“ My heart goes out to the family during this difficult time. May you find comfort in the love and memories you shared together.

Richard—also known as “Dynamite”—I’ve been reflecting on our memories growing up as cousins at our grandmother’s house, and all I can do is smile. The jokes, the love of music and sports—you always brought the excitement.

We celebrate you, your accomplishments, and the beautiful family you built. I know the angels in heaven are truly celebrating with you. You will be greatly missed.

Monique - January 24 at 06:34 AM

11

“ ICN 1990 purchased the Fiery Lily and Rose for the family of Richard Toraine Bartell.



ICN 1990 - January 23 at 06:43 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Richard Toraine Bartell.



January 23 at 02:23 PM



“ 19 files added to the album Memories Album



A.E. Grier & Sons Funeral and Cremation, LLC. - January 21 at 03:47 PM

MT

My beautiful, wonderful nephew. I am anguished at your departure from us. I am and always was a proud auntie. I love you my dear heartbeat. I'm grateful for your family, our family whom GOD has rested upon. He was & always is our family's total source. You've been prayed over, prayed for and missed more than you could ever know. We thank GOD for preparing a place for you in heaven & we know that you are in perfect peace & rest. To GOD be the glory for you life & life eternal. Rest in perfect peace my heartbeat, our King. WE LOVE YOU! Always & forever!

Minnie Turnage - January 26 at 09:48 AM