



Dr. Diane A. King, 92, beloved matriarch and adored friend and colleague, died peacefully surrounded by her family at her residence in Rydal, PA, on March 27th.

A lifelong resident of Philadelphia, Diane was born March 28, 1925 to Mollie and Louis Averbach. Her parents had emigrated from the Ukraine in 1923 to join her father's older brother who had started a factory making hot dogs and salamis. Diane loved being a first-generation American, maintaining old traditions and being a member of a tight-knit Jewish community.

Diane was a lifelong student and influential educator of Jewish culture and tradition. Her parents enrolled her in Talmud Torah at age five and by age 11 she was teaching the younger children. At age 14, Gratz College waved the age requirement for her so that she could earn a teaching certificate in Jewish Education. Diane also excelled in her academic studies, graduating first in her class from Southern Philadelphia High School for Girls and earning a full scholarship to University of Pennsylvania, where she earned a degree in Chemistry. Diane worked as a chemist for four years and then returned to Jewish education. She taught at Germantown Jewish Center for 17 years. During this time, Diane also earned a master's degree and Doctor of Education from Dropsie College. She became a professor at Gratz College, where she taught into her 80s.

Diane taught generations of students from kindergarten to college. She developed system-wide curricula. She initiated a teacher consultancy practice to provide personalized advancement for teachers across the Philadelphia program. She participated in countless organizations, committees and boards. She was friend, colleague and collaborator to hundreds and she loved working with all of them. Diane earned many honors for the impact she made on Jewish education in Philadelphia. Among them, she received the Humanitarian Award in recognition of humanitarian service and dedication to Jewish causes from Federation Allied Jewish Appeal Israel Emergency Fund in 1983; Diane was the first woman to earn an honorary PhD from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1987 and she was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Jewish Educators Assembly in 1998.

While at Penn, Diane met the love of her life, Leon King. They married Nov. 30, 1946 and enjoyed 68 years of marital bliss until Leon passed in 2014 at age 93. Diane and Leon built a rich family life. Diane worked part time while the children were young, so she could guide the children and make sure the family would always have dinner together. Diane and Leon were the center of a large close-knit family, hosting holidays and family reunions. Diane's unconditional love, unfailing support and beaming optimism will be sorely missed.

Diane is survived by her three children—Cheryl King, Elliot (Anita) King, and Louis (Peggy Britt) King, 7 grandchildren—Aliza (Brad) Friedlander, Etta (Ryan) Heisler, Max King, Ari King, Marcie King, Jordan King, and Alister King, 2 great-grandchildren—Lila and Brooklyn Friedlander. She also leaves behind many adoring nieces, nephews, and cousins. Diane is preceded in death by her adoring husband, Leon King, her sister Bessie Nussbaum, and her son-in-law, Dean Hadiks.

Contributions in her memory may be made to the Dr. Diane A. and Leon King Fund for Student Study in Israel or the Diane A. King Scholarship Fund for Giborim, C/O [Gratz College](#).