



COMMUNIQUE

MOURNING THE LOSS OF BELOVED SHOP STEWARD PRISCILLA CARROW

By Marci Rosenblum

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It was a solemn day on Monday, March 30 when Local 1180 received news about the death of beloved member and H+H Shop Steward Priscilla Carrow.

"It is with tremendous sorrow and the heaviest of hearts that we announce the passing of Priscilla Carrow, Coordinating Manager at Elmhurst Hospital in Queens, due to COVID-19. She was a dedicated, active CWA Local 1180 Shop Steward who was loved by so many," President Gloria Middleton announced to the membership.

Priscilla first became a member of Local 1180 in 1994 and a Shop Steward in 2005. She was also a passionate leader of the Queens Borough Community Coordinating Committee, diligently served as a member of Community Board #4, was a member of the Queens Democratic Party, and was a member of the National Council of Negro Women/Empress Life Members Guild, N.A.A.C.P., Corona East Elmhurst Branch, Ericsson Street Block Association 27th & 29th Avenues, Sherwood Village Tenants Association, and the First Baptist Church, Democratic Association of the 21st Century, and was a Delegate for the 11th Judicial Convention, Queens County. She was also very involved at Elmhurst Hospital Center on the Joint Labor Management Committee as Assistant Co-Chair & Co-Chair of the Sports and Recreation Committee, and was a co-founder You Can Go to College Committee.

Priscilla, who lived in LeFrak City and was affectionately known as "Sweet Pea," previously worked for the late state Sen. José Peralta as a director of community relations. Politicians from across New York City and the state posted on social media about her death, everyone from NYS Attorney General Letitia "Tish" James (pictured below top right with Priscilla at the 2019 Shop Steward Conference), to NYC Councilman Francisco Moya, Queens Assembly District Candidate Richard David, State Senator Jessica Ramos, former Congressman Joe Crowley, and Queens Boro President candidate Elizabeth Crowley,

"We lost one of God's most precious children due to the coronavirus, a blessed soul who gave her all every day at work at Elmhurst – a hospital overloaded with the coronavirus – to make sure others were taken care of," Middleton said. "I am beyond devastated and heartbroken as is the

entire Local 1180 Executive Board. Priscilla always had a huge smile on her face and kind words to offer."

Elaine Blair, an H+H Shop Steward and a close friend of Priscilla's, took the loss harder than most. "Words cannot express how I am feeling right now. Priscilla was an angel on earth. She devoted her life not just to her family, but to all of us. She was a friend, a sister, and a mentor to me. She taught me how to put my best foot forward and not be shy in achieving my goals," Blair said. "She was the light that shined wherever she went; I never had a dull moment with her."

Blair said when she became friends with Priscilla, it was like gaining a sister. "I have not found a friend who took care of me like she did. I will truly miss my big sister from another mother. I pray her soul will rest in peace."

In 2015, Local 1180 spotlighted Priscilla in a Communique feature on Shop Stewards and why they wanted to get involved. In that article Priscilla said, "At a young age, I was very involved with helping my grandmother/mother help those who were in need. In 1985, my grandmother asked me to join the Better Community League (BCL) to help organize trips to Albany to the Black & Puerto Rican Caucus. This trip was for the members of the community to speak to our local elected officials concerning the needs in our communities. After joining this organization, I've been very successful in joining others. That is why I became a Shop Steward, so I can talk to my members about issues at work and politics and, even though I've been around a long time, what I say carries so much more weight because of who I am and what I do in my community."

Priscilla's voice did, in fact, carry a lot of weight. Members and non-members alike turned to her for advice, and she was always there to lend an ear and a helping hand. She had a goal, as she told Local 1180 in her spotlight feature:

"My goal is to continue to serve the members of CWA with the highest expectation during my time as a Shop Steward, and to never lead them wrong; to serve as a resource for other Shop Stewards, lending experience, knowledge, and expertise to resolve grievances and other

problems, and to identify issues that matter to members across the work areas in the various departments.”

Teesha Foreman, Local 1180’s Assistant Supervisor of Staff Representatives, remembers Priscilla as her Shop Steward at Elmhurst Hospital, and said she most definitely lived up those goals—and then some.

“Priscilla, P as I liked to call her, held that hospital and our members down. She was always doing for others, whether in the union, the hospital, or her community. You don’t come across many like P. Elmhurst Hospital lost a soldier in the fight against COVID-19, but 1180 lost a jewel, a gem in Priscilla Carrow. I’m going to miss her big, beautiful smile,” Foreman said.

Priscilla’s big, beautiful smile touched so many people throughout her 65 years of life, that between the time Local 1180 posted a notice of her passing on the union’s Facebook page on March 30 at 5:59 p.m. and April 1 at 9:00 p.m. when this story was finished, that post had reached 32,345 people and received 11,467 engagements. The nearly 300 comments all told the same story in different words — Priscilla Carrow was a great woman, a real friend, a warm, caring person, and a fallen heroine who touched the lives in some way of every single person she met. She was planning to retire at the end of the year.

Priscilla, rest in peace. You will be forever missed. Priscilla is survived by her two children, son Tasheen Carrow, and daughter Keyana Reaves.

“Being a Shop Steward, I can make a difference in someone’s life.”

— Priscilla Carrow, 2015