



Ileana Casanova

September 9, 1950 - January 31, 2022

Ileana Casanova, beloved teacher, activist, art collector, music lover, and world traveler passed away unexpectedly in Miami, Florida on January 31, 2022.

Born in Sagua la Grande, Cuba in 1950, Ileana immigrated to the United States with her family in 1961, eventually settling in McAllen, Texas. She graduated from McAllen High School in 1969 and went on to study Education at the University of Texas at Austin. Upon graduating, Ileana led the bilingual curriculum at Metz Elementary School in Austin. In 1992, she moved to Miami where she earned her master's degree from Nova Southeastern University and taught at Auburndale Elementary School in Miami-Dade County until her recent retirement. Deeply passionate about her responsibility as an educator, Ileana shaped hundreds of young minds through her work, and mentored countless others outside of the classroom.

When she was not teaching, Ileana was traveling the globe and immersing herself in different cultures: sampling cuisines, experiencing music, discovering art, and making friends in every conceivable corner of the world. Her travels took her to five continents, and you could always count on her to recommend the funkier museums, the finest dives and, and the hippest clubs. She could put you in touch with chefs, artists, musicians, and probably a driver, too.

Ileana cared deeply about protecting the rights and freedoms afforded to her family when they immigrated to the United States. She believed in the importance of the individual voter and was active with the Coral Gables Democratic Club, volunteering in voter registration campaigns around Miami-Dade County. In addition to this work, she devoted herself to furthering cultural exchange between the United States and Cuba. Ileana was also an ardent supporter of Caritas Cuba, the social arm of the Cuban Catholic Church helping the sick, the hungry, and the elderly through their many incredible programs around the island.

She was larger than life. And she is certainly larger than death. Her legacy will live on

through the curiosity and appreciation for life that she fostered in those around her. She will forever be with us in those authentic moments of joy: on the dance floor, at the table, and as we explore new places. ¡Azúcar!

She is remembered by her mother Marisa Casanova; brother and sister-in-law Roberto and Christine Casanova; sobrinos Ana Casanova, Kathleen Casanova and Eric Ryan, Laura and Blake Keathley, and Christopher and Brooke Casanova; bisobrinas Clara Keathley and Zoey Casanova Ryan; and many so others outside of her bloodline whom she chose to call familia.

In lieu of gifts, the family has asked for donations to be made to charities important to her:

- Caritas Cuba 81 Washington Ave. Cambridge, MA 02140 (617) 849-4027 <https://friendsofcaritascubana.org/donate-3/>
- Coral Gables Democratic Club <https://www.coralgablesdems.org/donate>
- Betancourt-Latorre Foundation <https://checkout.square.site/merchant/2JEPFBN1QBWBV/checkout/VIAZPWQMMMJX7ZYI7M7OWBCL>

Cemetery Details

Ferdinand Crematory

2546 SW 8th Street
Miami, FL 33135