



James "Jay" Arthur Cermak

April 5, 1980 - March 25, 2022

James "Jay" Arthur Cermak, 41, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, passed away March 25, 2022. He was born April 5, 1980 in Palos Heights, Illinois to Rebecca Malinak Cermak. Jay was a graduate of Merrillville High School where he enjoyed theater and music. He was voted the most musical out of his graduating class. He studied musical theater and business at Ball State University, and earned his bachelor's degree in Business from Franklin University, Ohio. Jay was a productivity coach for Keller-Williams Real Estate in Fort Lauderdale, Florida for many years. Jay brought so much joy and laughter into the lives of others. He loved going to the ocean, he always felt Ft. Lauderdale by the Sea was his favorite place. Jay's ambition in life was to motivate others. His shenanigans were well known and he would light up a room with his smile. He was fondly known as Funcle Jay to his eight nieces and nephews, ChloeAdriana, Chloe Grace, Hailee, Wyatt, Landon, Taylor, Rosalie and Elijah.

Jay leaves behind many family and friends who adored him. He is survived by his mother, Becky Cermak; sisters, Jackie Cermak and Donna (Phil) Wingham; brother, Doug (Cassie) Cermak; eight nieces and nephews; and his dog, Milo; special aunt and Godmother, Ellen (Dex) Quillinan; special aunt, Sherri (J.D.) Browne; aunts, Donna, Nancy and Jeanette; uncles, Jamie (Reyna) and John; and many cousins. He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Jim and Donna Malinak; aunts, Shirley and Laura; uncle, Jerry; and dogs, Lucky and Lady.

Visitation will be Tuesday, April 5, 2022 from 3:00 p.m. until the time of the Celebration of Jay at 7:00 p.m. at Shirley Brothers Washington Memorial Chapel, 9606 East Washington Street. Jay's favorite color was blue, so, if possible, please wear blue to the celebration in honor of Jay.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are suggested to Brandywine Community Church Wellspring Fund, 1551 East New Road, Greenfield, IN 46140 or online at <https://brandywinechurch.org/give/>

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 5. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Shirley Brothers Washington Memorial Chapel
9606 E. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46229
<https://shirleybrothers.com/>

Celebration of Jay

APR 5. 7:00 PM (ET)

Shirley Brothers Washington Memorial Chapel
9606 E. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46229
<https://shirleybrothers.com/>

Tribute Wall



“ Wednesday April 6, 2022

I've struggled for nearly two weeks on how to capture this into print. When I met Jay in 2002, I was unprepared to meet what would become the most significant figure in my life for the past two decades. His legacy on me, my family, and how I relate to others has been forever impacted by knowing him. A man of shorter stature, he was larger than life. His comfort and ease with total strangers was easily evident with his signature jovial laugh, broad smile, and his tirelessly big spirit. He loved people. And people found comfort in his presence--whether it was a family function, a musical performance on stage, motivational speaking through Keller Williams, or at an annual home viewing of Christmas Vacation (ridiculously, in costume, of course).

I was unprepared to fall in love with this man. We all-too-briefly allowed our deep personal friendship to evolve into a romantic relationship in 2010. And while that ultimately didn't work out longer than our one year together, I say with confidence today that I loved him madly, deeply, and hard during those days, and all the days since. Every relationship I may ever experience will always be scaled against the "Jay Factor". The song I'll Never Love Again from the movie A Star is Born (2018) by Lady Gaga captures this for me.

Jay and I took a hard parting of our friendship in 2013. I lost total contact with him at this point. We were never able to clear the air, and so I don't know much of his life for his last nine years on Earth. But I know what he meant to me. His passing this month crushed me, and has crippled me emotionally. A veil of regret hangs over me that we were never able to resolve things.

Last night, my best friend Adam and I traveled to his gathering and the Celebration of Jay. Jay meant the world to his family and to his friends, and that was quite evident as family and friends shared song, soliloquy, laughter, and tears in his memory. I just hope that Jay is in a happy place of total love and bliss, and is able to see the love he engendered from countless people.

I love you, Jay. I will miss your humor, your life, your ethos, and I can never feel quite wholly complete.



Ed Eblin - April 06 at 08:55 AM

SV

“ Jay’s wonderful way of making everyone feel special, will live in my heart forever. He made an impact every time he entered a room. I will miss his hugs and sweet smile... that I looked forward to, at all of our KW events. ❤️🙏

Stacie Womack Velliquette - April 05 at 10:44 PM

JR

“ I am very sad to hear about Jay’s passing. As days pass, may the memories of him help mend your hearts and fill the space with the joy and love Jay had for each of you. My high school memories of Jay are ones of joy and laughter. Jay loved entertaining others through choir and theater. He was positive, cheerful, and found the good in everything he did. He was dynamic and charismatic. As I read about what a presence he was in his workplace, I am not surprised at all. Jay had a knack for finding humor in situations and making others feel comfortable and welcome. He was a good friend to all. I enjoyed every moment I got to spend with him. Rest In Peace, Jay. Now you will share your sunshine from above.

Jennifer (Beaty) Rausei - April 05 at 03:54 PM

RA

“ I met Jay in 2000 working at Cedar Point. Such an amazing friend, room mate in 2003. Was very sad to hear of his passing. I will always remember the voice, that amazing across the room smile. We spoke last month and I wish it was a longer chat. Till we meet again, safe passages buddy, love you!

Russ Aikman - April 05 at 12:44 AM

“ It breaks my heart to have to share these emotions and feelings with regards to the passing of a friend, a good person and a work colleague.
I remember working with Jay when I was the team leader for Keller Williams Realty Professionals, Ft. Lauderdale NE.

I must tell you that Jay was one of the smartest and creative people that I've ever encountered before. If you've ever heard the term “make lemonade out of lemons”, Jay was this type of person. He can see the opportunities in the midst of crisis when it came to supporting others with their dream and vision. He could see everything from such a 4 dimensional perspective and the beauty of it is that he was not afraid to take action on his ideas and his vision where most people live in fear of failing, he lived with the expectation of success.

Jay's sense of humor is something that, in my opinion was infectious. He can turn the simplest things into a sarcastic joke and the reality is we know that he always came from a good place. At the same time it was a reflection of what was going on inside his heart.

The one thing that I do admire about him is that he was not afraid to share his heart, his mindset, his opinions and his vision.

He was truly an example of being a bold communicator and speaking with conviction period in a time where people are being silenced every single day for expressing their lifestyle and opinions, this man stood his ground and focused on creating the life that he wanted most. It's sad to see that he couldn't be here with us longer.

However in the short period of time that he's lived. He managed to make an incredible impact in the lives of so many people around the world 🌍. This is legacy.

My only request for myself and for all of us is to live life now! The world is going through a massive values change. What we used to think was the most important thing in our life, is no longer the most important thing in our life. Who we used to think was the most important person in our life, is not the most important person in our life.

Unfortunately, we are being discouraged to think independently by the new label that's been broadcasted throughout the world and everywhere which is, “The Great Resignation”. This is simply a message that the world is sending to everyone else that we can no longer continue to live the way we've been “modeled” to live and as a world we want and deserve more.

So when I think of you Jay, I know that you wanted and deserved more. I will see you in the next life my friend. You have set a great example of what it looks like to manifest your dreams and what it looks like to knock down one domino at a time which eventually leads to something massive that people can model and people can respect and I know your journey is not finished.

Onward!

Robert Carbuccia - April 02 at 06:21 PM

SF

“ I did not know Jay personally but knew his sister Jacquleen and have heard much about the family vacations and decorating golf carts. I enjoyed the amount of love that his sister had for him. Your family is in my thoughts and prayers. God Bless

Susan Foster - April 01 at 05:25 PM

MT

“ I did not know Jay personally yet I learned so much from him the past two years with his outpouring of knowledge of our systems at Keller Williams. He had an easy going personality and is a great loss. My deepest sympathies to his family and all who knew him.

Mary Tynell - April 01 at 11:35 AM

CS

“ My heart goes out to you and your entire family. Everyone who knew Jay was touched in some way, he grew people around him, an all around amazing person. So smart and funny. I will miss Jay with all my heart. His laugh, his sarcasm, my best friend. 💙



Christine Swanson - April 01 at 07:51 AM

CV

“ Jay had the heart of a servant leader. A truly wonderful, fun loving gentleman, he was a wonderful speaker and helped so many realtors. This is a huge loss to Keller Williams. I, for sure, will miss his energy.

Cherylyne Vaz - April 01 at 07:22 AM

HH

“ I knew jay just from KW connect and all his video to help all Realtors to grow up in Busniess !
Always smiling and very helpful
He was great person
Too young
Rest In Peace 🕊

hala hanna - March 31 at 09:22 PM

FW

“ Frankie W. purchased a sympathy card for the family of James "Jay" Arthur Cermak.



Frankie W. - March 31 at 04:23 PM

RT

“ I am so shocked and saddened to learn the news of Jay's passing. We met at Fort Lauderdale Front Runners - Walkers in about 2016. We were FACEBOOK friends and kept in contact with occasional posts. Rest in Peace dear Jay.

Randy Turner - March 31 at 09:21 AM

RW

“ Becky and family,

My heart is broken for all of you. Jay was such a very special person, in many ways I thought of him as my other son. I hope he is at peace and that with time, you all too will find peace. Sending hugs and prayers to all of you.

*Love, prayers and hugs,
Rita Whitaker*

Rita Whitaker - March 31 at 08:57 AM

IG

“ I remember watching you and Milo in your arms so many times on our Daily Pivot Shift call with James Shaw and our family. I will miss your words of wisdom and shining personality. May your memory be a treasured blessing.

Ira Goodman - March 31 at 07:45 AM

GC

“ Jay, it was an honor to work with you here at KWRI. You were the epitome of the Keller Williams culture. You will be missed so much, thank you for being a beacon of light in this world.

George Craig - March 30 at 10:36 PM

GF

“ This bright light has been dimmed way to early. Jay was always a joy to be around and his smile, infectious. I enjoyed having him present at my conferences and you can bet, he is still in the middle of a crowd somewhere. Godspeed my friend.

Greg Gorman - Naples FL - March 30 at 09:45 PM

LM

“ Becky, Jackie, Donna, Doug and your families,

The only word that comes to mind is heartbroken. Jay was such a light in this world and seemed unstoppable. He was a great friend to us, even as a teen. He was there to help in John's business, with the choir, and with our family - even a great help to Grandma Vivian! We always called him our "emergency backup son". He was such a blessing to so many people- as you all know so well. May the angels lead him into paradise. He is truly in our hearts.

John, Laura and Ann Marie Monteen

Laura Monteen - March 30 at 07:59 PM

MA

Jay will be terribly missed by so many, including The Keller Williams Family and Pivot Shift Community. His smile and energy would light a fire in our souls that would make us smile, care, achieve, prosper...BELIEVE. His brightness will continue to shine within all of us. Sending prayers, hugs, light, and peace to his family and loved ones. SIP Jay...Never Forgotten 🙏👍💔

Marlene Alvarez - March 30 at 10:56 PM

TC

It's so sad to lose someone let Jay. He was an awesome young man... he will be missed.

Tony Cordileone - March 31 at 09:34 PM

BM

“ Jay was always sweet and supporting and such a joy! I'm so very sorry for your loss.

Bob McCranie - March 30 at 07:07 PM



“ I am so sorry to hear of Jay's Passing! It was a pleasure to get to know him while he was in Arizona. He will be missed by many. His passion for life was so apparent in everything he did. Rest in peace Jay. Sending love, light, peace and understanding to all of his friends and family who love him so dearly.

Penny Lambert - March 30 at 06:39 PM

MR

“ Thank you Jay! To your family and friends please know that Jay left a dent in the universe. His Witt and pure heart impacted and inspired so many. Well done good a faithful servant!

Mark Richard - March 30 at 05:23 PM

RW

“ Farewell Jay...you were a bright shining light everywhere you went. You truly made an incredible impact in the Real Estate Industry and no doubt in all areas of your life. You left our world a better place than you found it, and you will be dearly missed. Thank you for being a shining example of living a powerful and impactful life....you will not be forgotten!

Ron Wexler - March 30 at 05:17 PM



“ So sad to hear of Jay's passing. He was such a bright light and energy, so full of passion to help others. I knew him through our KWU community and of course from his excellent youtube videos. Prayers and peace to the family and everyone who knew and loved him.

MaryBeth Kaljian - March 30 at 04:44 PM



“ I met Jay several times at various KW conventions (we ran in the same tech circle). The impact Jay had on people around him is immeasurable and hard to obtain by most humans. He was a STAR. Keller Williams will not be the same.



Mindy VanTil - March 30 at 04:23 PM

MN

“ I was so sorry to see Jay leave Ft Lauderdale. He was my friend and coach since I started in the real estate business 3 years ago. I am absolutely stunned to here of his passing. Such a bright light and mind, has been taken from all of us way too soon. I want to express my sincere sympathy and condolences to his mother and family. Take care of Milo for him. Jay may you rest in peace, you will be remembered fondly, dearly and sadly for leaving us all way too soon.
Michael Nicotera



Michael Nicotera - March 30 at 04:15 PM

SG

“ Jay was such a huge asset to our KW Indy Metro North office, and gave so much of himself to anyone who had a question, or needed something. We used to laugh & kid around a lot - always joyful and motivated! My funniest memory of Jay is that one year for my birthday, he gave me a framed picture of himself! He will be deeply missed. Godspeed my friend!



Sherrill Gunn - March 30 at 04:13 PM

AR

“ I first met Jay in a coaching development program. He was such an inspiration and an all around amazing person. I did not know him very well, and yet it deeply saddens me he is gone, knowing he will not be there at the next session to share and inspire. To his close family and friends I wish you the utmost of peace and acceptance in this impossible time. He shall be remembered and cherished for all eternity.

Alex Reed - March 30 at 04:03 PM

TG

“ Jay was a tremendous asset to and resource for us Keller Williams agents. I really enjoyed his enthusiasm in his videos. He will certainly be missed... Prayers for Jay's entire family.

Tony Gates - March 30 at 03:47 PM

MO

“ One of my happiest actors. Was a great “Jack” Always played with my children they like him a lot . Part of the Merrillville High School theater of the 1990s. I will miss him. Thank

Mark Owens - March 30 at 03:40 PM

EF

“ When I first met Jay he impacted me with that big smile of his. I was new to the real estate community, but Jay still made me feel welcomed. He is truly someone I will never forget.



Emma Fifer Franke - March 30 at 03:32 PM

MA

“ Jay made us laugh, Jay supported us - he was a huge part of why we are the agents we are today and we looked up to him as a mentor and as a dear friend. He will be missed, but never forgotten. As you always told us Jay - we will make sure that we are "rock stars" in all we do. Rest Easy. With love and our deepest sympathies, Mariela Rico & Zachary Maxwell



Mariela - March 30 at 02:55 PM

SA

“ Jay was such a great part of our KWFTL Family and he will be so missed. Rest well my friend, thank you for everything! Sharon Arnold-Keller Williams Fort Lauderdale

Sharon Arnold - March 30 at 02:50 PM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of James "Jay" Arthur Cermak.



March 30 at 02:50 PM



“ Back in 2014, this was taken at our first NAGLREP National Conference here in Fort Lauderdale. At that time, I could have said I taught him everything he knows. He far surpassed me in the following years. I am so sad he's gone way too early.



Robert Darrow - March 30 at 02:42 PM

CA

“ My favorite memories of my uncle jay consisted of how happy he was all the time. No matter what time of day he made everyone's day a million times better. When we were at Disney for a Family Vacation, we made up these christmas parodies about jay. I thought it was the funniest thing. My siblings and I joked that he should make us a tshirt. So a couple christmas ago he made us "Happy HoliJay" shirts. I just miss him so much. And i wish so much love to my parents, aunts, uncles, and grandma. You guys are the strongest people i know.



Chloe Adriana - March 30 at 01:33 PM

JC

“ After so many zoom calls and chats about “Command,” I had the privilege of meeting Jay in person at Keller Williams Family Reunion in Dallas, Texas in February 2020. He was a great mentor and friend. A truly amazing human. He will be greatly missed.



Jay Canady - March 30 at 01:18 PM

ET

“ Jay was a good man. Such a smart and joyous person. I couldn't help but smile every time I saw him. I'm shocked and saddened to learn of his passing and pray for ease of emotional pain for his family and friends.

Emily T - March 30 at 01:14 PM

RA

“ I knew Jay professionally. He was such a lovely, kind, giving person. I am so sad to learn of his passing and send his family and friends much love during an unthinkable time.

Rachel - March 30 at 12:45 PM

DM

“ Jay was always the highlight of every family function, and I always looked forward to spending time with him. He had a way of bringing so much happiness and joy wherever he went. It's hard to imagine a world without him, and he will be so greatly missed.



Danielle Mays - March 30 at 09:41 AM

SG

Becky
Shocked to hear about Jay passing
My deepest sympathy

Susan gaines - March 30 at 11:45 PM



“ What I remember most about Jay was him being the life of any room he entered. So full of kindness and energy for those he cared about. I can't imagine a world without him. Wishing the whole Cermak family comfort in the days ahead.

Nina Brown and family
(Picture taken in November 2009)



Nina Brown - March 30 at 12:21 AM