



## Jacob Robert Lorkovic

September 4, 2001 - December 30, 2025

Jacob Robert Lorkovic, age 24, passed away peacefully on December 30, 2025.

Born on September 4, 2001, in Cleveland, Ohio, Jacob was the beloved son of Aimee Dray and Robert Lorkovic — their pride, their light, and their constant source of joy.

From middle school, Jacob's passion for music was evident. He had an instinctive gift for understanding rhythm and harmony, but more than that, he had a rare ability to make people feel the music. His parents nurtured this love every step of the way — from concerts as a family to jam sessions with his dad — moments that became the heartbeat of their family life.

A proud 2019 graduate of Willoughby South High School, "Sparkles" found his true passion while playing the baritone for the Marching Rebels. He realized that this combined environment of music and education would be his lifelong pursuit. He then continued a cherished family tradition by attending Miami University, where he earned his Bachelor of Music with a concentration in Music Education. While at Miami, he found both purpose and lifelong friendship. He led his fraternity, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia, played in the Miami University Marching Band and sang in the Men's Glee Club. Most importantly, it was at Miami that Jacob met his best friend and fiancée, Tatum Durbin, the love of his life.

This year, Jacob began what he called his “dream job” with Northridge Local Schools in Dayton, Ohio, teaching music to students from sixth through twelfth

grade. As Band Director, he devoted himself to inspiring young musicians with the same encouragement and passion he had once received from his own high school music teacher, “Mr. P.” Those who worked with Jacob remember how his passion was contagious, his energy unmatched, and his belief in his students unwavering. As one school official shared, “Jacob made such a profound difference in such a short time and was loved by his students.” Jacob is survived by his loving parents Aimee Dray (Brad Steinberg) and Robert Lorkovic (Lorna Reardon); his devoted fiancée, Tatum Durbin; his grandmothers: Barbara Lorkovic and Barbara Dray; his aunt, Karmi (Austin) Gura; his uncle, Albin (Kerry) Lorkovic; his cousins, Charlie, Sam, Emma, Caleb and Isabella as well as extended family and many cherished friends; and his faithful cat, Sylvain.

He was preceded in death by his paternal grandfather, Slavko Lorkovic, and his maternal grandparents, David Dray and Susan (John) Vanderberg.

Visitation will be held on Thursday January 8, 2026, from 4:00 to 7:00 PM at MONREAL SRNICK FUNERALS & CREMATIONS, 35400 Curtis Blvd, Eastlake, Ohio 44095

A Mass of Christian Burial will follow on Friday, January 9, 2026, at 11:00 AM at Saint Noel Catholic Church, 35200 Chardon Road, Willoughby Hills, Ohio. Private family interment will take place in All Souls, Chardon Twp.

The family asks that, in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to The Jacob R. Lorkovic Foundation c/o either Aimee or Rob to help continue Jacob's mission in support of student musicians and music educators — to help his song continue in the hearts of others for generations to come.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 8. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Monreal Srnick Funerals & Cremations  
35400 Curtis Blvd.  
Eastlake, OH 44095

## Funeral Mass

JAN 9. 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM (ET)

St. Noel Church  
35200 Chardon Road  
Willoughby Hills, OH 44094

# Tribute Wall

MR

“ Rob and Aimee, I was so saddened to hear of your deep, deep loss. I remember Jacob from my preschool class at All Saints school, and what a sunny, happy little boy he was. He obviously continued to bring joy to those around him through his gifts of music and teaching. Please know that you will be held closely in prayer as you mourn.

Mary Rainey - January 10 at 03:05 PM

JM

“ Joshua Martin purchased the Pretty Please for the family of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.



Joshua Martin - January 08 at 03:13 PM

TC

“ The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.



The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland - January 08 at 02:35 PM

CS

“ Rob, Aimee, Tatum and family: I can't imagine the depth of your grief on the loss of such a young, bright soul. Thinking of you all at this difficult time and hoping your happy memories bring you some measure of peace. With love, Christina Skarjak-Cragg

Christina Skarjak-Cragg - January 08 at 02:19 PM

SS

“ Sarah S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.

Sarah S. - January 08 at 02:09 PM

ND

“ Nancy Lesic & Richard Demchuk purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.



Nancy Lesic & Richard Demchuk - January 08 at 09:55 AM

LF

“ Love, Your Northridge Family purchased the Encanted Cottage for the family of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.



Love, Your Northridge Family - January 08 at 07:32 AM

LF

“ Love, Your Northridge Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.

Love, Your Northridge Family - January 08 at 07:32 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of  
*Jacob Robert Lorkovic.*



---

January 07 at 06:48 PM



“ *Arrive in Style* was purchased for the family of  
*Jacob Robert Lorkovic.*



---

January 07 at 11:05 AM

SP

“ Mr.L was more than just a teacher and band director to me. he was like a brother to me, he always made sure that i knew if i ever needed a place to go when i was sad or just having a bad day i could come to the band room. He was there for me when i needed someone most, he was a big inspiration to me and so many others. He always made me laugh and smile when i was around him. We had so much in common, and that’s what made us so close. We would always listen to Panic at the disco during 6th when i would come down there. I loved every memory we shared together, i’ll never forget what he taught me.

Whenever i would doubt myself or think lowly of myself he would always encourage me to keep going and tell me the opposite of what i was saying about myself. He was an amazing person, and i’m sure many others who were close to him like i was can agree. Thank you for everything you’ve taught me. I’ll never forget a single thing you’ve told me. I’m really gonna miss being bullied by you, it always made me laugh when you would mock everything i said lol. i love you Mr.L, i hope you rest in peace.



Sophie Proffitt - January 07 at 12:17 AM

SF

“ Sharon Myers (Daneshmand) and family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.



---

**Sharon Myers (Daneshmand) and family** - January 06 at 05:49 PM

EY

“ He was a very nice guy and my favorite teacher I will never forget him I love you Mr. Lorkovic

---

**Emaricia yates** - January 06 at 03:27 PM

EM

“ Mr. Lorkovic was such a great mentor to his students and he was so kind, he was such a nice person and I would like to send regards to his family, he was such an amazing person and we will all miss him. I hope you rest in peace and I hope you spend your eternity in heaven.

**WE LOVE YOU MR.L!!**

---

**Eli Miniard** - January 06 at 03:26 PM

BR

“ I was also a student of his

---

**bridget** - January 05 at 09:48 PM

BR

“ *Mr lorkovic was more than a teacher he was a friend if somebody had a bad day he would let them have a moment and he made us see music in a different way then others have in the past and my current choir teacher is making our spring concert to honor him he just brought light to the room and making the day better I wish I could see him again before he passed away.*

---

**bridget** - January 05 at 09:47 PM

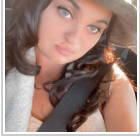


“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.*



---

January 05 at 08:15 PM



“ Jacob, you promised us you wouldn't leave. What the heck man! Working with you over the last 5 months has been great. Suppo and i were seriously worried about letting yet another stranger in to the band room around the kids, you proved us so wrong. You came in and immediately won the kids over. The way you encouraged these kids to be there best and be them selves. You did so much for my boys too.. You taught novah that he could do what he wanted and let him learn the quads, now he won't stop beaming every time he plays. Corban was originally upset that you couldn't string his violin when they came back from break but now he is eager to learn because he knows you'll be proud. You were the perfect band director for this school! That shirt fit you perfectly!

Aimee and Robert. You raised one hell of good guy. He was definitely taken too soon from all of us. Tatum, he was not around long enough for you either. So much more life to live.

---

**Nichole Morrison** - January 05 at 06:23 PM



“ my name is gabriel phillips and I was a kid Mr lorkovic and one time he said to me before the concert believe in your self and never give up

---

**Gabriel phillips** - January 05 at 02:53 PM



I ment Mr lorkovic taught

---

**Gabriel phillips** - January 05 at 02:52 PM

SM

“ My heart goes out to the family, friends, and all of the his students. Thank you for being there for the students and thank you for everything you did with the band. You will be greatly missed. Once a polar bear, always a polar bear. Rest in peace.

---

**Samantha Mutter** - January 05 at 10:33 AM

AC

“ At the beginning of the school year, it was clear that the vibe in the band had changed. Mr. L was surprised every time I told him that.

Our paths did not often cross, but when they did, I let him know how appreciated he was.

I thanked him for being the inspiration for the pride I could see on his students' faces and in the way they moved throughout the school. They portrayed a confidence I had not seen before.

It was a beautiful experience. Thank you, Mr. L.

---

**a colleague** - January 05 at 10:02 AM

DB

“ Prayers for family and friends. Fellow Polar Bear, Dana Burris



---

**Dana Burris** - January 05 at 09:26 AM

MS

“ *Dragi Jacob  
Pocivao u miru Bozjemu. Neka te andeli cuvari zagriju kao nekada  
tvoji najmiliji.  
Rest in peace dear Jacob. May the angels at heavens gate  
embrace you as those who loved you most once did.*

---

**Maria Skarjak** - January 04 at 07:29 PM

JS

“ *May Jacob rest in peace 🙏  
Condolences to family and friends.*



---

**Joe Skarjak** - January 04 at 07:05 PM

JE

“ *While I didn't work directly with him, the way his students spoke  
about him said everything. In Bear Facts class, my students  
consistently shared how much they loved band class, and several  
even wrote about it in our newsletter. His positive impact on  
students was clear, and he will be greatly missed.*

---

**Jesemy Eisele** - January 04 at 04:57 PM

AD

“ Jacob what can I say he was the best band director Northridge has seen in a long time. He not only cared about his band kids but about what the community felt about him and how he was doing with the band. We could not tell him enough “you are doing more than was expected and you have the love and support this community can give” well Jacob know that you have touched sooooo many hearts here at Northridge and you will be greatly missed. You are a true polar bear and will always be. Rest in peace and know we all love you and miss you greatly

Ann Didier - January 04 at 03:42 PM

TF

“ Though we only had the gift of knowing Jacob for a short time he has forever changed the lives he touched including mine and my husband his tender touch with our Students fellow staff and community members was a perfect fit! Words can not express how deeply saddened I remain after hearing of his loss I pray that comfort and peace find your family, his fiance' and his whole tribe of friends, during this time of loss and sorrow



Tina Fiore - January 04 at 11:02 AM

SG

“ Skarjak Georgina lit a candle in memory of Jacob Robert Lorkovic



Skarjak Georgina - January 04 at 09:05 AM

SK

“ Dearest Rob & Aimee, beloved fiancée Tatum, teta Barbara, Albin & Kerry cousins and extended family,  
I am truly at a loss for words to utter to console your broken hearts. Your joy is now flying amongst the angels singing his beloved song with those who called him to heavens gate. May his soul forever play his life's song and may the guiding light of his soul sun shine down upon you and warm your hearts. You are all in our prayers tenfold. We pray for your strength for your hearts to heal and for your everlasting peace. May perpetual light shine upon your most beloved Jacob always and his precious soul rest in eternal peace.

Sandy Skarjak Kockovski - January 03 at 07:02 PM

JG

Aimee, we never got a chance to know each other well. But I do know that you & Jacobs father must have loved him very much. That shows, I have never met a sweeter, kind, polite, & caring man than your son .  
Jacob  
I want you to know that I have been through this and it's hard, very hard. So please feel free to call me for anything. I want to be able to do something for your family. I may be disabled. But, I still have a heart. Don't go through this tragedy by yourself. I will always have Jacob with me in my heart. Tatum couldn't handle it if she was to loose his family also. With my deepest sympathy and bleeding heart. I'll be there for you. Your friend Jackie Mullins

Jackie Mullins/ Tatum Bliss, grandmother - January 04 at 04:17 AM

TM

“ Our hearts are breaking for Aimee and Rob!! We are so sorry. We were best friends with Jacob's grandmother, Sue. There was never a conversation when she didn't bring up “Jakey”. He truly was the love of her life. I'm sure she is welcoming him home in heaven with open arms!! May Jacob rest in peace.....

Ted and Jackie Mowen - January 03 at 06:15 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.



---

January 03 at 05:01 PM



“ Dan & Sharon Sheehan planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.

---

**Dan & Sharon Sheehan** - January 03 at 05:01 PM



“ Condolences to the family and special hugs for Tatum



---

**Barbara Cox** - January 03 at 04:37 PM



“ Our deepest condolences Rob, Aimee, Tatum, and extended family. Holding you in our thoughts and sending you strength. Jacob will be greatly missed, forever in our hearts and in song. Love Edward, Kerry Ann, Owen and Eireann Skarjak

---

**Edward & Kerry Ann Skarjak** - January 03 at 04:32 PM

CF

“ Christina Cragg, Edward Skarjak & Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.

---

Christina Cragg, Edward Skarjak & Family - January 03 at 03:32 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.



---

January 03 at 03:32 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Jacob Robert Lorkovic.



---

January 03 at 03:31 PM

LE

“ Few students have touched my life the way Sparkles touched mine. I was so fortunate to be a part of his journey through middle and high school band, and serve as his contest accompanist, which is where I started calling him by the nickname that has stuck with him for all of these years. We also share a birthday, and I cherish the memory of our football game at Maple Heights, where the marching band sang to both of us. I also treasure the memories of teaching him piano before he left for Miami--the discussions about music that were mature beyond his years, and he also, after years of chiding, got me into the Marvel movies and helped catch me up so that I would know what was going on!

He was not only a musician of the highest caliber, but an even better human. He always had a smile and a kind word for others, and from his earliest years in band was a true servant-leader, as well as a leader by example.

Reading of the impact he had on his own students comes as no surprise. In his short time at Northridge, his students and colleagues got to see what we've all known since the beginning, and I'm grateful for the impact that he had on his teachers in Willoughby, his friends and bandmates at Miami, as well as his own students. Sparkles, your nickname suits you perfectly, and you will continue to be a shining light for all of us who have been so privileged to know you.

---

Lori Elias - January 03 at 02:45 PM

TF

“*Jacob Lorkorvic was so much more than a band teacher to my daughter. During a time when band felt difficult and life felt heavy, he helped bring her love of music back and gave her a place where she felt understood, encouraged, and safe to be herself. She truly looked forward to spending her all of free time with him at school—talking about music, space, and big dreams for the future. Even if she was supposed to be practicing.*

*He never dismissed her ideas or her persistence. Instead, he listened, encouraged her, and helped her believe that her voice and passions mattered. Through his love of music, he influenced not only what she listened to, but how she saw herself. Panic at the Disco will always remind her of him.*

*I am deeply grateful for the role he played in her life and for the care he showed all of his students. Losing her favorite teacher, band director, and trusted mentor has been incredibly hard, and he will be missed more than words can express.*

*We love you, Mr. L.*



---

**The Proffitt Family** - January 03 at 02:32 PM