

OBITUARY INFORMATION FORM

Last Name: Pierce First Name: Lelaina

Middle Name: N/A Age: 48

Professional Title: Television Producer;
Documentarian Military Rank: N/A

Date of Death: 3/14/20 Place of Death: Austin, TX

Cause of Death: Lung Cancer

Date of Birth: 10/29/71 Birthplace: Denton, TX

Parent Names: Tom Pierce (father) Charlane McGregor (mother)

High School/College: UT-Austin Graduation Year: 1994

Spouse(s): Troy Dyer Marriage Date(s): 6/18/1996

Occupation(s): See Below Position(s): _____

Regional Emmy, Producer, "Life with Lainie" 1998; UTA distinguished alumnus, Department of Art, 2004; Best Curated Series winner, "A Lost Generation," International Documentary Association, 2006; Best Documentary Series winner, "A Lost Generation," Dallas-Fort Worth Film Critics Association, 2006; Regional Emmy, Producer, "When X met Y: The Clash of Generations," 2010; nominee, Academy of Motion Pictures Award, Best Documentary, "It Didn't Make Us Stronger: How the 1990s Killed Gen X." 2014. Hall of Fame inductee, Texas

Awards: Association of Broadcasters, 2018.

Accomplishments: _____

Membership(s): Writers Guild of America; RTNDA; Dates: UNK

Volunteer Position(s): N/A Dates: _____

Religious Affiliation: None Church: _____

Hobbies/Interests: _____

Survivor(s): Husband, Troy Dyer; daughter Victoria Dyer-Pierce; son Samuel Dyer-Pierce; Sister, Patty Pierce-Williams (husband, Jimmie Williams); Mother, Charlane McGregor; Step-Mother Helen-Anne Pierce; many friends and peers

Predeceased by: Father, Tom Pierce; Step-Father Wesley McGregor

Funeral Date & Time: 12 p.m., March 20, 2020 Location: Saint Martin's Lutheran Church, 606 West 15th Street, Austin, TX 78701
Cremation/Interment: N/A Officiant: The Rev. Robert Reese
Visitation/Service: Family will greet visitors two hour prior to the funeral.
Special Thanks/Requests: None
Address for Flowers/Donations: None
Contact Information: None

Additional Information: Ms. Pierce began her career as an intern for “Good Morning Grant!” in 1993, working her way into a paid position as an associate producer in 1994. Upon leaving the show, she remained in the Austin area, where continued the documentary work she began in college. In early 1995, she took a position as the NBC affiliate, KXAN, where she served as an associate producer for the station’s early morning shows. In 1996, she was promoted to producer of the morning show, eventually taking over as the star of what would become “Life With Lainie,” a fun and engaging show that ran for the next 10 years. In 2006, she was promoted to the position of Projects Producer, which allowed her to address deeper issues, such as generational politics and personal loss. During this time, she rekindled her love of documentary-style producing, as she created multiple limited series and longer feature-style films for KXAN. In 2017, she took a leave of absence for one year to battle lung cancer, returning in 2018 for one more year before taking a medical leave in late 2019.

QUOTES FROM FAMILY AND COLLEAGUES:

TROY DYER, HUSBAND: “I don’t know if I can adequately put into words what she meant to me. Lainie was my touchstone in so many ways. Despite the complex layers I would always put out for the public, Lainie would see right through all that and know who I was at my core.

“No matter if it was a silly interview with a goat roper on her morning show or a deep dive into how LGBTQ youth were treated in the 1990s, Lainie was always completely immersed in telling stories that mattered. When you were with her, if you were family or friends or whatever, you were the most important thing in that moment. She loved our kids and would always make it to their plays and their games. Whenever someone would come up to her during a game or whatever and want to talk about what Lainie had just produced or an award she had won, Lainie was always gracious and engaging. She treated everyone like they were the best part of her day.

“My wife was everything to me, even when we had nothing. Before the awards and the recognition, it was just us. After she became known all over the Austin area and beyond, it still always felt like it was just us. I always used to tell her that all we needed to make it through life was her and me, a pack of smokes and a couple of cups of coffee. Five bucks and a great conversation. I’ll miss her a lot.

JEREMY AGUILAR, GENERAL MANAGER, KXAN: “Lelaina Pierce gave a face and a voice to her generation in so many ways. She showed that she could be funny and silly during her run on that morning show, but she also showed what the kids of the 1990s had to deal with in terms of divorce, alcoholism, economic strife and parents with unreasonable expectations. That was the core of what she wanted people to see. She wanted to let people know that for all the ‘slacker’ labels people kept layering on her peers, we all had to deal with a lot more than we got credit for and we did it with a lot more grace than anyone had the right to expect. Losing her was more than losing a colleague and a friend. I feel like I lost a small piece of my soul and I feel like her generation lost a truly sympathetic figure.”

SAMMY GRAY, LONGTIME FRIEND: “Lainie was Lainie, and that’s the best thing I can say about her. She never once pretended to be something she wasn’t and she never once tried to show anyone up. It was never, ‘I was the valedictorian of my university,’ or ‘I won an Emmy’ or any of that stuff. She always wanted to tell stories and share experiences. She never forgot what it was like to have to scrape together rent money or how hard it was to get a job at the age of 22 or 23. She never forgot who she was or who her friends were. I loved her so much and it’s so sad she’s gone.”