

### Sugar Skull Explanation

The person that I made my sugar skull for is my deceased Aunt Patricia Jones. She died from breast cancer that spread to her stomach, and she was no longer able to eat. My Aunt truly was a big part of my life. I have a lot of fond memories with my Aunt, but there is one in particular that I will never forget. I remember when my cousin was getting married, and she came to Philadelphia for the wedding. At the wedding reception, I can remember my brother and I dancing the night away with her to all types of songs. She had such a radiant spirit that was truly unforgettable. My family and I miss her every day, and I am glad that I was able to make a sugar skull to commemorate her death.

My Aunt Pat meant so much to me. I couldn't even begin to describe the impact she had on my life. She taught me so much. I learned how to be independent and not depend on anybody but myself by watching how she operated on a daily basis. She knew that if she wanted to get anywhere in life, she had to work for it and not expect anyone else to give it to her. To this day, I still follow that same vision. I work hard for everything that I have because I want to be able to say that my success is mine and nobody else.

It was one of the most painful things seeing how sick my Aunt got. She didn't even look like the same person when I would go and see her. Despite her illness, my Aunt always kept a smile on her face and a pep in her step. For a while, I couldn't understand how she stayed so positive when all the odds were against her. I realized that she knew that it was time for her to leave this Earth. She had lived a full life, and God was calling her home.

I decided to create my sugar skull for my Aunt Pat because I wanted to create something to commemorate her death. She died in 2008 and I have never created something to celebrate her death. Creating the sugar skull was the perfect chance for me to remember her and the impact she had on my life. Sometimes I think that a death is seen as such a sad thing, but I have realized that it isn't at all. Yes, it's sad for us, the people who loved her. But, I think about how much pain she was in not being able to eat and I realize that she is no longer in that pain anymore.

My sugar skull reflects my Aunt because I painted the whole thing pink and put glitter on it. Pink is the color used to express moral support for people that have breast cancer. My Aunt had breast cancer, and I used the color to support other people dealing with the same disease. She would often wear pink in support of other people she knew with breast cancer. At her funeral, many of us wore pink ribbons because of how important the color was to what my Aunt Pat had gone through. She was even able to participate in the Susan G. Komen Walk for the Cure (when she was healthy) which raises money for breast cancer research. I placed glitter on the top of the skull because my Aunt was very fashionable and flashy I would say. She always wore the latest clothes and always dressed nicely whenever she went anywhere. The glitter represents the attention she would get for her fashionable outfits. I also used the glitter on the head of the skull to represent how my Aunt lost her hair during her chemotherapy with cancer.

Día de los Muertos has truly open my eyes up to what it means to celebrate the passing of someone. As I stated before, death is often seen as a sad thing and usually creates a somber mood. Día de los Muertos is exactly the opposite of this. Throughout my time learning about this holiday I have realized that we should celebrate the spirits of the dead more often instead of being sad about it. I know that my Aunt would not want me to be sad about her death. She would want me to lift her spirit up and celebrate her life as much as possible. Creating my sugar skull has given me time to reminisce about what my Aunt meant to me. I miss her every day and her absence is felt, but I know that she is in a much better place where she is no longer suffering.

### **Panegírico**

¡Hola! Mi nombre es Zoie. Gracias por estar aquí. Yo soy la sobrina de Patricia Jones. Yo estoy triste. Mi tía fue de Nueva Jersey. Mi tía fue muy bonita y amable. Ella fue la hermana de mi madre, Joi. Yo estoy en la iglesia para su funeral. Pienso en mi tía todos los días. Me encanta mi tía Pat. Gracias y adiós.