

## Marion Ramsey, 'Police Academy' and Broadway star, dead at 73



Marion Ramsey, an actress best known for her work on the "Police Academy" franchise and her roles on Broadway, has died. She was 73.

Ramsey's rep Roger Paul confirmed the news to USA TODAY Friday, saying she died suddenly early Thursday in her Los Angeles home. No cause of death was given.

"Her passion for performing and sharing her heart with the world was immense," the statement read. "Marion carried with her a kindness and permeating light that instantly filled a room upon her arrival. The dimming of her light is already felt by those who knew her well. We will miss her, and always love her."

Born in Philadelphia, Ramsey's first acting credit was a guest starring role as Tracy Davis in the TV series "The Jeffersons" in 1976. But her rise to fame took off when she began playing the squeaky-voiced role of Officer Laverne Hooks in "Police Academy" in 1984. She continued with the role through five more films in the franchise, concluding with "Police Academy 6: City Under Siege" in 1989.

On stage, Ramsey starred opposite Bette Davis in Josh Logan's pre-Broadway production of "Miss Moffatt." On Broadway, she co-starred in various shows including Harold Prince's "Grind" with Ben Vereen and "Eubiel" with Gregory and Maurice Hines.

"On a personal note, Ms. Ramsey was particularly proud about Broadway's 'Dreamgirls' finally becoming a major motion picture because Ms. Ramsey was one of the three singers the producer of the original

Broadway show, Tom Eyen, based the three main characters," the statement added.

Ramsey also lent her voice to roles on "Robot Chicken" and "The Addams Family" cartoon.

"Ms. Ramsey's infamous voice was emblematic; soft-spoken, unique and gentle, equally fitting her golden generous spirit, and humorous disposition," the statement continued.

The statement also described Ramsey as a "staunch advocate for AIDS awareness," who performed in "Divas Simply Singing," an annual fundraising event in Los Angeles that has raised millions of dollars to benefit AIDS awareness and prevention.

Ramsey leaves behind three brothers.

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