

# Lafayette family left with questions after fatal shooting of 14-year-old 'Daddy's girl' | Crime/Police

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BY KATIE GAGLIANO | Staff writer, Katie Gagliano

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Brandy and Raymond Garry thought they'd spend the final weeks of summer preparing their 14-year-old daughter Zaria for her first day of high school at Northside High. Instead, they visit her grave at Gethsemane Gardens Cemetery weekly after Zaria was shot and killed in June.

The days since the June 10 shooting have dragged on.

Each morning, Raymond Garry steps into his daughter's pink-walled bedroom and gazes at a memorial banner with Zaria's printed photo. That way, it feels like she can see and hear him, he said. With photo booth shots of friends tucked in the mirror, bottles of perfume scattered across the bureau and canvas prints of Paris with the price stickers still attached from a cut-short room redo, it's almost like she could walk in the door at any moment.

Her mother said she slips into her room to smell her jacket and the bath towel hanging from her closet door in small efforts to feel closer to her. Each day is a wave of emotions, she said.



**[Photos: Slain 14-year-old Zaria Garry remembered as 'The Rainbow in our Clouds'](#)**

“You go from anger to despair to happy to sad — feelings are all over the place. Sometimes you wish that she's going to call. Sometimes you go in her room and you hope she's in her bed and she's not. It's a lot — because we knew her plans and what she wanted to be and she couldn't do it. She was robbed of it,” Brandy Garry said.

“It’s hard because it comes often — the pain. It comes often. Sometimes we have to comfort one another just to get through that moment. Not that day — that moment,” Raymond Garry said.

Zaria was shot in the head while at a friend’s home in the 1100 block of North Pierce Street around 4 p.m. June 10. She was taken to Ochsner Lafayette General Hospital where she was put on life support and died two days later. A 16-year-old boy, whose name has not been released by law enforcement because he’s a juvenile, was arrested in her death.

Her parents said they have many questions, namely what happened, and why. Brandy Garry said her daughter had reconnected with a former classmate at tryouts for the Lafayette Dazzlers Dance Team and after making the team, was invited to practice at her new teammate’s home on North Pierce Street the next day.



### [\*\*‘It hurts’: Loved ones remember loving, energetic 16-year-old girl killed in Lafayette shooting\*\*](#)

Brandy Garry was at her mother’s home on North Pierce Street when the shooting happened. Not long before, Zaria had hugged her in the home’s kitchen before walking to her friend’s house. When the police units whooshed down the street, Brandy Garry said she

ran after them and saw paramedics loading her daughter onto a stretcher as she bled profusely. The distraught mother stood in the street screaming.

Raymond Garry, a retired school custodian, was out fishing when the shooting happened. His son Raymond Jr. called and told him to pack quickly and get to Lafayette General Hospital, where they dropped the bomb — Zaria had been shot.

“It was like the world stopped,” he said.

Law enforcement has revealed little to the family. Detectives said it seemed Zaria had broken the boy’s necklace prior to the shooting, but it’s unclear exactly what transpired. The boy, a relative of Zaria’s friend, wasn’t known to the Garrys or Zaria before the shooting. He hasn’t been forthcoming with police, the Garrys said.

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The 14-year-old’s parents said they’re trying not to fill in the holes with too many what-ifs.

“I pray not to give myself a heart attack or a stroke worrying about if she was scared or if she was trying to fight her way out of there — or what happened,” Brandy Garry said. “If I try to worry about if she was scared, it’s going to kill me. It’s going to kill me. That’s my only child.”

Zaria was born three years to the day after her older sister, Kyler, who died after being born premature; Zaria was the daughter they prayed for, Brandy Garry said. Zaria was Brandy and Raymond’s only child, but she had four older half siblings on Raymond’s side. The baby of the family, she was a daddy’s girl through and through, they said.

The 14-year-old grew up watching WWE wrestling with her father and as a little girl would practice her elbow drop while he was lounging on the sofa, he said.

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She routinely dragged him to every beauty supply store in Lafayette for shopping sprees and had full veto power over his outfits, leveling him with an authoritative: “C’mon, Daddy. We understand you’re from the ‘60s but it’s gone. Go back and change that,” when she didn’t like his fashion choices, her parents said through chuckles.

“Parents couldn’t ask for a better daughter,” Raymond Garry said.

A rising freshman at Northside High School, Zaria hoped to run track, play basketball and join the debate team, her mother said. She was an inquisitive, intelligent and hardworking girl, who loved English and social studies, and often put her curiosity to work in real life by

exploring new churches on the weekends, from Baptist to Catholic to Apostolic congregations.

While high school was only on the horizon, Zaria was already looking to the future, her parents said. She wanted to become a licensed beautician and own her own business. She honed her skills watching YouTube videos, analyzing the work of an older cousin who works in the field and practicing with her own beautician set, Brandy Garry said.

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Her ambition was clear to everyone who knew her, childhood friend Comani Bonnet, 14, said at a vigil for Zaria in mid-June. Zaria had dreams and she was funny, caring, determined, athletic, goofy and spoke her mind, Bonnet and other friends shared.

The girls banded together at Bonnet's 13th birthday party to become "Uss Girlss" and had been a unit since, weathering teen drama and COVID-19's upheavals to their lives, they said.

Jonnett Henry, 15, said Zaria was adventurous and liked to try new things. She was always on the move and wanted to go places and see people. She had an affinity for people; she cared about them, whether you'd seen her that day or hadn't seen her for weeks, she would check up on you, Henry said.

"We had some ups and downs, but she still got me through some situations when I didn't even want to be happy any more, and didn't want to talk to nobody. She always made me laugh when I felt like I didn't have nobody," 14-year-old Semaja St. Julien said.

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Friends, classmates and family members spoke about their rage, their grief and their love for Zaria at her vigil. Friends talked about how she defended them against bullies, tutored them in school and always had a forgiving spirit. All decried how the 14-year-old's life was stolen and called for an end to gun violence, especially youth gun violence, in the community.

"We have to live the rest of our lives remembering how she died. We're going to carry this for the rest of our lives," Bonnet said in tears.