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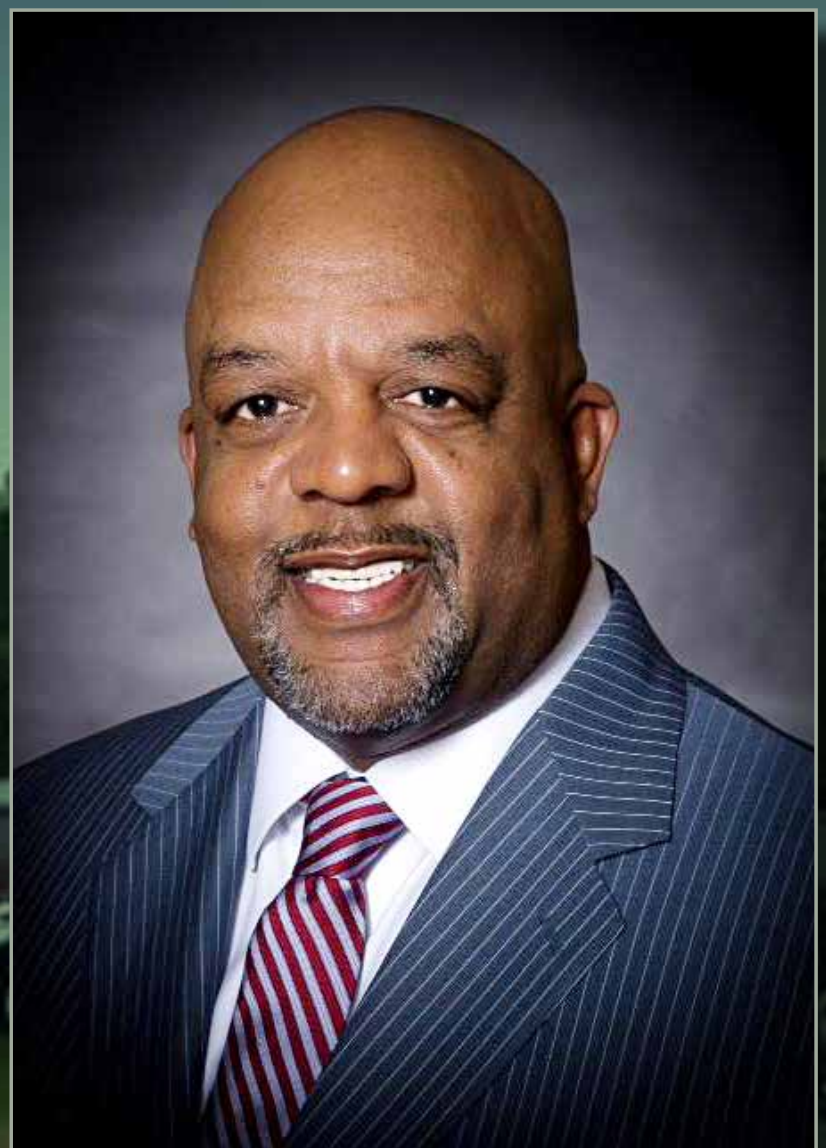
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Beyond Talking Trash

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His Recipe for Building a
Successful Black Business and
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Beyond Talking Trash

Metro Service Group CEO Jimmie Woods Shares His Recipe for Building a Successful Black Business and Making Community Impact



Metro Service Group Co-Founders, brothers Glenn H. Woods, Sr. and Jimmie Woods, Sr.

Terry B. Jones
Publisher, New Orleans Data News Weekly

Building A Successful Business
It's been over four decades since Metro Service Group (Formerly Metro Disposal) was founded in

1982. Since its inception, the business has grown from a single-axle, rear loading truck into a major industrial services firm that serves the Southeastern region of the United States, with offices in Baton Rouge, LA, Hattiesburg, MS, Pensacola, FL and Atlanta, GA. Under the leadership of brothers Jimmie Woods, Sr. and Glenn H. Woods, Sr., they have become a major

force in business in the City of New Orleans. Additionally, they are an inspiration to other Black businesses and continue giving back to the community. Data News Weekly had the opportunity to speak to Metro's Co-Founder and CEO, Jimmie Woods, Sr., about how they continue to thrive and make a positive impact in New Orleans and beyond.

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The Building Blocks of Success: A Brick-by-Brick Approach

In the City of New Orleans and beyond, Metro is still a viable business with a vision focused on providing great service for its clients and plans for expansion. "We still have a lot of private clients in the City of New Orleans," says Woods. Continuing his remarks he says, "municipal contracts are only one part of our business, we have always worked with the business community from the very beginning. It was Black businesses and property owners who gave us a chance, and we grew our business to where we are now as a multimillion-dollar company where we operate in multiple states."

Although today, Metro enjoys much success, and is an example for how to build from the ground up, reminiscing about their journey he says, "We used to keep those trucks together with duct tape and bubble gum. We didn't inherit, we had to build it on our side."

While Metro is a success story, Woods is a visionary, who has his sights set on building a Black-owned, multi-billion-dollar compa-



"We have built this company for over four decades, and what we realize is that political administrations come and go, but Metro continues to be in business. We will continue to fight for our good name, serve and give back to the community and inspire our citizens," says Jimmie Woods, CEO of Metro Services Group.

ny headquartered in New Orleans. Recently, the company was a part of a joint venture team that helped to build the City's new airport. Woods feels this is an important step for Black businesses, to move from subcontractors to having a larger stake in business opportunities,

coming through the City of New Orleans and other cities as well.

"In the airport deal and others we are pursuing, we insist on being a joint venturer and not a subcontractor. We are working out at the New Orleans airport every day and we have an equity stake; we were

committed to pushing the envelope. We have now positioned the company where major companies could not tell us no, because we bring resources and a resume to be at the table."

Also, Woods mentions the "low hanging fruit" that is African Ameri-

can political leadership throughout the region and nation who can work to grow Black businesses by being intentional regarding bringing in qualified businesses to do some of the work on governmental contracts. "We have had public officials with the will to provide opportunities for African American businesses to compete for city contracts; many do not have the same intentionality today. With the number of African Americans in elected leadership in the southeast region, I thought we would be in 100-150 cities. Although, that is not the case presently, it is still a goal for us at Metro to expand our footprint."

Commitment to Competence and Having a Good Name

While Metro continues to be a company that's done excellent work, and over the years has built a reputation of quality service for its clients and customers, a recent problem with the City of New Orleans caused what was a perception problem and contributed to the company's no longer operating as

Cover Story, Continued on page 6.

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National Urban League President and CEO and Former Mayor of New Orleans, Marc H. Morial Amongst Political Leaders Inducted into Louisiana Political Museum Hall of Fame

Special Guests in Attendance Included:
City Council President, JP Morrell, City Council Vice President, Helena Moreno, City Councilman, Oliver Thomas, Louisiana State Senator Royce Duplessis, and Urban League of Louisiana President and CEO, Judy Reese Morse

On Saturday, March 4th Marc H. Morial was one of eight political leaders honored with an induction into the Louisiana Political Museum Hall of Fame.

Other inductees were Ben Bagert, Jr., former Louisiana State Representative, James Desmond Carvin, former Campaign Strategist, Louis Charbonnet, III, former Louisiana State Representative, Mitch Landrieu, Senior Advisor to President Joe Biden, White House Infrastructure Coordinator, and Marc H. Morial, former Mayor of New Orleans, Ben W. Nevers, former Louisiana State Senator, Suzanne Haik Terrell, former New Orleans City Councilwoman and Louisiana Commissioner of Elections, Roger F. Villere, Jr., and former Chairman of the Republican Party of Louisiana.

The Political Family of Officeholders Award was presented to the Bagneris family, brothers former State Representative, John Bagneris, former Louisiana Fourth District Court of Appeal Judge, Dennis Bagneris, and former Orleans Parish Civil District Court Judge, Michael Bagneris. William "Billy" Nungesser, Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana, co-hosted the event alongside Randy Haynie, Chairman of the Louisiana Political Hall of Fame.

"The experience of being inducted into the Louisiana Political Museum Hall of Fame was a validation of the work I have done to impact the nation," said Marc H. Morial. "I am so excited and honored for this recognition and I will continue to uphold the standards of those who paved the way for me."



William "Billy" Nungesser, Louisiana Lieutenant Governor, Marc Morial, National Urban League CEO and former New Orleans Mayor and Randy Haynie, Chairman of Louisiana Political Hall of Fame.



Dennis Bagneris, former Louisiana Fourth District Court of Appeal Judge, John Bagneris, former Louisiana State Representative and Michael Bagneris, former Orleans Parish Civil District Court Judge.



William "Billy" Nungesser, Louisiana Lieutenant Governor, Mitch Landrieu, U.S. Presidential Senior Advisor and former New Orleans Mayor and Randy Haynie, Chairman of Louisiana Political Hall of Fame.



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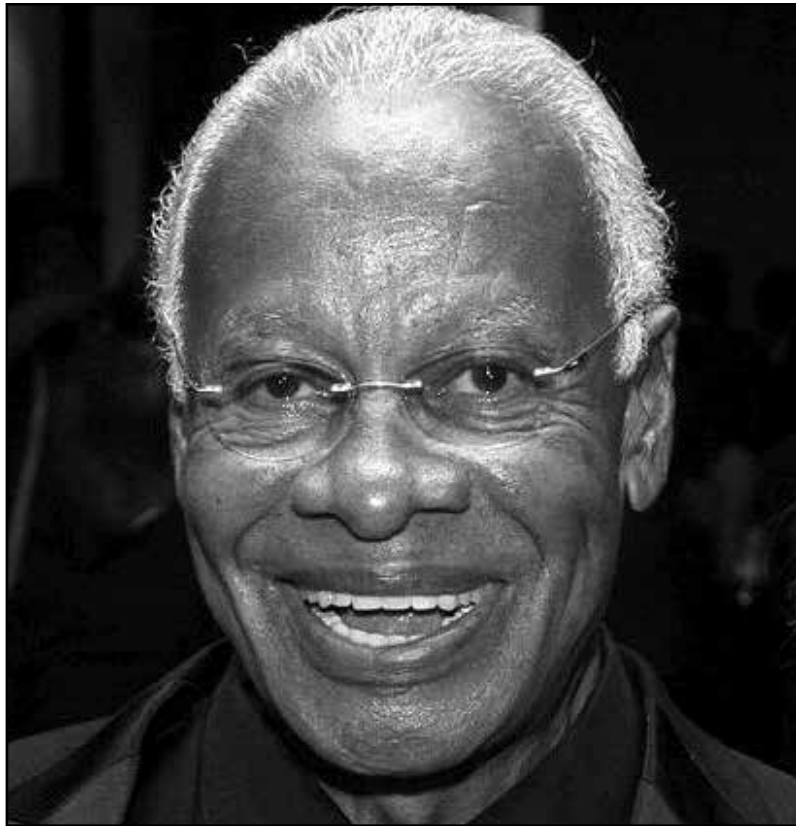
Celebration of Life for Robert H. "Bob" Tucker 1941 - 2023

New Orleans Agenda

Robert H. Tucker Jr., a prominent civil rights activist, successful businessperson, and dedicated community leader, passed away on March 1, 2023, at the age of 82. Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, on January 29, 1941, Robert was the second of three children born to Rev. Robert H. Tucker Sr. and Mattie Amacker Tucker.

Robert's parents were both raised on self-sufficient farms in rural Louisiana before moving to New Orleans. His father became a successful mortician and owner of three funeral homes, and later served as an African Methodist Episcopal minister in Louisiana and Mississippi. Growing up in the segregated South, Robert learned about business, spirituality, and the struggles of being an African American man.

After graduating from Walter L. Cohen High School in the top 5% of his class, Robert received an academic scholarship to Clark College, now Clark Atlanta University, where he excelled academically, led student activism, and made history by participating in the first lunch counter sit-in in Atlanta. Robert's leadership skills and public speaking ability led him to captain Clark College's first debate team, which won tournaments over prestigious universities such as Harvard and Columbia. While at Clark, he joined the Beta Psi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated, and was elected and held national office as 2nd Vice Grand Basileus as an undergraduate. He graduated from Clark with honors in Political



Robert H. "Bob" Tucker

Services for Robert H. Tucker will be held on March 11, 2023, 12:00 noon, at Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel in New Orleans East located at 5600 Read Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70127

cal Science and Economics. He also attended the London School of Economics & Political Science and then later gained his master's in business administration (MBA) from Tulane University.

Robert continued to make history after college by being one of the first African Americans to integrate the National Park Service. He was assigned to Yosemite National Park in California, and later enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he was sta-

tioned in France and Thailand.

Returning to New Orleans in 1967, Robert became a community organizer and civil rights activist, leading an effort to launch an ecumenical march to commemorate the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Robert's efforts were instrumental in pressuring the city to hire African Americans to meaningful positions.

In 1970, Robert was hired as the first Black Executive As-

sistant to a New Orleans Mayor (Mayor Moon Landrieu). During his eight years in the Landrieu administration, Robert played a pivotal role in managing and resolving municipal challenges and fighting for economic access for entrepreneurs of color. He had an instrumental role in electing and advising prominent political leaders such as Mayor Dutch Morial, Mayor Marc Morial, Senator Mary Landrieu, Mayor LaToya Cantrell, and many others across the nation.

He was also instrumental in achieving a peaceful resolution to an eight-hour standoff between the New Orleans Police Department and the Black Panther Party.

Robert left government in 1978 and entered the world of business, first as a consultant and later as the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of his own firm. He and Jane Tucker built a small business that specialized in providing support services to Department of Defense agencies into a major employer of over 300 individuals. Robert was also active in civic and public affairs, serving on numerous boards and commissions, including the New Orleans Port Authority, the Regional Transit Authority, the United Negro College Fund, Inc., The Clark Atlanta University Board of Trustees, and the Historic St. James AME Church's Commission on Church History & Preservation to name a few.

Robert's dedication to social justice and community empowerment was rooted in his love for his family and his faith. He believed that everyone deserved access to equal

opportunity and fought tirelessly to create a better world for all. His life and legacy are a testament to the power of faith, determination, and compassion in making a positive

difference in the world. He will be deeply missed by his family, friends, colleagues, and all those whose lives he has touched.

Robert was a devoted husband to Fatma Aydin, and a loving father to his three children, Iam, David, and Jeffrey. He instilled in them the values of hard work, education,

integrity, and community service, and inspired them to carry on his legacy of fighting for equality, justice, and dignity for all.

He leaves behind the following family members to mourn his absence: Wife, Fatma Aydin; Sons, Jeffrey Tucker Washington (Sheila) Dallas, TX; David Tucker, Los Angeles, CA; Daughter, Iam Christian Tucker (Candace), New Orleans, LA; Grandsons Jason Washington (Carin) & Jamaal Washington (Kieche'el); 7 great-grandchildren, Dallas, TX; Niece, Dr. Shuana Tucker-Sims (John), Middlebury, CT; Nephews, Keith Stamps, Atlanta, GA; Devrim Hayes, New Orleans; Kaya Aydin; Great nephew Evan Battiste, Washington, DC; Sister-in-law, Ruyveda Collins; Brothers in law, Suleyman Aydin (Sona Ocal); Apo Aydin (Elif); Mother-in-law, Ayse Aydin; Godchildren, Shawn Favre & Heather Hodge as well as numerous cousins, relatives and friends.

Robert was predeceased by his parents, sister Mercedes Tucker Stamps and brother Eric Lionel Tucker.

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the City's largest collector of garbage. Dismayed by what he feels was an unfair decision by the city government that may have been politically motivated, Woods believes that a recent report by "Fox 8" shed light on this and in some ways has vindicated the company's good name.

"Rhetoric is one thing, but the numbers do not lie," Woods says with passion. "Lee Zurik put it out there based on information we and the city provided them. Every month Metro was picking up more tonnage than average. We were ex-

ceeding expectations."

The report noted between 2013 and 2018, New Orleans residents consistently ranked trash collection as one of the best city services in quality-of-life surveys conducted by the University of New Orleans. It also stated after "FOX 8" reviewed hundreds of pages of invoices and documents related to the city's garbage collection contracts they found the City likely shortchanged its garbage collectors millions of dollars in revenue, preventing them from hiring more workers and possibly contributing to the garbage

crisis the City now faces.

Further, the report stated that not just Metro, but Richard's Disposal was also affected stating: "While the city declared emergencies for both COVID and following Hurricane Ida, it refused to pay Metro and its other trash contractor, Richard's Disposal, any additional money for the extra tonnage the companies picked up."

Woods believes the solid reputation Metro built was unjustly damaged by false allegations by those at the Mayor's office, "As a standup guy who believes in accountability, I made the apology to the public, but my guys did not fall

down on the job, and we continued to pick up more waste as best we could while not being compensated adequately by the City." Without malice in his voice, Woods feels that the present administration for whatever reason is not doing an adequate job of governing and leading the City. "Today, there are levels of incompetence in city government. I believe the mayor may be a nice enough lady, but I don't see a lot of executive leadership around her, and I don't know if she is a bad judge of talent or doesn't know any better. But the City deserves better from City Hall right now, given what is happening

in so many areas."

Woods continues, "I feel the injustice that was done to Metro speaks volumes. We took our role seriously, so I am glad this report came out to help and, in some way, can help work to restore our good name, not just in the City of New Orleans, but all over this country as we continue to expand into other cities."

Serving the Community

Metro, under the leadership of the Woods family, continues to be

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On Anniversary of Bloody Sunday, Biden and Harris Vow Continued Push for Voting Rights

John Lewis, a Young Civil Rights Leader, and Congressman, was Beaten and Had his Skull Fractured When he was 25.

Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior
National Correspondent

To protect one of America's most precious liberties — the right to vote — 600 courageous people marched out of Selma, Alabama 58 years ago.

However, their peaceful demonstration on the Edmund Pettus Bridge was met with brutal force.

John Lewis, a young civil rights leader, and congressman, was beaten and had his skull fractured when he was 25.

"Those brave marchers were pushed back, but they continued to march forward," Vice President Kamala Harris stated ahead of the March 5 commemoration ceremony at the foot of the famous bridge.

Harris said the courage of those civil rights marchers and their sacrifice inspired many to join the fight to put an end to poll taxes, literacy tests, and other forms of discrimination that blocked Black Americans' access to the ballot box.

"They achieved passage of the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965, which enshrined critical protections for voting rights in federal law," the vice president stated.

But the Shelby County Supreme Court decision in 2013 undermined the Voting Rights Act, making it more difficult to prevent discrimination.

Harris argued that this has led to a renewed attack on the right to vote in the United States in recent years.

"Extremists have worked to dismantle the voting protections that



generations of civil rights leaders and advocates fought tirelessly to win," Harris said.

"They have purged voters from the rolls. They have closed polling places. They have made it a crime to give water to people standing in line."

Representatives Terri Sewell of Alabama and James Clyburn of South Carolina, as well as NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., Reverend Jesse Jackson, civil rights leader Charles Mauldin, and Martin Luther King III, were among the many dignitaries who attended the annual pilgrimage to the Pettus Bridge.

During the ceremony, President Joe Biden vowed that voting

rights remains a top administration priority.

"The right to vote, to have your vote counted is the threshold of democracy and liberty," Biden said.

"This fundamental right remains under assault. Conservative Supreme Court has gutted the Voting Rights Act over the years. Since the 2020 election, a wave of states has passed dozens, dozens of anti-voting laws fueled by the big lie," he insisted.

The President continued.

"We must redouble our efforts and renew our commitment to protecting the freedom to vote.

"We know that we must get the votes in Congress to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement

Act, and the Freedom to Vote Act. I've made it clear: I will not let a filibuster obstruct the sacred right to vote."

Harris said she and Biden have continued to call on Congress to pass federal legislation that protects voting rights, election integrity, and American democracy.

"And we will continue to implement the President's Executive Order on Promoting Access to Voting, which enhances the federal government's efforts to advance voter participation," Harris stated.

"If we are to truly honor the legacy of those who marched in Selma on Bloody Sunday, we must continue to fight to secure and safeguard the freedom to vote."

Commentary, Continued from page 6.

lieve in investing in the people of the City of New Orleans by giving back. "We are in the business of helping those in need. We contribute to many causes across this City." Woods, also serves as member of the LSU Board of Supervisors, who believes investing in the future of New Orleans and its surrounding areas, "It feels good to give back and bless others because we have been so blessed. In addition, we at Metro believe in giving a chance for people to work at our company and take care of and provide for their families."

This is what Woods describes as part of the legacy and an example

of what Black businesses should do. "We must support and stand with our community. Also, we must mentor other businesses and help them build capacity and share the tools and guidance to be successful. This is what we live to do at Metro."

The Future of Black Businesses in New Orleans

The question for Black businesses today is one of sustainability. Woods understands that what is key is staying true to your mission and vision. The story of Metro is one of resilience and in some ways a cautionary tale for Black businesses. For sometimes, you can perform at or beyond the level of expectation and still find yourself the victim of attacks

on your ability and competence. The Woods brothers and their team over at Metro have weathered this storm and continue to do work around the City and nation. Their growth plans continue to be ambitious, because they believe the City of New Orleans can become a place where there is a vibrant Black business community.

"We have built this company over four decades, and what we realize is that political administrations come and go, but Metro continues to be in business. We will continue to fight for our good name, serve and give back to our community and inspire our citizens. We at Metro are poised to continue to keep growing our business, to not only survive but thrive."



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