

## Ackneil M. Muldrow, II

Ackneil M. "Neil" Muldrow, II, died suddenly on Thursday, October 25, 2018. He had been admitted to Baltimore's Sinai Hospital after complaining of indigestion.

Neil was an active member of LAI Baltimore and he participated in several LEWs during his active membership. He served as Chapter President from 2004-2006. During his term as President he strongly supported the all-day Metropolitan Baltimore Transportation Symposium at the Johns Hopkins Carey Business School with the cooperation and support of ULI Baltimore and the Greater Baltimore Board of Realtors. He was awarded LAI International Member of the year in 2010. He also served as LAI's Eastern Regional Vice-President, and was instrumental in adding the Atlanta Chapter, and initiating activities which ultimately resulted in the formation of the New York City Chapter and the re-activation of the Philadelphia Chapter.

Our long-time LAI Baltimore Member, David Rudow, offered the following comments about Neil:

"I learned a lot from him and always enjoyed having lunch or breakfast with him. He always knew at least half the people in any restaurant and received warm welcomes and kisses from the ladies."

"I first met Neil over 20 years ago when the Baltimore Efficiency and Economy Foundation (BEEF) started a project we called Selling City Owned Properties Efficiently (SCOPE). Jody Landers and I co-chaired the project, which spanned over 10 years. We met monthly over that entire period, and the first several years Neil hosted us at the Baltimore Development Corporation's Charles Street office. He always furnished donuts and coffee. As a result of that experience, I encouraged Neil to join the BEEF Board, in which he very successfully participated, and ultimately served as President. I also encouraged Neil to join LAI, in which he also very successfully participated, and ultimately served as President. He was obviously a leader and example setter." [Neil's LAI membership was also co-sponsored by Tara Clifford.]

Neil spent his early life in North Carolina, where he was raised. In 1957, he began his undergraduate studies and graduated from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University at Greensboro, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology in 1960. In 1960, during his senior year at NCA&T, prior to passage of the Civil Rights Act, he and his fellow students staged sit-ins at Greensboro's F.W. Woolworth Company's lunch counter to protest their rules forbidding them from eating there. He was among the first African-Americans in the USA to protest through lunch-counter sit-ins, enduring the taunts and hostilities directed at them by whites. He believed it was worth doing, "not for the food, but for the access." In this, his senior year, he was threatened by North Carolina's governor with expulsion from the university, but he persisted nonetheless, and, with faculty and administration support, averted any action by the governor.

Mr. Muldrow worked several years as a public-school teacher, as well as department manager for a major U.S. retailer in Baltimore City. Having an engaging and winning personality, and

using his social and professional channels, Mr. Muldrow joined the Commercial Credit Company in 1966, where he established one of the nation's first Affirmative Action programs. At Commercial Credit, Mr. Muldrow was successful in marrying his personal motivation for professional excellence and advancement to his personal commitment to racial equality, founded on his earlier experiences of inequality. He eventually joined the company Treasurer's Department as a manager of bank relations and commercial paper sales, calling on major east coast commercial banks and corporations. He was the first African American to hold such a position in a major commercial finance company.

In 1983, having been recognized for his successful promotion of opportunities for other African American men and women, Mr. Muldrow was appointed President & CEO of the Development Credit Fund, Inc., "DCF", in Baltimore, MD, where he served for 22 years. Starting with a revolving loan of \$7.5 million, the fund contracted with outside loan managers to manage the funds. Additionally, DCF managed a \$4 million Empowerment Zone loan fund for Empower Baltimore Management Corporation. Eventually growing to manage \$14 million in loans, other managed funds included:

- \$1.7 Community Development Block Grant Fund for Baltimore's Dept. of Housing and Community Development;
- \$500,000.00 U.S. Small Business Administration Microenterprise Loan Fund;
- \$1 million business development loan fund underwritten by MD Dept. of Business and Community Development and NIKE, Inc. for the promotion of diversity and minority business development for entrepreneurs selling athletic specialty products in inner city communities.

Eventually, Mr. Muldrow was appointed as Chair, Governor's Small Business Task Force for the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development. He was also recognized for his tutoring of hundreds of young professionals, including young African-Americans, a life-long activity.

After serving at DCF, Mr. Muldrow formed Parker Muldrow & Associates with two other partners, specializing in property and casualty insurance. Another of our long-time members, Joseph Nathanson offered these comments about Neil's contributions to LAI, and his experiences with Neil:

"I got to know Neil well when I was working with Jim Leanos and others on the 2007 Transportation Symposium. Neil generously made his office on Charles Street available for our planning meetings even on occasions when he couldn't be present himself. I remember another occasion when Larry Lund was visiting when Neil and Ruth were able to join me and Sharon at our home, along with a few others."

Mr. Muldrow's many other activities included lecturer or speaker at UNC's Kennan-Flagler Business School, Morgan State University's Earl G. Graves School of Business, The California Thrift Association, The Council of Urban Economic Development, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York's Community Banker's Conference, and the Johns Hopkins University's School of

Continuing Education. His directorships and trusteeships included service as Chairman and Director of the Board of the Bon Secours Baltimore Health System Foundation, the Baltimore Efficiency and Economy Foundation, Governor's Commission on Small Business, The Walters Art Museum, Arena Players, Inc., Greater Baltimore Medical Center, UMBC Research Park Corporation, The Reginald F. Lewis Maryland Museum of African American History and Culture, the Baltimore City Chamber of Commerce, and the Woodholme Foundation. He founded the Baltimore Marketing Association, Inc. (a leading business association for minority and other business professionals). Additional activities included the first Maryland Lottery Commission, and advisor to The University of Maryland's Chancellor's Advisory Board, the University of Maryland Medical System, James Lawrence Kernan Hospital, Stevenson University, and Notre Dame College of Maryland. He serves on the Vestry of the Saint Katherine of Alexandria Episcopal Church of Baltimore.

Neil is survived by his beloved wife, Ruth, two adult children, Ackneil "Trey" Muldrow, III, and Denise Scott, and three grandchildren, Carlyle Muldrow, Rory Muldrow, and Charles "Chazz" Scott.

Prepared by:  
James S. Leanos  
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Photos of Neil and Ruth Muldrow with Tara Clifford by Bob Madden  
Baltimore LEW, April, 2018  
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