



Mr. Willie Larkin III

October 22, 1932 - January 1, 2013

Family, faith and industry were the cornerstones of the life of Willie Larkin, III. As senior vice president and co-owner of Symmetry Corporation, he delighted in providing for his family and helping people lead healthier lives and become entrepreneurs. Willie was recently inducted into Who's Who of Business Executives for being a pioneer in direct sales and was a proud, longtime member of the Direct Selling Association (DSA). His greatest legacy is the lives he touched. From his wife and children to friends and people he met for the first time, he always found ways to bring joy and make a difference.

Born on a farm near Oak Ridge, LA to the late Jesse B. Givins Larkin and late Willie Larkin Sr., Willie came from a large, loving family. He and his six siblings -- Mary Larkin, Alma B. Larkin, Mable Lee Larkin, Annette Larkin, Elbert Larkin, Charles Larkin -- learned early on the importance of resilience and hard work. Growing up, Willie and his family relocated around the state five times. Young Willie watched his father, a sharecropper, toil and reap only a small portion of the rewards. That inequity planted a seed in Willie's mind that would one day lead him to his life's work.

From the beginning, faith was an essential part of Willie's world. He accepted Christ at an early age and became a member of Pleasant Grove #2 Baptist Church. Under the leadership of the Rev. L.B. Brass, Willie's spiritual growth was nurtured into young adulthood. Baptized in 1945, he thrived in church and

eventually became director of the youth choir.

Willie soared at school too. A dedicated student, he graduated from Eula D. Britton High School in Rayville, LA. He took another step toward his dreams at Southern University & A&M College. Determined to succeed, Willie graduated six months early with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture and Biological Science. Following graduation, Willie served his country in the Korean War. He moved to Chicago after his return.

It was in the Windy City that Willie reconnected with Versie Mae Cook, a friend who he first met on the campus of Southern in the spring of 1955. Unbeknownst to him, she moved to Chicago too where she was employed as a dietician at the University of Chicago Billings Hospital. Sparks flew when Willie and Versie saw each other at the Southern Alumni Club. After a four-month courtship, they married at a cousin's Chicago home.

Willie, who had a heart for helping youth, became a math teacher for Chicago Public Schools. As he and his bride started a family, he taught during the day and worked for Chicago Transit Authority at night. When he strived to make ends meet, he thought back to his father toiling and someone else benefitting. He knew he had to find a different path.

Willie shared with a teacher friend, who also worked the night shift, his frustration of laboring long hours and still straining to make a good living. They realized that people who owned businesses had a leg up economically. The buddies made a pact to look for chances that could better both of their lifestyles.

A few years later, his friend found an opportunity to sell products through Bestline International. Cautious about the new venture, Willie studied the direct sales business and then went to a meeting to check it out for himself.

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Showing the drive that would be a hallmark of his life, he immersed himself in his job and quickly moved up the ranks, becoming city coordinator, regional director, divisional director and finally earning the top spot, CEO. Willie accomplished that in just five years.

His next venture was an international consulting company. For nearly a decade, Willie traveled the world as the company's ambassador, empowering other salesmen and women through sharing business lessons. Always looking for ways to improve his life and that of others, Larkin and his best friend Rudy Revak, who he worked with for more than a decade at direct sales firm Diamite, came up with another idea – creating a company of their own.

In the '90s, they started Symmetry Corporation, a nutritional supplement company with the mission of aiding people with health and financial wellness. Through their visionary leadership, Symmetry became a major sales force. Willie and Rudy created a pioneering line of some of the world's finest nutraceuticals and other lifestyle products. Willie loved how their company helped people take charge of their health and trained a future generation of entrepreneurs. He believed in their mission and felt honored to serve in this special way. But he always put family first.

Next to God, he loved his wife, Versie of 52 years and children more than anything in the world. He enjoyed the delicious and healthy gourmet meals Versie made. His favorites were fish and cornbread with a glass of buttermilk,

prime rib, smoked briskets and Versie's homemade greens. He took pride in his kids achieving their dreams. One of their most loving achievements was lavishly celebrating their 50th Wedding anniversary with friends and beloved ones in Las Vegas.

Everywhere they lived, Willie and Versie made faith the foundation of their home. In Chicago, Willie became an ordained deacon of the church at Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church on the South Side under the leadership of Rev. E.F. Ledbetter. When he and Versie moved their family back to Louisiana, they became members of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church and finally First Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of his life-long friend, Rev. Andrew Julius Mansfield. All of his life, Willie looked to God for direction and thanked Him for his blessings.

Some of Willie's passions included golfing, playing tennis, spending time with friends and showing his classic style that included custom-tailored Italian hand-made suits, Egyptian-cotton dress shirts, custom engraved cufflinks and European leather dress shoes. But he never strayed far from his roots. Nothing gave him more pleasure than a good cup of coffee. Whether he was hard at work or relaxing in his chair watching the game, he had his favorite cup of coffee made just so with a little cream and not too much sweetener. Like his beloved mother, Mama Jesse B., he liked it a little on the strong side.

His family is comforted that he's now with Mama Jesse B. and Daddy Willie, son Keith Larkin and eldest sister Mary Larkin Butler (the late Scott Butler) who all preceded him in death.

Left to cherish his memory are his loving and supportive wife of 52 years, Versie Mae Cook Larkin, his daughters Kristi Larkin, Ingrid Larkin, Glenda C. Willis (Albert Sr.), sons Kerby Larkin, Creighton Larkin, Christopher Larkin (Dr. Joi Freemont); grandchildren Katrina

C. Willis, Albert Willis Jr. (Juli); great-grandchildren Darrell Deshaun Willis, LaShay Willis, Chandler Willis, Ian Willis; sisters, Alma B. Larkin Jenkins, Mable Lee Larkin Boyd, (Thurman Boyd), Annette Larkin; brothers Elbert Larkin, Charles Larkin, Jimmy Alexander (Jerlene); two aunts Lizzie T. Larkin and Lottie Wesley and many dear relatives and friends.

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OBITUARY

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Cemetery Details

Mulhearn Memorial Park Cemetery Chapel & Mausoleum

623 E. Hwy 80
Monroe, LA

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Willie Larkin III*

January 30, 2023 at 03:35 AM



“ *Mr. Willie Larkin III*

January 30, 2023 at 02:22 AM



“ *To the Larkin family,
I am sorry to hear of the lost of Mr. Larkin. I know you will miss him
but he is in a better place now. He is in the loving hands of Jesus. I
will keep you all in my prayers.*

Isaiah "Ike" Lawson, III

Isaiah Lawson - January 31, 2013 at 12:45 PM



“ *Grand-daddy I will miss you! Rest in peace....I
love you! Trina*



Katrina Willis - January 14, 2013 at 12:55 PM

AG

“ *Angela Gaither-Scott lit a candle in memory of Mr. Willie Larkin III*



Angela Gaither-Scott - January 06, 2013 at 05:03 PM



Bernard Strozier

“ *1 file added to the album Mr. Willie Larkin III*



Bernard Strozier - January 05, 2013 at 01:15 PM

BS

“ *1 file added to the album New Album Name*



Bernard Strozier - January 05, 2013 at 01:10 PM

BG

“ *Bruce And Brenda Mitchell - Stone Mtn GA lit a candle in memory of Mr. Willie Larkin III*



Bruce and Brenda Mitchell - Stone Mtn GA - January 04, 2013 at 11:27 PM

DM

“ *Mr. Larkin you will be surely missed. Rest in peace my friend.*

*Dot McKelvin
Newport News, Va.*



Dorothy McKelvin - January 04, 2013 at 10:27 PM

MA

Fomentó el engaño y la ruina de miles de personas bajo las siempre falsas promesas de beneficios en base a la venta piramidal con productos marca Best Line y otros.

Que Dios le perdona por todo el mal que hizo.

Marijose - April 05, 2021 at 10:29 AM

MA

Con la excusa de lograr el éxito engañó, estafó y arruinó a muchos miles de personas. Tanto con la formación de estructuras y ventas piramidales bajo el nombre de productos de limpieza Best Line como bajo otras denominaciones.
Que Dios le perdone por tanto daño como hizo en su propio provecho.

Marijose - April 05, 2021 at 10:34 AM

RS

“ *Robert And Patsy Williams Of Shreveport lit a candle in memory of Mr. Willie Larkin III*



Robert and Patsy Williams of Shreveport - January 04, 2013 at 09:19 PM



“ Thank you for sharing Willie with us ;know that his time away from home was invested in people like himself...dreamers looking for an opportunity to do better. He will be greatly missed but never forgotten....

SYMMETRY DISTRIBUTORS,HAMPTON, VIRGINIA

Sharon Russell - January 04, 2013 at 07:36 PM



“ Sharon Russell lit a candle in memory of Mr. Willie Larkin III



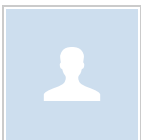
Sharon Russell - January 04, 2013 at 07:00 PM



“ Danny & Sharon Gibson purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Mr. Willie Larkin III.



Danny & Sharon Gibson - January 04, 2013 at 10:18 AM



“ Sacred Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mr. Willie Larkin III.



January 04, 2013 at 09:47 AM