

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Delbert W. Mullens

PERSON

Mullens, Delbert Wesley, 1944-

Alternative Names: Delbert W. Mullens;

Life Dates: November 14, 1944-

Place of Birth: New York, New York, USA

Residence: Auburn Hills, MI

Work: Troy, MI

Occupations: Entrepreneur

Biographical Note

Entrepreneur Delbert Mullens was born on November 14, 1944, in New York, New York, to Edythe and Harry Mullens. He received his B.S. degree in history and English in 1968 from Tennessee State University, in Nashville, Tennessee, and his M.S. degree in psychological counseling in 1974 from the State University of New York at Buffalo (SUNY Buffalo). He also studied law at the University of Detroit School of Law and later completed a business executive training program in 1992 at Dartmouth College's Tuck School of Business, in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Mullens worked as a salesman at Bethlehem Steel from 1975 to 1981, before founding Flint Coatings, an automotive supply company, in 1983. Subsequently, Mullens founded the holding company Wesley Industries, Inc., in 1985 and Yale Power Coating in 1986 while growing his enterprise by also purchasing New Haven Foundry in New Haven, Michigan in 1990. In 2002, Black Enterprise named Wesley Industries the fastest growing black business in America. In 2002, Mullens and his son Dorian Mullens expanded into defense manufacturing by acquiring Arnold Defense and Electronics. In 2015, Mullens also co-founded Proteus Trade and Commodities, Inc., which, in 2016, partnered with Venezia Food and Beverages in India. Also, a golf course and resort hotel in Raisen were added to Mullens's company portfolio. Mullens is also the co-founder of Wesley Financial, Wesley Consulting, and the Wesley Group (USA) LLC.

Mullens is a lifetime member of the Tennessee State University Alumni Association and the NAACP. He is also a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., and one of the founders of the National Association of Black Automotive Suppliers. From 2008 to

2012, he served as a director of Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs, the foundation of the Fabricators & Manufacturers Association, International. He is also a former member of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers and the Michigan Minority Business Development Council and former chair of the dean's advisory council of SUNY Buffalo. In 1998, Mullens was elected to a three-year term as a trustee of SUNY Buffalo. He also served as a guest lecturer at Dartmouth College's Tuck School of Business.

Mullens was named Entrepreneur of the Year by the Michigan Commerce Department and among the Top 100 Alumni of the Twentieth Century by Tennessee State University. He also received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Black MBA Association. His businesses have been named Business of the Year and Supplier of the Year by the National Minority Business Development Council and Business of the Year by the Michigan Commerce Department and Black Enterprise. SUNY Buffalo's "Thinking Outside the Box" scholarship award was formed in his honor.

Mullens lives in Auburn Hills, Michigan. He has two children, Dorian Mullens and Mandy Mullens-Williams, and five grandchildren.

Delbert Mullens was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on March 20, 2022.

Related Entries

Follow Through Magnet School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Marva J. Daniel Futures Preparatory School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Bennett High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Tennessee State University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.S.

State University of New York at Buffalo [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.S.

Dartmouth College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University at Buffalo School of Law [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Legal Aid Bureau [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 196809 to 196902]

Bail Bondsman Assistant

New York State Employment Service [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 196902 to 196908]

Employment Interviewer

Atlantic Richfield [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 196908 to 197001]

Marketing Representative

SUNY at Buffalo [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197001 to 197109]

Counselor, Department of Developmental Studies

SUNY at Buffalo [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197109 to 197206]

Admissions Assistant

Lever Brothers [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197206 to 197301]

Marketing Representative

British Petroleum [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197301 to 197401]

Marketing Representative

Bethlehem Steel [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197406 to 198109]

Interviewer, Salesman

Flint Coatings [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1983 to 1999]

Founder

Wesley Industries [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2000 to 2003]

Founder

Wesley Financial [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2004 to 2005]

Founder

Wesley Consulting [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2006 to 2013]

Founder

Wesley Group (USA), LLC [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2014 to 2021]

Founder

Tennessee State Alumni Association [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Lifetime member

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

National Association of Black Automotive Suppliers [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Founder and former member

Nuts, Bolts & Thingamajigs [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board member

Society of Manufacturing Engineers [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Michigan Minority Business Development Council [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

member

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Advisory Council, SUNY at Buffalo [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Former Chairman

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