

In Memoriam



Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

WHEREAS, the City of Tampa takes pride in recognizing those individuals whose commitment and dedication have made a lasting impact on our community and its citizens. One of these individuals was Betty P. Wiggins, a long-time resident of Tampa, Florida, business leader and community activist, who passed away on Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at age 78; and

WHEREAS, born in Monticello, Florida in 1932, Mrs. Wiggins graduated valedictorian from Howard Academy High School at aged 16, and went on to earn her Bachelor's Degree in English from Florida A&M University and her Master's Degree in Education from the University of South Florida. Her stellar career began as an educator in Hillsborough County, Florida until 1968 when she joined General Electric, where her work as a Specialist and Human Resources Manager earned her the distinction of being the first African American woman to hold a management position in the Pinellas Plant facility; and

WHEREAS, in 1984 Mrs. Wiggins opened B.P. Brown Enterprises, Inc., a public relations and printing company, the first African American woman in the Tampa community to succeed in the printing industry, and through the publications the firm produced for churches, community clubs, governmental agencies, businesses, organizations, and events, valuable history was created portraying the everyday lives of people in Tampa's African American Community from 1984 to 1993, and these documents have been preserved in the Betty P. Brown Wiggins Collection housed at the University of South Florida; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Wiggins was a former Tampa City Council member and one of Tampa's most notable community activists, well-known for her inspiring leadership, working passionately for the betterment of the neighborhoods of Tampa and the benefit of its citizens. She championed for her beloved East Tampa community for decades and was the guiding force for the East Tampa Business and Civic Association, led the East Tampa Community Revitalization Committee in numerous projects, and served as Director and Vice President of the Tampa Development Consortium, Inc. and President of BPW Consulting, Inc. An accomplished speaker, Mrs. Wiggins frequently spoke at churches, public schools, colleges and universities, civic groups, and television and radio; and

WHEREAS, a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. since 1952, she was instrumental in the local Gamma Theta Omega Chapter purchasing the AKA House, located in historic Tampa Heights, and in tribute to her outstanding service, her commitment to youth education, and programs she initiated that were of inspiration to African American students, the Chapter named the Betty P. Wiggins Scholarship in her honor; and

WHEREAS, although we are grieved at the loss of this outstanding citizen, her legacy will continue to live on through the tremendous contributions she made to our community, the young people that benefited from her guidance, and in all those whose lives she touched.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Buckhorn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Tampa, Florida, do hereby urge all citizens to join me in publicly expressing sorrow and heartfelt appreciation to her son Donald A. Brown, daughter Deborah Randall, family and many friends, and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their many cherished memories and the impact of her life on our city.

Dated in Tampa, Florida, this 12th day of November, 2011.

Bob Buckhorn

Mayor

