

# AC PHOENIX PAYS TRIBUTE TO BLACK ENTREPRENEURS

## Reginald F. Lewis Ranks #1

*"Like Dr. Martin Luther King, I, too, have a dream. My dream is that our children will begin to learn to mind their own business. That's right. Mind their own business. But not in the way you may be thinking. Our youth should be encouraged to start their own businesses for the purpose of making money off people like you and me. It's all very logical. The way to get a young person's attention is to talk about money." These are the words of Reginald F. Lewis.*

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From humble beginnings in Baltimore to the top of the business world, **Reginald Francis Lewis** is one of the truly remarkable men of our time.

Reginald was born on December 7, 1942 to the late Clinton L. Lewis and Carolyn Cooper Lewis. After a short illness he passed away on January 19, 1993.

During his early years, Reginald and his mother lived on Dallas Street with his grandparents, Samuel and Savilla Cooper, who influenced his early years. They always encouraged him to, "Be the best that you can be," and "always strive for excellence."

Reginald moved to the Rosemont Community in northwest Baltimore at the age of nine, when his mother married Jean S. Fugett. Despite all his successes, Reginald was always a dedicated son, brother, father, husband, uncle and family man. He learned most of his values while growing up with his family. He was particularly impressed by his grandfather, who often told stories of being in Paris during World War I. He developed a lifelong love of French language, food, and culture.

A lawyer by profession, Reginald built his business reputation by becoming skilled in acquiring companies... but before he became one of the world's most creative entrepreneurs, Reginald

got his first taste of business as a working class child in Baltimore. At the age of ten, he started his first business venture delivering the Afro-American Newspaper. He started out with ten customers and built the route up to one hundred customers. His mother was the back-up carrier and enforcer for late payers. He eventually sold the newspaper route to a friend at a profit. Reginald's participation in sports increased his desire to win. At Dunbar High School he was quarterback on the football team, shortstop on the baseball team, and guard on the

Vice President of the student body in his senior year.

After graduating from high school, Reginald attended Virginia State College on a football scholarship. He suffered an injury, lost his scholarship, and became a working student. As an employee for a local photographer, he generated so much business that he was offered a partnership. Reginald declined because he had bigger plans for his future. A quote from one of the rigid schedules he put together at the beginning of each semester says it best... "To be a lawyer, you must work hard!" It goes without saying, that to be successful one must also work hard - and this he did.

Despite the demands of a job, Reginald gave academics the highest priority. He graduated from undergraduate school on the dean's list and in 1965 was admitted to Harvard Law School - even before officially applying.

After graduating from Harvard, Reginald interned at the Baltimore law firm of Piper & Marbury. A partner there recognized his potential and urged Reginald to "Go for it big" in New York. It was a move that later put him on the fast track to greatness.

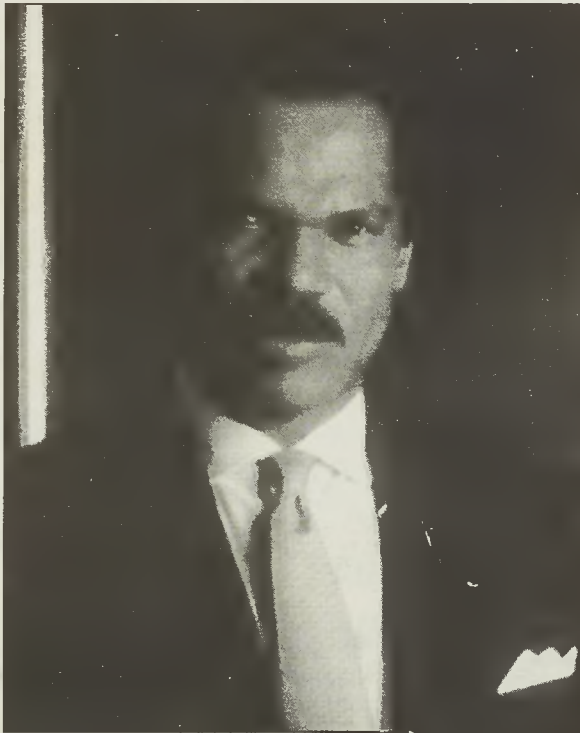
In New York, Reginald landed his first job with Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton, and Garrison. In 1972 he established his

own firm of Lewis and Clarkson on Wall Street, where he practiced corporate law.

In 1983, Reginald created his own investment firm, TLC. Within months, he purchased McCall Pattern Company, which was one of the nation's oldest home sewing concerns, but it was a declining industry. Under his leadership and innovative ideas, McCall's went through two of its most profitable years in the history of the company.

In 1987, Reginald sold McCall Patterns and immediately embarked on the transaction that would take him to the top of the business world... the purchase of a worldwide food conglomerate, Beatrice International.

Reginald Lewis came from humble beginnings in inner city Baltimore and progressed to become one of the world's greatest entrepreneurs. His 1983 purchase of the McCall Pattern Company was the thing that launched him into the public spotlight. Mr. Lewis will long be remembered for his keen business acumen and philanthropy. From 1987 through 1992 Mr. Lewis gave over 12 million dollars to various charitable organizations/causes. These gifts include a one million dollar unsolicited gift to Howard University and a three million dollar gift to Harvard Law School. Other beneficiaries of his giving include the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, Morgan State University, Virginia State University, Our Daily Bread (a shelter for the homeless), and many other educational, religious and health organizations. As a result of his strong yet gentle personality, Mr. Lewis was honored at the Great Blacks in Wax Museum on January 19, 1994. On this date, a wax figure of Mr. Lewis was unveiled and shown for the first time. The



Reginald Francis Lewis

basketball team. His competitive spirit took him into the arena of politics when he became

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