



Detroit Memorial Park Celebrates 100 Years of Compassionate Service

Michigan's oldest African American-owned corporation, Detroit Memorial Park was founded as a place of welcome for all families of all backgrounds

Warren, MI - June 28, 2025 - Detroit Memorial Park, Michigan's oldest African American-owned corporation, is proudly celebrating its 100th anniversary. Founded in 1925 by visionary Black business leaders, the cemetery was established to provide a dignified final resting place for Black families at a time when many were denied respectful burial options in white-owned cemeteries.

"For 100 years, Detroit Memorial Park has welcomed people of all backgrounds and offered a serene place for families to honor their loved ones," says President Wilbur B. Hughes, III.

Before its founding, Black families in Detroit often faced discrimination, forced to bury loved ones late at night or enter cemeteries through maintenance gates. In some cases, graves were desecrated after burial. Recognizing the need for change, funeral director Charles C. Diggs Sr. and pharmacist Aaron C. Toodle led efforts to raise funds and establish a cemetery that would respect and serve all families, regardless of race, creed, or religion.

"This has been our guiding principle since day one," Hughes says. "We want every family to feel their loved ones are at rest in a safe, welcoming, and peaceful setting."

Since opening in Warren, Detroit Memorial Park has expanded to include Detroit Memorial Park West in Redford (1988) and Gracelawn Cemetery in Flint (1996), continuing its legacy of compassion and inclusion.

Centennial Celebration

To commemorate its centennial, Detroit Memorial Park will host a gala on Saturday, June 28, at the Auburn Hills Pontiac Marriott. Multi-E Emmy winning broadcast journalist Paula Tutman will emcee the event, which will bring together staff, dignitaries, community partners, and supporters to celebrate the cemetery's history and bright future.

"It will be an evening of sharing memories, recognizing the many who have supported us, and looking ahead to our next 100 years," Hughes adds.

Contact:

Jocelyn Coley

The Allen Lewis Agency

248-416-4568

jocelyn@theallenlewisagency.com