

# 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 Robert (Bob) J. Samuels, leader, author, trailblazer, and one of Tampa, Florida's most beloved citizens who passed away on Sunday, November 18, 2012 at age 74; and

**WHEREAS**, born of humble beginnings in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on August 14, 1938, Bob Samuels graduated from Simon Gratz High School in Philadelphia, and enlisted in the United States Air Force, serving his country for four years before his Honorable Discharge in 1960; and

**WHEREAS**, after his graduation from Rutgers University's Stonier Graduate School of Banking in 1964, Bob Samuels began his illustrious career with First Pennsylvania Bank, becoming one of the first African-Americans to enter the industry, and in 1969 joined Manufactures Hanover Trust Company in New York, New York and was promoted to Vice President in 1975, one of the first African-Americans to hold the position in a major bank in the United States, and upon his retirement in 1992, he relocated to Tampa, Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, known as a man of conviction and passion, Bob Samuels' philosophy was "*Be driven, don't give up.*" As he chronologies in his memoir *Don't Tell Me I Can't* published in 2011, he demonstrated his commitment to community and others throughout his life. Included among his many accomplishments he co-founded the Harlem YMCA's Black Achievers in Industry Program, established the United Negro College Fund's Corporate Matching Gifts Program, served as a visiting professor for the National Urban League's Black Exchange Program, was appointed to the Board of Trustees of New York State Higher Education Services Corporation, was the founding President of the New York City Urban Banker Coalition, the National Association of Urban Bankers, and Tampa Bay Alliance of Black Professionals, and he was actively involved with various local community organizations such as the Tampa Museum of Art, Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, and the Hillsborough County Affordable Housing Task Force; and

**WHEREAS**, diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1994, Bob Samuels made it his mission to educate himself and others on the disease, and thereafter founded the National Prostate Cancer Coalition, Florida Prostate Cancer Network, African-American Men's Health Forum, became a board member of the H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center, and was instrumental in obtaining a \$1 million United States Department of Defense grant to establish Florida A&M University's Center for Minority Prostate Cancer Training and Research with Moffitt Cancer Center; and

**WHEREAS**, the well-deserved recognitions Bob Samuels received over the years include the National Association of Urban Bankers naming the **Robert J. Samuels Founder's Award** in his honor and further having his likeness placed in the Baltimore Great Blacks In Wax Museum, he was inducted into the **Black Hall of Fame** in Philadelphia, he received the United Negro College Fund's **Outstanding Citizen's Award**, listed in "*Who's Who in Black America*," the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's (NAACP) **Roy Wilkins Humanitarian Award**, Hillsborough Community College's **Trailblazer Award**, Florida Department of Health's **Unsung Hero in Health Award**, and many others; and

**WHEREAS**, although we are grieved at the loss of this outstanding citizen, his legacy will continue to live on through his pioneering leadership in the business community, the strides he made in cancer awareness and education, his dedication to our community, and in all those who lives he has touched.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Bob Buckhorn, by the 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 the Robert J. Samuels Family, his wife Lillian, sons Robert, Jr., Anthony, and Christopher, Grandchildren, Stepson, Stepdaughter and Step Grandchildren, and to express our hopes that they will take solace in their cherished memories and the impact of his life on our city, in our state and in our nation.

Dated this 21<sup>st</sup> day of November, 2012.

  
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Mayor

