

HHS Graduate Celebrates School's 50th & Company's 30th Anniversary

The Class of 1966's Hillside High School (HHS) is celebrating its 50th Anniversary July 1-3, 2016. In attendance at this milestone event is one of HHS' alum, Thomas (Tom) Wilkins. Wilkins grew up in Durham tinkering around as a youth on radios and cars, so it's no surprise that he founded The Wilkins Group, Inc. (WGI), a national telecommunications services firm, in 1986. Yes indeed! Not only is Wilkins celebrating his high school's 50th, but this year also marks WGI's 30th year in business.



Keeping true to his passion about communications and technology, Wilkins started his career as an IBM machine shop operator before enrolling in Durham Technical Institute (DTI) where he earned his Associates Degree. After DTI, next stop was North Carolina Central University (NCCU) where Wilkins worked as a Physics Lab Technician as he earned credits towards his Bachelor Degree.

Then, he joined the Navy and was a member of the United States Navy Presidential Ceremonial Honor Guard. Later, as a broadcast technician engineer for a PBS affiliate, Wilkins received his Bachelor of Science from The University of Central Texas in 1979. Between the years of 1980-1986, Wilkins continued to advance his technical knowledge working for MCI as a microwave engineer project manager and engineering team member for GTE Satellite.



As an entrepreneur, Wilkins' independent spirit lead him to start his own company Wilkins & Associates which eventually became The Wilkins Group, Inc. (WGI) in 1986. WGI began performing integration of microwave backbone systems across the country for MCI, and opened an office in Richardson, TX, home of The Telecom Corridor and later expanded to GA, IL & OR. Faye Moses Wilkins joined WGI as President in 1991. Currently, WGI is one of Dallas' largest woman and minority-owned businesses in the D/FW area per the Dallas Business Journal. While Mrs. Wilkins oversees the business' day-to-day operations and administrative affairs, Wilkins' core roles at WGI is business development, industry forecasting, fostering business affiliates and mentoring youth. Both are avid golfers whose children have been also involved with the business since day one. Angela Wilkins, was one of the company's first field crew managers and Tomeka (Moses) Herod and Ronald Moses are and have served in management roles in the company. Not only are Moses and Wilkins families involved in the business, but there are several other 2nd generation families within WGI. As WGI continues to be the hands in the field that supports carriers such as AT&T, Charter, Google and Time Warner, it is proud to employ a next generation of internal and external family talent.

Wilkins is proud of the knowledge and his HHS roots that gave him the foundation to expand his natural technical talents and reach nationally and internationally through building a business in the Southwest not only for his family, but for several families in his generation and beyond.

About HHS

Hillside is one of seven high schools in the Durham Public Schools system. Of more than 300 historically black high schools that once operated in the state before desegregation, only five remain today, with Hillside being the oldest. Hillside is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.



About WGI

WGI is a telecommunications services company which provides underground construction installation and equipment deployment for major wireline and wireless providers. WGI has experienced the change and growth in technology / equipment from Central Office Step Switches through Microwave Backhaul to Generation 4 wireless cell systems using copper, fiber and wireless.

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