



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bartech Founder John W. Barfield: A Business Legend and Pioneer

SOUTHFIELD, Mich.--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--John W. Barfield, founder of Bartech, a leading workforce management and staffing solutions provider to Global 500 firms, passed away at his home in Ann Arbor on Jan. 2, 2018. Mr. Barfield, who continued to enjoy an active lifestyle after retiring from Bartech, saw family members daily and enjoyed good health, died of natural causes at the age of 90. He would have turned 91 on Feb. 8.

Mr. Barfield was known as a pioneer of corporate America's minority supplier development programs, forming companies that were successful contractors to the major automakers and other industrial giants. He launched John Barfield & Associates in 1977, with a staff of six Washtenaw Community College students who updated engineering documents at GM's Willow Run facility in Ypsilanti, Mich. By 1984, Mr. Barfield expanded the company and renamed it The Bartech Group, finding success in the engineering and technical staffing industry.

Mr. Barfield was a legendary entrepreneur. He began his professional career as a janitor at the University of Michigan, making only \$1.75 an hour. Seeing an opportunity to serve residential developers, Mr. Barfield and his wife Betty formed J & B Cleaning Company (later renamed Barfield Cleaning Company), in Ypsilanti, Mich. By the late 1960s, the company's expertise in the commercial building maintenance industry attracted the attention of several Fortune 500 suitors. The Barfields ultimately sold the business to ITT Corp. in 1969.

John and Betty Barfield formed additional businesses over the following decades, assisted in key roles by their six adult children. Barfield Companies, composed of the family's three largest businesses in the mid-1980s, was named Company of the Year by *Black Enterprise* magazine in 1985. The Barfields sold four of the companies they founded, including Barfield Building Maintenance Company, Barfield Manufacturing Company, and in 2015, Bartech Group. Today, Bartech, based in Southfield, Mich., employs more than 3,000, manages approximately 120,000 contract workers worldwide, and also manages approximately \$4.7 billion in funds spent by its corporate clients. Bartech was named the nation's top Managed Services Provider firm for 2014 by HRO Today, a trade magazine for the contingent workforce industry.

John Barfield was born Feb. 8, 1927, in Tuscaloosa, Ala., the son of sharecroppers. His father became a coal miner, eventually moving the family to Washington, Penn., for several years before an ultimate move to Ypsilanti. Mr. Barfield dropped out of high school to enlist in the U.S. Army, serving in Germany and France from 1945 to 1947. He and Betty Barfield were married on July 1, 1947. Their friendship, partnership and romance lasted a total of 73 years.

Mr. and Mrs. Barfield were longtime philanthropists and mentors to other entrepreneurs. They formed Share Products Co. in the 1990s as a vehicle to support charitable giving to the homeless. Ten consumer products were sold in major grocery stores throughout the Midwest, with 50 percent of Share Products' profits going to organizations that aided people without shelter. The Barfields were also active supporters of nonprofits such as UNCF, Spaulding for Children, the Rotary Foundation and the Parkridge Community Center in Ypsilanti.



Mr. Barfield was the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including the A.G. Gaston Lifetime Achievement Award from *Black Enterprise* magazine, the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion's Humanitarian of the Year Award, and the Tree of Life Award, the highest honor of the Jewish National Fund in America.

Mrs. Betty Barfield preceded Mr. Barfield in death on April 24, 2017. Mr. Barfield is survived by his six children: Jon (Vivian) Barfield, Angela Barfield, Aaron Barfield, Bonnie (Jeff) Jones, Lisa Barfield and David (Kiana) Barfield. He is also survived by 13 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and his loyal cat, Quatro.

Services for John W. Barfield will be as follows:

PUBLIC VISITATION -- Monday, January 8, 2018, 4-6PM
Zion Lutheran Church, 1501 W. Liberty St.
Ann Arbor, Mich.
(734) 994-4455

FAMILY HOUR -- Tuesday, January 9, 2018
10AM, Zion Lutheran Church

FUNERAL -- Tuesday, January 9, 2018
11AM, Zion Lutheran Church

Arrangements being handled by:
SWANSON FUNERAL HOME
(313) 272-9000

As Mr. Barfield was passionate in his community support, in lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Parkridge Community Center: <http://www.aaacf.org/barfield>

If you prefer to send a check, please make payable to AAACF with "Barfield" written in the memo line and mail to:

John and Betty Barfield Community Investment Fund for Parkridge
c/o Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation (AAACF)
301 N. Main Street, Suite 300
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Condolences can be sent to:
David Barfield
27777 Franklin Road
Suite 600
Southfield, MI 48034
dbarfield@bartechgroup.com

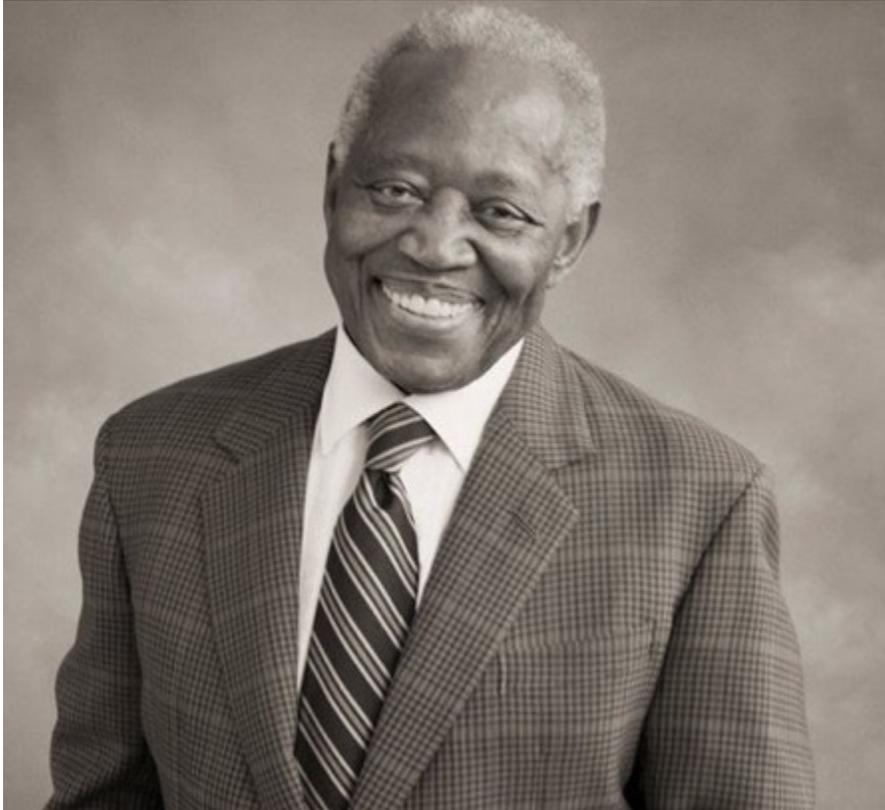
Contacts

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