

Darryl Woods, Sr. Biography



On any given day you might find Darryl Woods Sr. speaking before thousands about reforming unjust systems of oppression or urban planning with politicians, billionaires, and faith leaders. He may be spending time mentoring young students, helping families in need of food or shelter, or campaigning to get outstanding political leaders elected to office. No matter the job, opportunity, or circumstance, Darryl is going to use his vision, resources, and heart of gold to help bring about positive change. This is not quite what you would expect from a former inmate who up until recently was serving a life sentence without the possibility of parole. Since his welcome back to the streets and suites of Detroit, Darryl has kept his promise to prove that with God all things are possible.

Early in his incarceration, Darryl was born again and transformed by the power of God. He later became a minister and preacher leading hundreds of men to salvation and baptism in the Holy Spirit. Darryl worked with countless churches, gospel artists, and speakers to organize revivals, concerts, and church services that pierced the heart of men from all backgrounds for two decades.

Darryl has led thousands of young people and parolees to transformation through his RESTART Youth Deterrent™ and PRISON Deterrent™ Programs where he worked tirelessly to close both the school to prison pipeline and reduce recidivism. He partnered with the FBI, DEA, US Attorney's Office, city officials and countless leaders who flocked to volunteer at sessions and special events. Through various fund-raising campaigns, Darryl raised over \$100,000 for scholarships, school supplies and other charitable causes. He also expressed his passion for civil rights and social justice through his role as president of the NAACP Prison Branch at Ryan Correctional Facility.

After serving 29 years behind prison walls, being denied by every court in the land and three failed commutation attempts - God said enough! With the backing of countless pastors, judges, professors, and community leaders, on the last day of the legislative calendar, Darryl's sentence was commuted by Governor Rick Snyder and on February 12, 2019, he returned home.

While serving the community, Darryl never gave up his responsibility as a father. He would often write letters to his children's teachers, being an advocate for their education. Upon graduation, Darryl worked hand and hand with his son Darryl Jr. to identify scholarships and write essays. He eventually received over \$40,000 to attend Michigan State University. Darryl is also the proud father of his daughter Tiffany, an amazing entrepreneur and designer, and grandfather to his grandsons, Armando and Alexander. It goes without saying that his legacies are the light of his world and a blessing that brings unimaginable joy.

Now, in the same spirit of service and love, he is continuing his work of impacting the lives of others through a message of hope and transformation. He's the founder of Fighting the Good Fight, an entrepreneurial endeavor where advocates for criminal justice reform and helps to bring resources to the community through various partnerships and programs. He's also a member of the State Appellate Defenders Commission where he was appointed to a four-year term by Governor Gretchen Whitmer and a member of the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Oversight Policy Board (OSPB) for Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network.

Darryl is a faithful member of Greater Grace Temple, and his message of love, justice and mercy has opened doors for him to minister to leaders and members of all faith walks. He's received numerous community service awards including the 2019 Great Expectations Award from the Detroit Branch NAACP, the 2022 Changemaker Award from the Detroit Public School Community District Foundation, the 2023 Legacy Award from the Dr. Ossian H. Sweet Foundation, and the Rev. Dr. Wendell Anthony Community Service Award from Fellowship Chapel.