

## Remembering Anthony J. Bridgeman April 5, 1972 to April 6, 2023

Born in Brooklyn, NY, Anthony J. Bridgeman made his mark on Indianapolis through a rich life filled with love for his family, service to his community, and a gift for connecting with others. He was a courageous leader, a strategic thinker, and a life-long learner who demonstrated his care for others in everything he did.

He moved to Indianapolis to attend Butler University. After graduating from Butler and later earning a master's degree in urban planning from IUPUI, Anthony put his talents to use in public, non-profit and private sectors. As Director of Community Initiatives at the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Anthony led the Museum's community revitalization efforts by managing a \$3 million neighborhood improvement fund that invested in housing and removing blighted commercial and residential properties. He convened a broad-based coalition of community stakeholders, which worked towards positive community change in the immediate and adjacent neighborhoods to the Museum. He managed the Museum's community outreach programs to underserved households statewide. He also created and directed the Mid-North Promise Program, a neighborhood-based community development initiative providing case management, educational support services, and scholarships.



As Vice President of Community Development Banking at PNC, he helped execute the bank's Community Reinvestment Act strategy by leveraging lending and investment tools with a focus on serving low- and moderate-income communities and households. He also led several programs with businesses and was often a thought leader on various panels, steering committees, and task forces on issues related to education, community development, human services and other issues.

Anthony channeled his passion for cycling and history into a higher civic cause. He was a founding member of the grassroots Major Taylor Coalition to honor Indianapolis native and world champion cyclist Marshall "Major" Taylor (1878-1932) with a large downtown mural as a trailblazing Black athlete. Anthony worked tirelessly and provided crucial connections with the Indianapolis Arts Council and other local organizations to make the project a reality. The five-story mural on the Barnes & Thornburg building on South Meridian Street was completed in 2021, with Anthony among the speakers at the dedication ceremony.

Anthony admired Taylor for his athletic achievement but even more for his high integrity and perseverance amid overt and persistent racism. Throughout the four years of working on the mural project, Anthony would bring his son, Grant, to meetings and events to honor Major Taylor and his legacy. "Anthony was kind and welcoming to my family and me from the moment we met him several years ago," wrote Karen Donovan, Major Taylor's great-granddaughter. "I appreciate all that he has done for Major's legacy, and I especially love that he is an incredible father to his son."

It was his role as father to Grant that Anthony cherished most. Together they enjoyed traveling, playing video games, watching movies, and many other adventures and interests. Anthony always was proud of Grant, and planned for Grant's future educational pursuits.

Anthony was interested in everything and everyone – learning, reading, eating great food (especially African and Caribbean cuisine), and making great friends along the way. He served on the boards of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, American Red Cross – Indiana Region, City of Indianapolis Business and Neighborhood Services, LISC Local Advisory Board, Indianapolis Board of Zoning Appeals and Momentum Indy.

He was an Indy's Best and Brightest Award Winner in 2012. In February 2023, Anthony was recognized with the Robert Zdenek Staff Member of the Year award at Prosperity Indiana's annual conference, a significant accomplishment in his field.

Anthony, who loved martial arts, riding his bike and other physical fitness, was diagnosed with esophageal cancer in 2020. He persevered through multiple rounds of various aggressive treatments (while working full time at a job he loved). After noticing new developments, his doctors placed him in hospice care in March 2023. His family is grateful for the care provided by Dr. Shadia I. Jalal and her team, who specialize in cancer treatment at the Multi-D Oncology Clinic for Indiana University Health. His final days included 24-hour care at home, listening to tribute videos, and being surrounded by family and friends.

Anthony leaves behind his beloved son, Grant J. Bridgeman, his parents Anthony J. (Hazel) Bridgeman Sr. and Janice (James) Lawson, as well as brothers Kevin Bridgeman, James 'Jimmy' Lawson, NGozi Bridgeman, Njeri Bridgeman, extended family, best friend Marquisha Bridgeman and a host of close friends.

In Anthony's memory, you may consider making a gift to one of the many organizations Anthony served, including the [Starfish Initiative](#), where he was a mentor, [Freewheelin' Community Bikes](#), or [Momentum Indy](#).