

Western regional minister marks 10th anniversary

By Charlene Muhammad | Last updated: Apr 5, 2005 – 8:50:00 AM

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LOS ANGELES (FinalCall.com) – Earthquake. That is one thing that Western Regional Minister Tony Muhammad thought twice about when anyone mentioned the state of California.

But when the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan asked the young, successful businessman to leave his southern comfort zone to head west, the Atlanta native packed up his family and moved to the land of epicenters, because he loves Islam, Allah, the Messenger, the Minister and his people.

That love was ignited in 1985 within Min. Tony, both a college graduate and former drug dealer, as he watched the videotape of Minister Farrakhan's message "Power At Last Forever." The videotape was given to him by one of his "colleagues." Immediately upon hearing the message, Min. Tony recalled, he shunned his life of ill-repute and joined the Nation of Islam.

Minister Tony Muhammad

Graphic courtesy: NOI.org "I heard a word that changed my life. My duty to a man like the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan is to be obedient: Go where he says go, do what he says do, and stay away from what he says stay away from," Min. Tony said.

He is also grateful for former Eastern Airlines employee Oliver X. "He represented Islam so well, and he was the first one to mention Min. Farrakhan's name to me. He was my guardian angel," Min. Tony shared.

After laboring as one of Atlanta's top fishermen, once bringing out 135 guests one Sunday, Tony 3X was renamed Tony Muhammad by Min. Farrakhan, and labeled a born leader.

"Tears rolled down my eyes when I received the name 'Muhammad,' but I wasn't satisfied with the suffering in the South," he stated. So, he continued to work.

During his early years, before abandoning his six-figure earnings, to head to L.A., Min. Tony said, he was expelled from the mosque on nine different occasions. While outside, he served as an evangelist, touring colleges throughout the South and Southeast, speaking to college students about Islam. On day 89 of his sentences, he recalled, he would return to the mosque with nearly 30-40 guests.

Today, with ultimate support from his family, he brandishes the same fiery love for Islam on the West Coast. His wife, Sis. L'tonya, became a registered M.G.T. at Muhammad's Mosque No. 27. His son, Khallid, is member of the Jr. F.O.I. security team, and his daughter, Asha, is a member of the Divine Hands cultural dance troupe.

Min. Tony's work and influence in the Nation's Western Regional headquarters spans to the community, street organizations, entertainers, spiritual, political and educational circles. This has enabled him to implement various programs aimed at spiritual and economic empowerment for the community, such as the Your Farmer's Market "Feed My Flock" food co-op program, the Community Development Corporation, the Black Defense League, and the Peacemakers Gang Intervention Program and Peacemakers Junior Fruit Manhood Training Program, targeting resolutions to gang violence.

"Love for our people makes you go down in the trenches, like a mother into a burning house for a baby. Islam dignifies the Black man and woman, and the medicine into the mouth of his ministers is what our people need," he stressed. "They need to know who Allah (God) is and that their Saviour has already arrived. There's a man doing the Jesus work in our midst today."

Keeping obedience to Allah (God) through the guidance of Min. Farrakhan, Min. Tony continued, has garnered the respect of the people. Recently, Min. Tony added a multi-billion dollar redevelopment project to the list of programs brought to help lift the community out of poverty.

A business team headed by John McDonald, a successful Black developer from Dallas, probed L.A. community leaders for someone with strong ties to the under-represented, overlooked community. Bishop H.H. Brookins, Min. Tony stated, sent Mr. McDonald his way.

October 10, 2004 marked the unveiling of the Watts Rising Multi-Use Development Project by Imperial Partners, which aims to redevelop 200 acres in the city, and help evolve residents from renters to home owners through land trust development.

"Min. Tony represents the people who are in the streets, the people who we want to get behind this project and the ones who we really want to see benefit—overlooked and left out of other projects that have come into Watts. He represents a wide array of the working class people," stated Mr. McDonald, Imperial Partners' managing partner.

This year marks Min. Tony's 10-year anniversary as the region's minister. Through the years, he has braved many earthquakes by his desire to "be a witness-bearer for Farrakhan," and keeping his eye on the prize—the total mental, moral and spiritual resurrection of our people.