



Struggle-La-Lucha.org

Brother Aminifu, dedicated organizer for Black liberation

written by Larry Hamm
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Milton Lawrence Williams, also known as Brother Aminifu, left us unexpectedly on Aug. 12, 2021. He was born Jan. 6, 1942 in Petersburg, Virginia., the son of Arthur Lee Williams Sr. and Christine Chance Williams. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his sister, Doris Mae Williams. Surviving members of his family include his older brother Arthur L. Williams Jr. and many uncles, aunts and cousins.

Milton graduated from I.C. Norcom High School in 1962. Following graduation, he served in the U.S. Navy, where he was assigned to do paintings and photography.

When Milton lived in Los Angeles, he belonged to the US Organization, which was named “US” in reference to “‘us’ Black people,” when juxtaposed to the perceived oppressors, “them”. Milton became the cultural minister and was instrumental in helping to develop the now well-known holiday, Kwanzaa. It was also where he was given his African identity: Brother Aminifu.

At the suggestion of Baba Amiri Baraka, Milton eventually moved back to the East Coast and settled in Newark, New Jersey, where he became employed with the Ford Motor Company. He worked there for more than 30 years. During that time, he became a fearless union organizer and was made chair of the Fair Practices Committee. He held various chair positions throughout the United Auto Workers union.

In 1990, Brother Aminifu met Brother Kha Sekhem Wy, the founder of Reconstructing Economics For Afrikan Love (REFAL), while they both were attending Afrikan Echoes. Afrikan Echoes was an organization committed to bringing hundreds, if not thousands, of scholars devoted to African studies and liberation to speak each Sunday. But not having their own building was a problem. Churches they rented from withdrew their space if the teachings of the scholars conflicted with traditional Christian doctrine.

So, in 1991, Brother Aminifu joined REFAL, which is dedicated to building African Liberation through economics. One of the goals of REFAL was to purchase their own building so that they could bring in African-centered scholars and develop African-centered programs so that Black people could live the principles of Kwanzaa every single day. With that vision in mind, they remained steadfast and purchased their own building at 269 S Ninth St. in Newark.

Milton — Brother Aminifu — put his heart and soul into building REFAL. He was exceedingly generous with his money, time and knowledge. It was not uncommon for him to get on scaffolds with sheet rock. He designed many of the bookshelves and painted the main room. He donated many of the art pieces and did everything to make it feel like we were in the Motherland. Additionally, he headed up the REFAL study group and helped with the REFAL organic garden.

Because of Brother Aminifu's excellent organizational skills and wide interest in the affairs of our community, about 17 years ago he became an ambassador for REFAL, with the purpose of being a conduit between REFAL and other community organizations. That is how he came to the People's Organization for Progress (POP).

Upon going to his first POP meeting, he decided to become an active member and served in many capacities. From the organization's pro-reparations stance, to ending wars and stopping police brutality, he strongly supported all of its social justice stances and was the first one to show up to its many calls for action.

He was the historian, leader of the study group, and represented POP on the Human Rights Committee, International Affairs Committee, coalition and committees on Cuba, served on POP's Kwanzaa Committee, Justice Monday Committee, and the Saturday Empowerment Team. In addition, he was a speaker at numerous POP and non-POP events.

Our Brother Milton Williams, Brother Aminifu, served his family and his community well. He was a giant among revolutionaries who soldiered under Brothers Malcolm, Martin, Mtume, Kwame Toure, Amiri Baraka, Elombe Brath, etc. He stood with the likes of sisters such as Angela Davis, Claudette Colvin, Amina Baraka, Tawana Brawley, Sarah Collins Rudolph and so many, many others. He lived every moment of his life dedicated to the love of his family and the love of his community.

At Milton's prior request, his remains were cremated on Aug. 23, 2021.

