

## Willie Jolley Worldwide

### Willie Jolley's Life Story

Willie Jolley was born in Washington, D.C. and got his entrepreneurial start as a newspaper boy who designed a distribution system employing his friends and building one of the area's most profitable routes.

In elementary school, Willie would sit in class and dream about creating music that he could share with the world. He started by taking guitar lessons when he was 8 and started playing trumpet when he was 10. When he was 11 he accompanied a neighbor to her choir rehearsal and was sitting in the back singing along with the group when the choir director heard him and insisted he sing with the group. That choir director happened to be the director of the Washington DC Youth Choral and invited Willie to sing with the prestigious group. At the age of 15 he formed a singing group, 98.6, that became a local success story and he signed his first record deal at the age of 17. The group broke up, but Willie continued as a solo act by singing jingles, and performing in local nightclubs, which helped pay his way through college and graduate school. He went on to receive a B.A. in Psychology and Sociology from American University and a Masters Degree from Wesley Theological Seminary.

By the early 1980's, Willie had become Washington's #1 jingle singer with commercials for Pizza Hut, Phil Donahue, Black Entertainment Television, Seventh Heaven, Oldsmobile and many more. In 1982, Willie became a background performer with jazz legend Jean Carne and toured with her for two years and also later also with the legendary singer, Phyllis Hyman. In 1983, he joined forces with another powerful singer, Joe Minor, and they created a duo called The Deuce and in 1984 they signed with CBS Records and their first national single was released entitled "Someone Else!" The song was what record companies call a "turntable hit", which means it got lots of airplay, but not a lot of sales. CBS dropped the group and Willie went on to become a solo act, singing in local jazz clubs. Within a few years, he had become one of Washington most popular jazz performers. In 1987, he was awarded his first of five consecutive Washington Area Music Association (WAMMIE) Awards -- 3 for Best Jazz Vocalist, and 2 for Best Entertainer. In 1990, Willie was fired from his jazz club gig and replaced by the newest low cost entertainment program going across America, a karaoke machine.

Willie decided that he was going to change directions and started the process of discovering that "setbacks are really setups for comebacks!" He took a job with the D.C. Public Schools to join their Drug Prevention division as a Project Coordinator to develop a program using arts and music to attract youth to seek positive alternatives to drugs and violence. The program was called "Positive Images" and became an overnight success, winning awards from the Department of Education, and Blue Cross/Blue Shield. As part of his job

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responsibilities he started giving speeches to the young people and to parent programs. It was from this platform Willie started his speaking career.

In early 1992, there was a pivotal event that had a major impact on Willie's career. He sent a tape to the Gospel Music Association and was chosen for their New Artist Showcase in Nashville, Tennessee. He cashed in all of his sick leave, annual leave and everything else he could to get the time off to go to Nashville so he could become a "star!" He went to Nashville and BOMBED! In that moment he made the decision that he was not born to "Impress" people, but rather to "Inspire" people! Willie realized it was time for a major change -- to leave the security of a steady job and paycheck, and risk everything for his own dream of becoming a full time speaker who could inspire millions. With only \$200 in the bank, a mortgage to pay, family to support, and a dream of success, Willie left his job and started speaking full time.

Willie proved to be a practical dreamer, who realized "that the best way to predict your future is to create your future!" He started his own company, Willie Jolley Worldwide, and created a concept called InspirTainment, which stands for Inspiration-Entertainment, Motivation and Information, built on the foundation of his combining his unique talents as a speaker and singer.

That same year, Willie joined the National Speakers Association (NSA), learning from some of the best speakers in the world and honing his talents. In 1995, he became President of the Washington DC chapter of NSA,

In 1996, Les Brown heard Willie and invited him to be the opening act on his new Music and Motivation Tour with Gladys Knight and Billy Preston. As a result of this tour, Willie was introduced to the corporate arena and started speaking for companies such as Bell Atlantic, Staples, Nabisco, U.S. Postal Service, The US Army and Navy and the CIA. In July 1998, Willie was elected to the National Speakers Association Board of Directors, as the first African American Member to achieve that distinction.

In the mid 1990's, Willie started hosting a one-minute radio feature called "The Willie Jolley Magnificent Motivational Minute". He started it on a small AM Station and it has since gone on to become one of the top motivational features in America. It can be heard daily in Washington on Washington's Top Adult Urban Format Station, WHUR-FM, and across America on the ABC Rejoice Radio Network. He is also seen regularly on television on PBS, BET and has been featured on TPN (The People's Television Network) and the Success Channel. He is also a television spokesperson for Mercedes Benz and other major corporations. Willie now is a columnist for Black Enterprise Magazine, The Washington Informer and the Baltimore Times. Plus his Motivational Column is read weekly by over 6 million readers via urban America's #1 news magazine, The Electronic Urban Report (EUR).

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Willie is the author of a number of best selling books. The first was "It Only Takes a Minute to Change Your Life" and the second is "A Setback Is A Setup For A Comeback!" His books have now been translated in over 10 languages. He co-authored for teens called "Go M.A.D. (Go Make A Difference) which is part of his popular youth motivational package, which includes his PBS Special for youth "Dare 2 Dream/Dare 2 Win!" This video has become one of the top selling drug prevention videos for teens in America.

In 1999, Willie Jolley was named "One of the Outstanding Five Speakers in the World" by Toastmasters International. Former winners include Colin Powell, Norman Schwartzkoff, Nelson Mandela and Margaret Thatcher, Les Brown and Christopher Reeve! His new "Jolley" music is now the number one downloaded Motivational Music on the Apple iTunes store! And in 2003, he was named, "A Black History Maker of Today" by the McDonald's Corporation.

Willie is also co-author in "Chicken Soup For The Christian Soul 2" and has since written two more books: an organizational development book, "An Attitude of Excellence," and a wealth-building, mass-market book, "Turn Setbacks Into Greenbacks." Both are on their way to becoming bestsellers!

Willie Jolley is a graduate of The American University and Wesley Theological Seminary. His mission in life is to help people to maximize their God given talents and abilities so that they can Do More, Be More and Achieve More! He resides in Washington DC with his wife and family.