

**Mr. Richard Tolson
Community Ally Award**

Mr. Richard Tolson is being honored with the Community Ally Award in recognition of his commitment to working alongside the Black community in Ocean City to provide opportunities to our children. Mr. Tolson was born in Ocean City in 1958, the youngest of six children, to the late Charlie and Bunny Tolson. He attended Ocean City Schools throughout his childhood and graduated from Ocean City High School in 1976. After graduation, he started a career in the masonry industry, working with Frank Galante & Son. In 1988, he joined the Bricklayers Union and became Union Organizer in 1990. Mr. Tolson is currently the Director of the Bricklayers Union for the state of New Jersey, a position he has held since 2006.

In 2012, Mr. Tolson received his Bachelor's degree in Labor Studies from the National Labor College in Silver Springs, Maryland. He is very committed to community engagement throughout South Jersey. He has served on the New Jersey Economic Development Authority for seven years. He currently serves as the Vice Chairman of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority. His strong ties to the Black community in Ocean City originated in his relationship with the Ocean City Hawks Organization. Mr. Tolson coached Hawks teams from 1984-1992, and again in 2000. His commitment to the youth in Ocean City extended far beyond the middle school football field. For many, he was a father figure, guidance counselor, and community liaison. Mr. Tolson helped so many children in the neighborhood see beyond their circumstance and reach for their full potential. He currently resides in Ocean City with his wife Sonya Bertini. He has two children, Antoinette DiMeglio and Mikel C. Bertini, and two grandchildren, Kiersten and George Workman.