



David Hankerson, a loving husband, father, grandfather, brother, friend, and community servant transitioned on January 25, 2024. He departed this life peacefully at the age of 77 with his wife and children at his bedside.

Although David spent more than 5 decades living in Marietta and Kennesaw, he was a native of Burke County born to Otis and Louise Jones Hankerson in [Waynesboro, Georgia](#). After his parents passed away, at an early age he was adopted and raised on a farm by his aunt and uncle, Grant and Rhina Lee Crawford. This sparked his love for agriculture which would prove to be a defining factor early in his career.

Across the span of his life, he gravitated towards education, leadership, and service. In 1964, he graduated from Waynesboro High & Industrial School where he excelled as Junior and Senior Class President. He then went on to earn a degree in agronomy from Fort Valley State College (now University) and a Juris Doctor from Woodrow Wilson College of Law. From 1967 - 1970, he served our country in the U.S. Army Signal Corps stationed in Seoul, South Korea. Upon his return, David worked for the federal government as a soil conservationist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and in 1984, he was selected to oversee development for all of Cobb County. Due to his diligence and steadfast dedication, he was appointed as the Cobb County Manager in 1993. During his tenure, the county saw numerous accomplishments which include drafting its first stormwater ordinance, securing permits to build the East-West Connector, obtaining a Triple-AAA bond rating, and creating the Cobb Safety Village with an Education

Building now named in his honor. One of the major highlights of his career was the development of Truist Park which opened in 2017.

During David's administration, Cobb County became the home of Major League Baseball's Atlanta Braves, the 2021 World Series Champions. David leaves a powerful legacy as the first African American County Manager of Cobb County, and his 24 years of service in the role makes him the longest serving in county history. In a special tribute on the floor of the U.S. Senate in [Washington, D.C.](#), Senator Johnny Isakson recognized David Hankerson as "one of the people that really make America work." Isakson noted David's stellar leadership as the county "doubled in population and quadrupled in revenue tax rates went down, productivity went up and it became one of the shining stars in the state of Georgia." David had a passion for family, farming, and uplifting others. He was known for cultivating crops in his gardens and giving away fresh fruits and vegetables to everyone in the community. He treasured the opportunity to continue working with the soil to bear harvest the way he did as a child growing up in rural Georgia.

David is survived by his wife of 48 years, Janet; sons Shawn Hankerson, Shane Hankerson, Brian Hankerson; and daughter, Erica Bryant Graham (Glen). He was affectionately called "Pop Pop" by his two grandchildren, Ashleigh and Avery Fields, III (Tre'). He also leaves behind a sister, Mary Waltower of Augusta, GA and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family and friends.

A Celebration of Life service in memory of David Hankerson will be held on Wednesday, February 7th at 11am at Turner Chapel AME Church located at 492 North Marietta Parkway NE in [Marietta, Georgia](#). The public is welcome to attend. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the David and Janet Hankerson Endowed Scholarship at Kennesaw State University to support future public administrators in their pursuit of graduate studies.