

NC CHAMBER | EIGHTY-FIRST

ANNUAL MEETING AND AWARDS

MARCH 22, 2023 | RALEIGH, NC

Willie A. Deese **Distinguished Citizenship Award Recipient**

Willie Deese is a highly successful senior executive with an extensive background as a member of global Fortune 200 company leadership. He has actively interacted with corporate boards as a functional senior leader at Merck and GSK and is currently serving as a director on four domestic and international company boards – with extensive audit, governance, and compensation committee participation. As a strong operational leader, he has 39 years of experience in manufacturing, supply chain and procurement management, driving complex transformational restructurings, internal productivity efficiencies, turnarounds, consolidations, and integrations. Of tremendous value, he is recognized for his proactive contributions defining healthy, engaged corporate cultures with specific areas of focus, including ESG values/standards, DE&I policies, succession planning, compensation strategy, and leadership development.



In his corporate career, Willie most recently had a 12-year run at Merck & Co., Inc. In his last position he was promoted to *President, Merck Manufacturing*. There, he led global manufacturing, supply chain management, logistics/distribution, procurement, and Lean Six Sigma, with oversight of 42 (98 at time of merger) manufacturing sites spanning 30 countries, an annual operating budget of \$9 billion and capital budget of \$2 billion. He joined Merck in 2004 as *Senior Vice President, Global Procurement*.

Prior to Merck, Willie was *Senior Vice President, Global Procurement and Logistics, GMS* at GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals, PLC, responsible for developing and integrating the Procurement function post-merger and leading a \$1 billion+ cost improvement initiative.

Willie received his MBA from Western New England University and his B.S. in Business Administration from North Carolina A&T State University. He received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Davidson College in May of 2021, and North Carolina A&T State University named its College of Business and Economics in his honor in 2020. Willie also received an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities from North Carolina A&T State University in 2011.

In April of 2022, he was appointed to serve on President Biden's Advisory Board for HBCUs. Over the past 22 years, he has provided more than 300 partial and full scholarships to A&T students who majored in business. Willie has mentored and coached countless numbers of students over the past 25 years and ensured that graduates of HBCUs were hired and developed to take meaningful roles in corporate America.