

Eddie & Barbie Broussard

*Senior Vice President and Associate Director, US Field Ministries
The Navigators*

Eddie's exposure to the Navigator ministry at Texas A&M 1974 resulted in the recommitment of his life to follow Christ and to receive ongoing training in Christian discipleship and leadership. After graduating from Texas A&M 1978 with a B.S. degree in Pre-Medicine/zoology, doing graduate study in education, and teaching chemistry at Navasota High School in Texas, Eddie joined the staff of the Navigators and moved to the University of Illinois for a period of staff training.



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Eddie's varied ministry experience includes leading the Navigator ministry at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama (1982-1984) and at Memphis State University in Tennessee from 1984-1989 as well as serving as Pastor of Discipleship in two churches from 1984-1993, Lamar Terrace Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee (an African-American, inner city church) and Crown of Love Evangelical Free Church in the Chicago area (a Spanish-speaking church that Eddie helped to co-found). Eddie is a Magna Cum Laude graduate of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, where he completed the Master of Arts degree in New Testament in 1992. Eddie's interest in intercultural ministry continued to be developed as he directed In-country Training for the CoMission movement in the former Soviet Union (1993-1997). His strong relational skills, creativity and preaching ability have made Eddie a sought-after teacher, leader and speaker.

In the fall of 2008 Eddie transitioned out of his role as Vice President of Diversity, a role he pioneered from 1998 to 2008. During those years he led the growth of ethnic diversity in the US Navigators, and provided leadership for the four US Ethnic Ministries: African American, Asian American, Hispanic and Native American.

In January 2009 Eddie began a new role as Senior Vice President and Associate Director, US Field Ministries. This new role focuses on five areas: Creating and nurturing the culture of the US Navigators, serving with the US Field Leader in leading the Field Ministries of the US Navigators, Leading the development of a national diversity council to continue the work of diversity growth in the US Navigators, fund raising for the US Navigators, and serving as a national voice and stimulus for urban and inner city ministry across the US Navigators.

Eddie's Creole African American heritage and varied ministry experience bring sensitivity and perspective to his role. He also serves on the seven-member National Leadership Team of the U.S. Navigators. This team is charged with the leadership of the Navigators' multi-faceted U.S. ministries.

An avid language enthusiast, Eddie speaks Spanish, and enjoys his growing facility in Russian and German.

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Barbie & I want to take a minute and introduce ourselves to you. While we are both from Texas, Eddie's roots go back to Creole Louisiana & Southeast Texas where he still cherishes his childhood trips to Pt. Arthur, TX and Lake Charles, LA to visit grandparents and relatives.

Barbie hails from Muenster, TX, about 90 miles north of Dallas. She grew up in a family of seven in this small German Catholic Community. After finishing high school Barbie went to nursing school and completed her training and board certification as an Registered Nurse. She moved to Dallas, TX to begin her career as an R.N. Barbie's Brother Tom Hess, who leads The Navigators Military Ministries in North and South Carolinas, helped Barbie begin a relationship with Jesus Christ just before she finished High School. Her relationship with God became very important to Barbie and she began to pursue a more serious knowledge of Jesus Christ and how his life could fill and flow through her in every aspect of her life, including her career work as a nurse.

Over the next 18 years of Barbie's life she worked as an R.N. in hospitals, private duty, and home health, rotating through just about every facet of medical care including Emergency Room, Surgery, Internal Medicine, and Pediatrics. During these years she found another expression for her faith. She began taking short-term mission trips during her summer vacation time including ministry at the Summer Olympics in Seoul, Korea, and Atlanta, GA, and the world track championships in Stuttgart, Germany.

In 1996 her life took a different turn. She left her nursing career to join a team of nine other followers of Jesus Christ who moved to the city of Vinnitsa, Ukraine for one year to work with school teachers there who wanted to teach a curriculum of ethics and morality that used Jesus as a model citizen and the Bible as a text book. This movement was called CoMission, and placed teams of ten in over 65 cities in Russia, Ukraine, Latvia and Estonia with this desire to serve the teachers and students of what was then called the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Barbie had a tremendous year of ministry in the Ukraine building special relationships with Ukrainian women, reading the Bible with many of them and helping those who desired to know Jesus in a personal and real way.

At the end of this year something very interesting happened. One of the trainers responsible for helping train all these CoMission teams began to pursue a relationship with her! That would be me (Eddie)! The rest is history as we were married on November 23, 1996 and began our married life in Raleigh, NC after we both returned from overseas.

That brings me to my (Eddie's) story. I grew up in what people now call the "inner city" of Houston, TX. Back then it was just our neighborhood, and a very exciting place to live. The part of Houston where I grew up is called third ward, one of the large African American communities in Houston. I can still remember growing up through the violence and the beauty of the 1960s with the civil rights movement in full swing, Motown keeping us on the dance floor, and Negro spirituals being a staple in the singing traditions of our Boy Scout Troop 242 down at Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church.

In the midst of this tremendous time God had provided me with a special family where both parents were present along with my brother and two sisters. We attended our local Catholic Parish, which was my first experience with spiritual life. I am thankful for these early years that gave me a deep respect for God, His son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, and for the Scriptures that were given to help us know Him and how we should live. It was during these early years that I first came to faith in Jesus Christ.

In these early years I found no one to walk with me in my new found relationship with Jesus, and help me to grow spiritually. In 1974 I went to Texas A & M University to begin college studies in Pre-medicine. It was my desire and intent to finish Texas A & M, enter Medical School, and go on to become a surgeon. My journey, however, would take me in a very different direction. In the first month at Texas A & M I ran into The Navigators. A friend told me one day that he had become a Christian and was getting into a Bible study with other students that I found out later was led by a "Navigator."

The Navigators is an international partnership of those followers of Jesus Christ whose lives are committed to knowing Jesus Christ, becoming like him, and joining him in his mission in the world. I found out that these students and The Navigator leader there at Texas A & M were people that seemed to have a quality of life and a depth of knowledge of the Scripture that I wanted.

During the remaining years at Texas A & M I enjoyed the benefit of mentoring relationships with Navigator-trained men and women who not only helped me to know Christ more intimately but helped me develop the heart and skills to help others grow spiritually. Upon graduating from Texas A & M in May of 1978 I elected to defer Medical School for a couple of years to receive further development and training with The Navigators. One quality of Navigator mentoring I have always appreciated is the commitment to develop a person not only in skills, but in character and in depth of relationship with God.

I taught High School Chemistry in the two years after graduation while receiving quality Navigator training with the local Navigator staff John & Eleanor Mahon. In May of 1980 The Navigators invited me to join their staff full-time, so I resigned my teaching job, and moved to Champaign-Urbana, IL to join Navigator Staff-Training Director Bob Price for a two-year intern training experience at the University of Illinois. I was encouraged that this training experience was focused on ministry in the African American cultural context here

in the US. Following this intense period of preparation I moved to Tuskegee, AL to reopen The Navigator ministry at prestigious Tuskegee Institute.

After two action packed years at Tuskegee, The Navigators asked me to move to Memphis State University (MSU). At MSU was it was my privilege to minister to men and women who have become my friends. They are pastors, teachers, engineers, educators, naval officers who captain ships, and men and women who impact their whole communities with the love, grace and truth of Jesus Christ and His kingdom.

From Memphis I moved to Chicago, IL to begin another intense period of training, this time academic at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (TEDS). It was during this time that I had the privilege to fulfill a long-time dream to learn to speak Spanish. My roommate, seminary student, pastor and friend Carlos Guadagno took me in and, along with the church he was planting, helped me to learn to speak Spanish as I worked with him to start Corona de Amor, a church that brings the transforming power of Christ into the lives of Spanish-speaking men and women in the Northwestern Chicago suburban areas.

After completing my studies at TEDS an amazing door of opportunity opened for me in the former Soviet Union. Before I knew it I was moving to Moscow to serve as the In-Country Training Coordinator for the CoMission. My two and a half years in Moscow were life changing. It was the only time in my life that I had lived outside of my home country. I enjoyed the intrigue of developing facility in the Russian language that enabled me to connect with my Russian and Ukrainian friends at a new level of depth.

Following years in CoMission I moved back to the states where Barbie and I were married. Ten months into our marriage we received a call from the newly instated President of the U.S. Navigators asking me about serving on the National Leadership Team for the U.S. Navigators to bring the perspective and influence of ethnic minority America into the senior executive functions of the U.S. Navigators.

After a decision process involving the African American, Hispanic and Asian American Navigator leaders, I was affirmed to represent our ethnic minority staff and leaders on the National Leadership Team and to serve as the catalyst for moving The Navigators toward both becoming a multicultural organization and impacting ethnically diverse peoples of our country with the good news of Jesus and his kingdom.

For the last 10 years Barbie and I have lived in Colorado Springs, CO where it is our privilege to serve a growing movement of ordinary men and women who are doing extraordinary things because of the power of Christ operating in and through their lives. Our internet home will attempt to introduce you to some of them.

CONTACT US

We would love to hear from you. Feel free to send us a message and find out more about what Jesus is doing. You can email us at: eddie.broussard@navigator.org