



Jose Miguel Tengesdal

November 6, 1937 - June 3, 2026

Washington, District of Columbia

Washington lost Jose Miguel Tengesdal on June 3, 2026. He was 88. Born in Washington on November 6, 1937, into a Salvadoran-American household that treated work as a language. From the start, he treated promises like tools: keep them sharp, do not lend them lightly.

He cleaned cars that carried other people's mornings. A rail car cleaner checklist yellowed but legible outlasted three managers. Colleagues still mention a rail car cleaner checklist.

He and Ana married in 1961 and raised two sons without needing an audience. After Ana's death in 2019, he held to quiet habits-coffee before dawn, a tended yard, a voice on the phone that still checked in.

Neighbors remember covered dishes that arrived without a speech. He preferred the hour before a town fully wakes. Washington was home enough that he never rehearsed an introduction. The tools are still hung where a hand can find them in the dark.

What remains is not a legend but a practice: showing up, keeping a promise, leaving a place better than you found it. His life was the kind America is built from and too often forgets to name.

Services

A quiet remembrance in Washington. Those who wish may give to a neighborhood library, food pantry, or workers' aid fund instead of flowers.

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