



Elmer Whiting, Jr.

Elmer Whiting, Jr., was a graduate of John Adams High School and Howard University. He received from Case Western University a master's degree in business administration, and later earned a law degree from Cleveland Marshall School of Law.

During his lifetime, Elmer Whiting, Jr., achieved a number of important firsts. He made history in 1950, when he became the first African-American certified public accountant in the State of Ohio. He loved accounting but found that many times clients didn't come to him until they were having problems and needed an attorney.

So with encouragement from his wife, Carmel, Elmer went back to school. As an attorney and a CPA, in 1980 Elmer became president of the American Association of Attorney-Certified Public Accountants (AAA-CPA). Elmer achieved another first when, in 1971, he merged his practice with Ernst & Ernst and became the first African-American partner in the firm.

In addition to his professional career, Elmer maintained an outstanding record of service to civic organizations throughout the greater Cleveland area. He was the longest standing trustee and treasurer of the Eliza Bryant Center. Elmer also served on the boards of the Cleveland Playhouse, Karamu House and Blacks in Management.

In April 2009, the Cleveland Marshall School of Law Black Law Students' Association honored Elmer by unveiling his portrait painted by noted artist Norma Fleming. (see picture above). Mark McBride, JD, CPA and prominent member of the AAA-CPA, spoke at the ceremony. "Elmer Whiting was a very special person whose portrait will serve to remind others who follow that strongly-held beliefs, sincerely articulated, put forth in an effort to improve the world around oneself, will never go out of fashion."