

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Craig Strong

PERSON

Strong, Craig, 1947-

Alternative Names: The Honorable Craig Strong; Craig Stephen Strong

Life Dates: September 5, 1947-

Place of Birth: Detroit, Michigan, USA

Residence: Detroit, MI

Occupations: State Court Judge

Biographical Note

State of Michigan, 3rd District Circuit Court Judge Craig Stephen Strong was born on September 5, 1947, in Detroit, Michigan. Strong was raised in the Old Westside neighborhood of Detroit by his parents, Erman and Manila Geraldine Powers Strong. Growing up near the Blue Bird Bar and St. Cyprian Episcopal Church, Strong played the saxophone with the Junior Flips and was a patrol boy and a Boy Scout. Strong attended Sampson Elementary School and Cass Technical High School, where he excelled in the sciences. Graduating from high school in 1965, Strong entered Howard University, where he earned his B.S. degree in 1969. Drafted in 1971, Strong served as the only African American in the Navy's Judges Advocacy Corps at that time. In 1973, Strong received his J.D. degree from the Detroit College of Law.

While in law school, Strong worked for Wayne County Legal Services and later the Trade Union Leadership Council; during that time, he was influenced by legal activists Milton Henry, Damon J. Keith, Kenny Cockrell and Mike Walls. Passing the Michigan State Bar at age twenty-nine, Strong became an officer of the Wolverine Bar Association and eventually its youngest president at age twenty-nine. Active in Democratic politics, Strong was elected a judge of the Detroit Records Court at age thirty-one. Strong would later be elected to the 3rd District Michigan State Circuit Court in 2001. Strong was a founding member of the Association of Black Judges of Michigan and also served as its president. Strong served as judicial chair of the National Bar Association; was a member of the National Bar Association's delegation to South Africa; helped develop the International Black Bar Association; and served on the Supreme Court of South Africa.

In 1997, Strong, an avid collector of African art and African American memorabilia, was instrumental in the establishment of the Charles Wright African American History

Museum in Detroit; he has been honored with the Outstanding Museum Service Award for his extensive fundraising efforts. Strong was a mason, a member of the NAACP and the Black United Fund of Michigan, in addition to being well known nationally for his celebrity photographs, and his sartorial taste in clothing.

Related Entries

Cass Technical High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Sampson Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Sampson Academy [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Harvard Kennedy School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]