

CITY OF YOUNGSTOWN

MAYOR JAY WILLIAMS

Jay Williams is serving his second term as the City of Youngstown, Ohio's 47th mayor. His historic election was viewed by many political observers as a watershed moment in the changing political landscape of the community. Williams is the city's first African-American Mayor, and first elected at 33 years old, was also its youngest.

Youngstown has moved progressively under Mayor Williams' leadership. The city's *Youngstown 2010 Vision/Planning "right-sizing"* initiative has been recognized and rewarded by a number of notable organizations including, *The Wall Street Journal*, *U.S. News and World Report*, the American Planning Association, and *Governing Magazine* to name a few. In its August 2009 issue, *Entrepreneur Magazine* listed the City of Youngstown among the 10 best cities in the United States to start a business.

Mayor Williams has traveled nationally and internationally to discuss and promote Youngstown's innovative and progressive recovery efforts. There is a growing international interest in examining how many of the city's strategies might be of benefit to other global communities undergoing redevelopment challenges similar to Youngstown.

More important than improving the national and international reputation of the city, Mayor Williams is leading efforts that have a direct impact on improving the quality of life for the constituents he serves. Under his leadership, neighborhoods are being revitalized and aggressive policies are targeting crime. The city has increased investment in broad-based economic development initiatives. Mayor Williams is also a vocal proponent of an ambitious regional economic agenda intended to help the Youngstown area become more competitive in the changing global economic landscape.

In 2009, Mayor Williams was recognized as one of *Governing Magazine's* Public Officials of the Year. Mayor Williams was also the recipient of the 2007 John F. Kennedy New Frontier Award. The JFK Library Foundation, in conjunction with the Harvard University Institute of Politics, annually recognizes two exceptional young Americans, under the age of 40, whose contributions in elective office, community service or advocacy demonstrate the impact and value of public service in the spirit of President John F. Kennedy.

Prior to being elected, Mayor Williams served as the Director of Community Development for the city, and before that he enjoyed a distinguished career in banking. Williams was born and reared in Youngstown. He is a graduate of Youngstown State University with a B.S.B.A., majoring in Finance. The Mayor resides in Youngstown with his wife Sonja, who is an educational administrator.