



## DR. WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR. AWARD



### DR. WILLIAM FINLAYSON

***The Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award is the highest award the Urban League bestows nationally and locally. Mr. Young was the extraordinary long-time president of the National Urban League. His leadership, dedication, and clear focus on equity and equality built the National Urban League into the organization it is today. Local recipients of the award embody the same commitment to empowering communities and changing lives that is the hallmark of the organization.***

The 2023 Whitney M. Young, Jr. Award honoree is Dr. William Finlayson. At 98-years old, Dr. Finlayson is a living legend in Milwaukee. He not only continues to inspire this generation of young leaders; there's a good chance he also delivered them or their parents. As an obstetrician in Milwaukee since 1958, he delivered nearly 10,000 babies and was the first African-American to earn privileges at St. Joseph's Hospital in Milwaukee.

Together with four other doctors, he formed a practice at 5th and North Ave. in the very building that houses Greater Milwaukee Urban League. His skill and dedication earned the respect of Black and white colleagues, but he and his wife Edith still faced discrimination, especially in housing. He was an advocate for fair housing, improving employment opportunities, and civil rights.

A graduate of Morehouse College and Meharry Medical College, Dr. Finlayson was a classmate and Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity brother of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. That was not his only brush with greatness; Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, who was a civil rights leader and founder of Bethune Cookman College, was a family friend and Booker T. Washington was his elementary school teacher.

Dr. Finlayson has earned recognition and many awards for his skill as a physician and as a pioneer for civil rights. Fifth Street between West Capitol Drive and West Walnut in Milwaukee was recently named Dr. William Finlayson Street.