

**Reverend Dr. William E. Summers, III  
(1918-1996)**

William E. Summers III, a noted African-American broadcast journalist, made history in 1967 as the first African-American in the United States to manage a radio station. In 1971, he became the first African-American radio station owner in the state of Kentucky when he purchased WLOU.

Concurrent with his professional career, he became an ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and pastored churches in Georgetown, Louisville, Shelbyville and Taylorsville, Kentucky.

Born in Louisville, Mr. Summers was a community leader and was active in a number of civic groups. These included the Urban League and the Boys Clubs of America. He served on the Kentucky Derby Festival Board from 1972 to 1985, and served as its first African-American chairman in 1984. He was also a board member for the Transit Authority of River City from 1986 to 1995, and served as its chair in 1993.

Mr. Summers was inducted into the University of Kentucky Journalism Hall of Fame in 1996, in honor of his many years in broadcast journalism. He was also presented the Kentucky Derby Festival Distinguished Service Award that year. It was only the fourth time the festival had presented the honor in forty years. The City of Louisville's Freedom Award to honor a person who embodies the principles of Martin Luther King, Jr. was presented to Reverend Summers in 1993.

