

# John W. Porter

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John W. Porter, former state superintendent of schools and president of Eastern Michigan University, opened many doors during his distinguished career in education. He was the first black professional hired by the state education department, starting out as a researcher and becoming the nation's first African American superintendent of schools. His many accomplishments include setting up the Guaranteed Student Loan Program for college students and the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), which is used to test students throughout the state.

Beginning in 1979, Porter was for ten years the president of Eastern Michigan University (EMU). In 1989 he was asked to help out Detroit Public Schools as temporary superintendent. Porter balanced its budget and came up with an improvement plan for the struggling district.

He returned to EMU in 1991 as president and CEO of Urban Education Alliance, Inc, from which he recently retired. Porter remains active in matters related to urban schools and in the school reform movement.

At EMU, the College of Education building, an urban education department professorship, an undergraduate scholarship, and a distinguished service award are all named in his honor. Porter holds ten honorary doctorates, and has been named both an Albion College Distinguished Alumnus and a member of Albion College's Athletic Hall of Fame. He served on the Albion College board of trustees for 15 years and is now an honorary trustee.

U.S. Presidents Johnson, Nixon, Ford, and Carter all appointed Porter to commissions and councils addressing higher education, employment, and mental health. He has held leadership positions and served on the boards of numerous national organizations, including the Council of Chief State School Officers; the American Council of Education (Educational Credit Commission); the National Advisory Council on Social Security; the National Urban League; and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Porter's accomplishments and career have been recognized and honored by organizations as varied as the Michigan State Legislature, the Tuskegee Airmen, Incorporated, and the Michigan Education Hall of Fame.

Porter, who received his undergraduate degree from Albion College, earned a master's degree in counseling and guidance and a doctorate in higher education administration from Michigan State University.