



## **Guide to the William Bledsoe Papers UP002783**

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English

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Walter P. Reuther Library

5401 Cass Avenue

Detroit, MI 48202

URL: <https://reuther.wayne.edu>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Walter P. Reuther Library
<b>Creator:</b>	Bledsoe, William, III
<b>Title:</b>	William Bledsoe Papers
<b>ID:</b>	UP002783
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1947-2002
<b>Date [bulk]:</b>	1960-1989
<b>Physical Description:</b>	8 l.f. Linear Feet 7 SB, 1 OS
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	Material entirely in English.
<b>Abstract:</b>	William F. Bledsoe held a long career in the field of law. Working under Attorney General Frank Kelley, as well as being elected to the 30th District Court in Highland Park, Judge Bledsoe is particularly noted for cases pertaining to civil rights issues.

### Citation Style

"William Bledsoe Papers, Box [#], Folder [#], Walter P. Reuther Library, Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University"

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## History

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Honorable William F. Bledsoe III was born November 20, 1929, to parents Harold Bledsoe and Mamie Geraldine Bledsoe. Early signs of William's interest in the law and activism came about when he began his academic career at Olivet College in 1947. Mr. Bledsoe would graduate from Olivet in 1952, and would go on to earn his law degree from Wayne State University. Following admittance to the Michigan Bar, Bledsoe would go on to serve in private practice, then immediately joining the ranks of the Michigan attorney general's office, under Frank Kelley, to assist in the state commission on Civil Rights. It was during this time that William Bledsoe met Wilma, whom he married in 1970. Following his time here, the Honorable William Bledsoe was elected District Court Judge in 1980, under District 30 in

Highland Park, where he served for nearly 20 years. Judge William Bledsoe passed away on November 10, 2006.

Judge Bledsoe was also a part of the Black United Fund of Michigan, as well as their first chairman, and was involved with the Wolverine Bar Association. Law runs deep within the Bledsoe family. His father worked as an attorney and his sister, Geraldine Bledsoe Ford, was the 1st female African American to be elected judgeship in 1966.

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## Scope and Content

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This collection contains 2 series: General Files and Oversize Files. The General Files series contains a broad ephemera of work-related materials, including opinions, cases, correspondence, election notes, and commission reports. The Oversize Files contain a map of Highland Park, as well as a campaign sticker for Circuit Court. Series 1: General Files, 1947-2002. Series 2: Oversize Files, 1973.

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## Arrangement

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The collection is arranged into 2 series. Series 1 (Boxes 1-7) and Series 2 (Box 8). Folders in each series are simply listed by their location within each box. They are semi-arranged, so any given subject may be dispersed throughout several boxes within each series.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

Walter P. Reuther Library

5401 Cass Avenue

Detroit, MI 48202

URL: <https://reuther.wayne.edu>

## Acquisition

Materials were deposited at the Walter P. Reuther Library by Wilma Ray Bledsoe on April 23, 2018.

## Processing History

Processed and finding aid written by Mark Prindiville on September 28, 2018.

## Access

Collection is open for research.

## Use

Refer to the Walter P. Reuther Library "Rules for Use of Archival Materials." Restrictions: Researchers may encounter records of a sensitive nature – personnel files, case records and those involving investigations, legal and other private matters. Privacy laws and restrictions imposed by the Library prohibit the use of names and other personal information which might identify an individual, except with written permission from the Director and/or the donor.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

Topics covered in the William Bledsoe Papers are featured in several other Reuther Library collections, including the Department of Africana Studies Records, the Wayne State University College of Education, Dean's Office: Detroit Public Schools Monitoring Commission on Desegregation Records, the Merle Henrickson Collection, and the Cornelius Golightly Papers.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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- African American judges
- Social Justice
- African American lawyers
- Michigan -- Politics and government

- Civil rights
- Levin, Carl, 1934-
- Michigan. Civil Rights Commission.
- Milliken, William G., 1922-
- Kelley, Frank J. (Frank Joseph), 1924-

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## Collection Inventory

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