



THE HONORABLE JESSE WHITE

Illinois Secretary of State

Jesse White is Illinois' 37th Secretary of State. White was first elected to the office in 1998 and won landslide victories in 2002, in which he won all 102 counties, and again in 2006, 2010 and 2014. On Nov. 6, 2018, White was re-elected to a record-breaking sixth term, winning another landslide victory in which he earned over 3.1 million votes statewide – the most ever by a statewide candidate in a midterm election. White became Illinois' longest serving Secretary of State on May 30, 2014.

The Illinois Secretary of State's office is the largest and most diverse office of its kind in the nation, providing more direct services to the people of Illinois than any other public agency. White's office issues state ID cards, vehicle license plates and titles; registers corporations; enforces the Illinois Securities Act; administers the Organ/Tissue Donor Program; licenses drivers; and maintains driver records. As State Librarian, Secretary White oversees the State Library and literacy programs, and as State Archivist, he maintains records of legal or historic value.

Under White's leadership, the use of new technology along with modernizing and streamlining operations has significantly improved customer service. Wait times in facilities are shorter than ever before. Illinois has become a national leader in road safety as White strengthened DUI laws, reformed the truck driver licensing program and overhauled teen driving guidelines. As a result, traffic fatalities have decreased, with drunk driving deaths down nearly 50 percent and teen driving deaths reduced by 51 percent. In 2014, White was inducted into the Illinois High School & College Driver Education Association Hall of Fame.

Prior to his election as Secretary of State, White served as Cook County Recorder of Deeds – a job to which he was first elected in 1992 and re-elected in 1996. Before that, he served 16 years in the Illinois General Assembly, representing the most culturally, economically and racially diverse district in Illinois.

In 1959, White founded the internationally known Jesse White Tumbling Team to serve as a positive alternative for at-risk children residing in public housing in and around the Chicago area. Since its inception, more than 18,000 young men and women have performed with the team. White has spent 60 years working as a volunteer with the team to help kids stay away from gangs, drugs, alcohol and smoking, and to help set at-risk youth on the path to success. The program has received international praise. This year the team will make more than 1,500 performances using seven units, consisting of 225 young men and women. Currently, there are 51 members enrolled in college. In 2014, the Chicago Park District opened the Jesse White Community Center and Field House in honor of White's lifelong contributions to the community. In addition, a school in Hazel Crest, Illinois, was recently renamed the Jesse C. White Learning Academy, and a Chicago street was designated Jesse White Way in honor of White.

White served our country as a paratrooper in the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division and as a member of the Illinois National Guard and Reserve. He played professional baseball with the Chicago Cubs organization, which was followed by a 33-year career with the Chicago Public Schools as a teacher and administrator. Jesse White earned his Bachelor of Science from Alabama State College (now Alabama State University) in 1957, where he was a two-sport athlete earning all-conference honors in baseball and basketball. In May 1995, White was inducted into the Southwestern Athletic Conference Hall of Fame. He was an all-city baseball and basketball player at Chicago's Waller High School (now Lincoln Park High School) and was inducted into the Chicago Public League Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in June 1995. In 1999, he was inducted into the Alabama State University Sports Hall of Fame. Born in Alton, Illinois, he now lives on Chicago's Near North Side. White has two daughters, Glenna and Lorraine, and two grandchildren, Jesse and Susan.

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