

CLIFFORD M. CLARKE

Biography

Clifford M. Clarke is the founder, owner, and president of C² IT Advisors, a strategic information technology advisory firm. Prior to devoting his full-time to consultancy Clifford was the Executive Director in the Office of Information Technology for Ivy Tech Community College – Northeast, Fort Wayne, IN, where he led a team of Information Technology professionals in the management of the thirteen-county region's computing, networking, and telephony assets. Clifford also served as Chief Information Officer / Chief Technology Officer for the City of Fort Wayne, where he was responsible for the technology strategies and assisted the City in its efforts to use technology to improve services for the citizens. He balanced the fiscal responsibilities while meeting the increasing technology expectations; ultimately responsible for the citizen customer relationship management (CRM) system, the migration and standardization of the Storage Area Network, the telecommunication infrastructure at the Public Safety Academy Northeast Indiana, and led the IT outsourcing RFP and selection of the new IT partners. It was after a few years with the City that he launched his strategic advisory firm C² IT Advisors and accepted the role of CIO for Public Technology Institute, a member-based public sector technology research organization located in the Washington DC area. As Chief Information Officer for the Public Technology Institute, he led IT decisions within various municipalities and guided their executives on technology decisions.

Clifford has extensive corporate experience including Lincoln Financial Group, serving in the Technology Services Group, where he was responsible for the alignment of strategic business technology decisions with current and emerging technologies. He was also responsible for managing the relationship between several business areas and Lincoln's technology vendors. Before Lincoln Financial Group, Clifford worked with K&K Insurance; SLE Worldwide, an AON company, leading the application development staff; General Motors Corporation, Chevrolet Pontiac, and Canada Division performing application development with EDS. Clifford has 30 years of public speaking experience and has contributed to numerous technical newsletters and articles. He enjoys sharing his knowledge of IT security matters, leadership development, project management, and change management. His budgetary experiences include several multimillion-dollar, multi-year efforts where his leadership was tapped to create high-performance teams.

Clifford was born in New York City to immigrant parents. His father was born in Jamaica, West Indies and worked in chemical engineering; his mother a Licensed Practical Nurse, was born in the Panama Canal Zone and thereby spoke fluent Spanish and English. His parents met and married in Jamaica before migration to the United States for work opportunities, then had children late in life; using their hardships to instill character, value, and confidence in their kids. As the oldest of two children, Clifford was the first generation to graduate from college. His younger sister also completing college two years behind him. These two, and their families, remain exceptionally close despite now living many miles apart.

Clifford learned many valuable lessons from his parents but also from the streets of Brooklyn, NY during the post-civil rights era of the late 60s and 70s. His appreciation for diversity in people began early in life germinating from his cultural background. He started his education at a local public school, but he was subsequently bused to a neighborhood. Clifford was enrolled in community college before graduating high school and later attended Indiana Institute of Technology, Fort Wayne, IN where initially majored in Electrical Engineer but changed to Data Processing with a minor in Business where he excelled in several programming languages. Clifford holds a Bachelor's degree in Data Processing and a Master's in Business Administration with dual concentration areas of Entrepreneurship and Human Resource Management, both from Indiana Institute of Technology. Additionally, Clifford is a Certified Project Management Professional, a Certified Information Security Manager, Certified in the Governance of Enterprise Information Technology, Certified in Risk and Information Systems Control, Certified Six Sigma Green Belt, an alumnus of Lincoln Leadership Learning Forum and Leadership Fort Wayne. Clifford is currently pursuing his doctoral degree in Global Leadership, at Indiana Tech, where his focus is on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Mr. Clarke is active in the community. He has served as board president in several organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Leadership Fort Wayne, and the Fort Wayne Black Chamber of Commerce. He is the board vice chair at Three Rivers Federal Credit Union. Additionally, he has served in numerous, nationally recognized not-for-profit organizations like, Black Data Processing Associates (BDPA), the United Way, YMCA, and Northeast Indiana Public Radio, to name a few. Clifford is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. and holds the rank of Captain with the Indiana Wing of Civil Air Patrol, Fort Wayne Composite Squadron. In 2008, Mr. Clarke was awarded the Distinguished Leadership Award, in recognition of exemplary service and commitment to the community, from the Community Leadership Association.

Clifford's love of music and electronics, led to his creation of Paradise Inc., Professional Disc Jockeys. which has been incorporated in Indiana since 1986. He runs all aspects of this company, from sales and marketing to strategic planning. Clifford often quips "*Home is where the toys are*" and loves family projects and enjoys playing with his computer collection, electronic gadgets, exercise and golf equipment, motorcycle, and power tools. He also enjoys entertaining, exotic cars, food, playing basketball, and visiting museums. As an instrument rated private pilot, Clifford relishes taking to the air and adventure travel with family and friends.

Clifford has been married for over 32 years to Eve-Lynn, an Information Technology Auditor, who currently teaches Management Information Systems and Risk Management at the university level. The Clarkes have two adult children, Morgan and Clifford N. III; both college-educated and independently pursuing careers.