

E. Christopher Johnson, Jr.
GM North America Vice-President and General Counsel

E. Christopher Johnson, Jr. was appointed General Motors North America vice president and general counsel in October 2001. In this position, he is responsible for managing the delivery of all legal services that impact the GM North America Region and its hundreds of attorneys, support staff and outside law firms. Johnson also serves on the GM North America Strategy Board, the internal GM leadership organization that sets strategy, policy and manages GM's North American operations. Additionally, Johnson is the Chair of GM's African Ancestry Affinity Group.

Prior to his current appointment, Johnson was assistant general counsel for global policy and planning. From 1994 to March 2001, he served as corporate law and transactions practice area manager.

A former (1985-1988) attorney search consultant and an associate attorney (1981-1985) with the New York firm of Mudge Rose Guthrie Alexander & Ferdon, Johnson graduated with honors from New York Law School in 1981, receiving an American Jurisprudence Award for constitutional law. He also served as president of the New York Law School student body.

Johnson was educated at the United States Military Academy at West Point, graduating in 1973 as a cadet captain. He served in the U.S. Army from 1973 to 1978, attaining the rank of captain and receiving the Army Commendation Medal for Meritorious Service.

Johnson is active in a number of community and civic activities. He is a member of NorthRidge Church in Plymouth, Michigan, where he volunteers in a number of capacities including as its General Counsel. He also serves as Co-Chair of the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Foundation; a member of the United Negro College Fund Michigan Leadership Committee; the Board of Directors of Great Lakes Division, American Cancer Society; and the Council for Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO); is a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation; and is the Past Chair of the ABA's Africa Law Council, of which he is still a member. Johnson is also the Chair of The Corporate Committee for the State Bar of Michigan Access to Justice Initiative and the Co-Chair of the Legacy Campaign for Detroit's Legal Aid and Defender Association.

He has been recognized by numerous organizations for his efforts to increase the opportunities for women and minorities in the legal profession and for his personal commitment to corporate diversity initiatives. He was awarded the American Bar Association's Spirit of Excellence Corporate Award in February 2004 and in September 2004 received the Michael Franck Award from the State Bar of Michigan. In January 2005, Johnson received a 2005 Urban Wheel Award as the auto industry's African American Executive of the Year and in May 2005 Johnson was awarded the Champion of Justice Award from the Detroit Metropolitan Bar Association. In April 2006, Johnson received the Corporate Award from Street Law.

Johnson is married and has two children – a daughter attending law school and a son in college.