

ect: Dr. Herbert Smitherman

### [The African History Network](#)

Did you know that Crest Toothpaste, Folgers Coffee, Bounce Fabric Softener and Safeguard Soap were all created by an African-American Man? I have talked about D...r. Herbert Smitherman Sr. before on The African History Network Show before. In 2011 I spoke at an 8th grade graduation and told the audience about him to show them their potential. Most of the audience including parents had never heard of him and were amazed by his story.

Dr. Herbert Smitherman was a pioneering executive and professional chemist at Proctor & Gamble who led the way for other African-Americans at the prestigious company in the 1960s. He was the first black person with a doctorate hired at Proctor & Gamble.

With a Ph.D. in physical organic chemistry, Dr. Smitherman developed a number of incredibly popular patents, including Crest toothpaste, Safeguard soap, Bounce fabric softeners, Biz, Folgers Coffee and Crush soda, to name a few. Not only are they still on the shelves, but many of them are on display at the Cincinnati Museum Center in the featured exhibit, "America I AM: The African-American Imprint."

Nicknamed the "Jackie Robinson of Proctor & Gamble," Dr. Smitherman spent 29 years there before turning in his labcoat to work as a professor at Wilberforce University. But after serving at the historically black college, Smitherman turned his attention to starting a high school called the Western Hills Design Technology School to help black students perform better in math and science.

A child of the south, Dr. Smitherman family lived in Birmingham, Alabama, where his father served as a reverend. A young Smitherman would see his father's church burn down twice during their push for voting registration and voting rights.

He died on Oct. 9, 2010.

Read more

here: [http://blackhistorymonth.blackamericaweb.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=562:dr-herbert-smitherman&catid=112:general&Itemid=292](http://blackhistorymonth.blackamericaweb.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=562:dr-herbert-smitherman&catid=112:general&Itemid=292)