

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dale Clinton

PERSON

Clinton, Dale E., 1927-

Alternative Names: Dale Clinton;

Life Dates: June 10, 1927-

Place of Birth: Tupelo, Mississippi, USA

Residence: Long Beach, CA

Occupations: Community Activist;

Biographical Note

Community volunteer and community resource specialist Dale E. Clinton was born June 10, 1927, in Tupelo, Mississippi. She attended George Washington Carver School in segregated Tupelo. Her family moved to Chicago when she was fourteen years old. Clinton graduated from Chicago's Wendell Phillips High School in June 1944. She enrolled in Wilson Junior College, Cortez Typing School, and studied commercial law and nursing while working for Spiegel, International Harvester and other manufacturing companies. Clinton received a political education organizing youth volunteers for Chicago's black congressman, William L. Dawson.

In 1959 Clinton moved to California. By the mid 1960s, she was a struggling single mother of five children living on a monthly \$333 welfare check. However, local Head Start officials urged her involvement in the Neighborhood Adult Participation Program. When Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty called for the eradication of federal welfare programs, Clinton wrote a letter to President Lyndon Johnson defending the plight of poor mothers. The letter was soon published in the major dailies nationwide and featured in Parade. Congressman Augustus F. Hawkins read the letter into the Congressional Record. The letter impressed Sargent Shriver and trickled down to local human services officials. Soon, Clinton was sought for her advice and was appointed to the board of the local Community Action Agency. She accepted an offer for postgraduate training in community relations and eventually worked on the executive staff of the Office of Community and Human Relations for the city of Long Beach.

Clinton is the recipient of numerous awards and plaques for championing welfare rights, fair housing and economic development. Now retired, she still lives in Long Beach where she is helping to raise her grandchildren.

Related Entries

Wendell Phillips Academy High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Spiegel, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

International Harvester Company of America [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1989 to 2004]

Los Angeles Community Action Agency [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1972 to 1974]