

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with James H. Lowry

PERSON

Lowry, James , 1939-

**Alternative Names:** James H. Lowry;

**Life Dates:** May 28, 1939-

**Place of Birth:** Chicago, Illinois, USA

**Residence:** Chicago, Illinois

**Occupations:** Business Consulting Executive; Management Consulting Chief Executive

## Biographical Note

Management consultant and entrepreneur James H. Lowry was born in 1939 to Chicago postal workers Camille and William Lowry. Lowry graduated from the Francis W. Parker School in Chicago, and went on to earn his undergraduate degree from Grinnell College in Iowa. Lowry served in the Peace Corps in Tanzania and Puerto Rico before he returned to school to earn his master's degree in public international affairs from the University of Pittsburgh. In 1968, Lowry became McKinsey Consulting's first African American recruit.

At McKinsey, Lowry convinced corporate clients of the value of investing in minority communities and sought to increase the firm's number of African American consultants; he continued this work while attending Harvard Business School, where he served as class president in 1973. On assignment from former Commerce Secretary Juanita Morris Kreps, Lowry produced a report on the status of minorities in the twenty-first century that attracted the attention of numerous municipal and corporate clients, including PepsiCo and Ford. In 1975, Lowry used his knowledge and experience to found James H. Lowry & Associates. Lowry's strategic partnership with Ford led to the automotive giant sourcing more than \$3 billion dollars of goods and services to more than 300 minority suppliers. In 1981, Lowry approached his former employer, McKinsey, about its disappointing number of African American consultants, which he helped increase to nearly one hundred by 1999.

In 2000 Lowry was recruited to join the prominent Boston Consulting Group; as a president of the group's Chicago operations, he was credited for his productive involvement in the North American Black Diversity Initiative, a program that fosters the development of African American management consultant professionals on college campuses and within the company. An adjunct faculty member of Northwestern

University's Kellogg School of Management, Lowry developed a lauded education program for minority business professionals in 2002. Lowry and his wife, Doris, raised a daughter: Aisha.

## Related Entries

**Austin O. Sexton Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Paul Robeson High School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Diploma**

**Grinnell College** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Bachelor of Arts**

**University of Pittsburgh** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Master of Public and International Affairs**

**Harvard Business School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Certificate**

**Peace Corps** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1963 to 1965]

**Associate, Peru**

**Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1965 to 1968]

**Director**

**McKinsey and Company** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1968 to 1975]

**Senior Associate**

**James H. Lowry and Associates** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1975 to 2000]

**President and Founder**

**Boston Consulting Group** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 2000 to ?]

**Vice President**

**Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**Grinnell College** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**