

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Barbara L. Thomas

PERSON

Thomas, Barbara L., 1947-

**Alternative Names:** Barbara L. Thomas;

**Life Dates:** December 5, 1947-

**Place of Birth:** Dublin, Georgia, USA

**Residence:** Glenwood, IL

**Work:** Chicago, IL

**Occupations:** Broadcast Chief Executive

## Biographical Note

Barbara Louise Thomas was the president and CEO of the Chicago based National Black Master of Business Administration Association (NMBBAA). Thomas was born on December 5, 1947, in Dublin, Georgia, one of Jerrie Lee Tart and Horace Sanders's thirteen children. Thomas was raised by foster parents Georgia and George Monroe in Dublin, where she attended segregated public schools and graduated from Oconee High School. In 1965, Thomas moved to New York City with her birth mother and took a job at Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited - Associated Community Teams (HARYOU-ACT) where she met her husband. Thomas went on to receive her B.A. degree from New York's Bernard Baruch College in 1970 and her M.B.A. degree from Columbia University in 1973.

While a university student, Thomas clerked at CBS's Radio Division. After completing her education, Thomas moved into the CBS television division and managed network cut-ins, a position she credits with opening the door to her twenty-five year career at CBS. Eventually Thomas was the first African American woman to attend CBS's School of Management. Thomas later became director of finance and administration for CBS, and left the network in 1989 after serving as the first African American woman to act as a senior vice-president.

Moving on from CBS to function as chief financial officer for various health care organizations and other non-profit groups, Thomas moved to Chicago in 2001 and spent two years as the chief financial officer for the NMBBAA. The board of directors of the NMBBAA appointed Thomas as president in 2003. Citing her faith as a major sustaining force in her life, Thomas remained active in her church. Thomas raised two

daughters and had five grandchildren.

## Related Entries

**Oconee High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Columbia University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**M.B.A.**

**Susie Dasher Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**CBS School of Management** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**City University of New York** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Baruch College** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.S.**

**Harlem United Activists for Community** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**CBS Television Division** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Management**

**CBS Television Finance Division** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to 1989]

**Director & Senior Vice-President**

**CBS Radio** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1967 to ?]

**Clerk**

**National Black MBA Association** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 2001 to ?]

**President & CEO**

**New England Hospital for Women and Children** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Chief Financial Officer**

**YWCA** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]