

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Alma Powell

PERSON

Powell, Alma

Alternative Names: Alma Powell;

Life Dates: October 27, 1937-

Place of Birth: Birmingham, Alabama, USA

Residence: McLean, Virginia

Occupations: Civic Leader

Biographical Note

Alma Vivian Johnson Powell was born on October 27, 1937 in Birmingham, Alabama to Mildred Elisa Bell and Robert Charles Johnson. Powell is the eldest of two daughters. She attended Pratt Elementary School and Parker High School. Powell's father was her high school principal. She graduated in 1954 and went on to Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee at the age of sixteen. In 1957, Powell graduated from Fisk University with her B.A. degree.

Powell's first job was as a radio show host. She had a show called 'Luncheon with Alma' that featured women's news and lunchtime listening music. A year later, Powell decided to move north to Boston, Massachusetts. There, she went to Emerson College to study pathology and audiology. Between 1958 and 1962, Powell worked for the Boston Guild for the Hard of Hearing as an audiologist. In 1962, Powell met her husband, General Colin Powell, and was married the same year in Powell's hometown of Birmingham. Powell traveled around the world with her husband and family as her husband rose to the rank of general in the U.S. Army. Powell was the chair of America's Promise - The Alliance for Youth and authored two children's books, America's Promise and My Little Wagon. Powell served as vice chair of the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts and chair of the Pew Center for Civic Change.

Powell received several awards and honors including the doctorate of humane letters from Emerson College in 1996; the Pew Center for Civic Change Award in 1997; and the Washingtonian of the Year Award for 2000.

Powell is married and has three children, Michael, Linda and Annemarie.

Related Entries

A.H. Parker High School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

H.S.

Pratt Elementary School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Lincoln School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Fisk University [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

B.A.

America's Promise - The Alliance For Youth [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1997 to ?]

Chair