

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Deborah Wright

PERSON

Wright, Deborah, 1958-

Alternative Names: Deborah Wright;

Life Dates: January 30, 1958-

Place of Birth: Bennetsville, South Carolina, USA

Residence: New York, New York

Work: New York, New York

Occupations: Bank Executive

Biographical Note

Bank executive Deborah C. Wright was born in 1958, in Bennetsville, South Carolina to Harry C. Wright. Wright received her B.A. degree from Radcliffe College and earned a joint M.B.A and J.D. degree from Harvard University's School of Business and School of Law.

After college, Wright worked as an associate in corporate finance at First Boston Bank. Finding the position unsatisfying, Wright left the bank in 1987 to take a position as the director of marketing for a building project in Harlem for The New York City Partnership, a business advocacy group in New York that promotes affordable-home ownership. In 1992, New York City Mayor David Dinkins appointed Wright to the New York City Housing Authority Board. Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani promoted her Commissioner for Housing Preservation and Development in 1994. From 1996 through 1999, Wright served as the director for the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation, a post that would give her tremendous experience in bringing together community, civic, and private-sector interests to revitalize blighted urban areas. In 1999, Wright was named chief executive officer of Carver Bancorp, the parent company of Carver Federal Savings Bank and the largest African American-owned financial institution in the United States. Wright was chosen for her talents in coalition-building among business, government, and community leaders. Wright immediately began a successful program to revitalize Carver's balance sheet and made it a key player in the rising economic fortunes of Harlem. In 2005, Wright was named chairman of Carver Federal Savings Bank.

Wright is a member of the board of directors of Time Warner and Kraft Foods. She is a

member of the Board of Overseers of Harvard University and the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Wright was honored as "Community Banker of the Year" in 2003 by The American Banker, the financial industry's daily newspaper. She is also involved in the missionary activities of the American Baptist Churches.

Related Entries

Bennettsville Intermediate School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Murchison School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Thomas L. Marsalis Elementary School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

William Hawley Atwell Law Academy [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

David W. Carter High School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Radcliffe College [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

BA

Harvard Business School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

MBA

Harvard Law School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

JD

Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1980 to 1981]

Intern

Elliot House- Harvard University [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1981 to 1983]

Tutor

Davis Polk and Wardwell [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1981 to 1981]

Summer Intern

Chase Manhattan Bank [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1982 to 1982]

Summer Intern

Dallas Legal Services Foundation, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1983 to 1983]

Summer Intern

First Boston Corporation [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1984 to 1987]

Finance Analyst

Partnership for New York City [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1988 to 1990]

Sales and Management

New York City Planning Commission [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1990 to 1992]

Board Member

New York City Housing Authority [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1992 to 1994]

Interim Chairperson

Cabinet of the Mayor of New York [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1994 to 1996]

Deputy Housing Commissioner

Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1996 to 1999]

President & CEO

Carver Bancorp, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1999 to ?]

CEO

Neighborhood Entrepreneurs Program [MEMBEROf]
[from 1995 to ?]

Founder