

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Geraldine Johnson

PERSON

Johnson, Geraldine, 1919-2015

**Alternative Names:** Geraldine Johnson;

**Life Dates:** April 11, 1919-November 28, 2015

**Place of Birth:** Bridgeport, Connecticut, USA

**Residence:** Bridgeport, CT

**Occupations:** Teacher

## Biographical Note

Geraldine Johnson is a distinguished retired educator, community activist, and volunteer. She was born on April 11, 1919, in Bridgeport Connecticut – the third in a family of seven children. She grew up in the East End of the city where she attended McKinley, Harding, and Bridgeport Normal Schools, which she later went on to lead as Superintendent of Schools. Johnson received her B.A. degree in teacher education at New Haven Teachers College (now SCSU) in 1940 and her M.A. degree at New York University in 1959. Following graduate school, she went on to earn her sixth-year professional certificate at the University of Bridgeport in 1969.

In 1961, Johnson became a principal after achieving the number one score on Bridgeport's civil service examination. She served in many other educational capacities as well and taught first, seventh, and eighth grade, as well as a music class. She also worked as a Director of Title I Programs in Bridgeport, assisting disadvantaged pupils with achievement in school programs. In 1969, she served as the Assistant Superintendent of Bridgeport Public Schools, the second largest school system in Connecticut. She went on to become Superintendent of Schools in 1976, notably working through the 19-day teachers' strike over salary contracts in 1978. She became Interim Superintendent of Schools in Fairfield, Connecticut in 1986, after her retirement in 1981.

Governor Ella Grasso listed Johnson as one of Connecticut's 100 Most Distinguished Women in 1976. The Girl Scouts also named her a "Woman of Distinction." She was bestowed Honorary Doctorate Degrees from Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University, and the University of Bridgeport. To honor her work as a superintendent and her commitment to education, in 2008 a new elementary school was dedicated to her and named the Geraldine W. Johnson School.

Geraldine Johnson was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 29, 2010.

Johnson passed away on November 28, 2015.

## Related Entries

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

**Diploma**

**Southern Connecticut State University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

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

**M.A./Ed**

**University of Bridgeport** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**6th yr. Professional**

**McKinley Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Sacred Heart University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Honorary**

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

**Honorary**

**University of Bridgeport** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Honorary**

**Greater Bridgeport Adolescent Pregnancy Program** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Director**

**Connecticut Symphony** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Cellist**

**Connecticut Parole Board** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 19860101 to 19710101]

**Bridgeport Board of Education** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 19440901 to ?]

**Elementary Teacher**

**Bridgeport Board of Education** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 19640901 to ?]

**Assistant to Superintendent - Head of Departmental Title I Programs**

**Bridgeport Board of Education** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 19740901 to ?]

**Assistant Superintendent of Schools**

**Fairfield Board of Education** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 19860901 to ?]

**Interim Superintendent of Schools**

**Bridgeport Board of Education** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 19761001 to ?]

**Superintendent of Schools**

**Bridgeport Hospital Board** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Committee Member**

**Discovery Museum** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Committee Member**

**Connecticut Humanities Council** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Founder**

**Les Treize Bus & Professional Women** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Founder**

**Greater Bridgeport Area Foundation** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**Action for Bridgeport Development** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Founder**

**Educational Foundation of America** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Chairman**

**People's Bank** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**United Illuminating Co.** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Jack and Jill of America, Incorporated** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Girls Friends, Incorporated** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Links, Incorporated** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Opera New England** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Golden Hill United Methodist Church** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Trustee**

**Delta Kappa Gamma Sorority, Incorporated** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]