

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Ann Smith

PERSON

Smith, Ann E., 1939-

**Alternative Names:** Ann Smith;

**Life Dates:** August 17, 1939-

**Place of Birth:** Poplar Bluff, Missouri, USA

**Residence:** Chicago, IL

**Occupations:** Education Executive;

## Biographical Note

Civic leader Ann E. Smith was born in Jefferson City, Missouri in 1939 where she attended segregated schools. Her grandfather served with the United States Colored Troop regiment during the American Civil War and then graduated from Fisk University. Smith's father, a principal, and her mother, a high school, pushed her to do well academically and athletically. During high school, she played softball and volleyball. Smith went on to receive her B.A. degree from Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri; her M.A. degree from the University of Iowa; and her Ph.D. degree from the Union Institute and Union University in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Smith began her dynamic career with sixteen years of service in academia. She taught high school in her native State of Missouri and then assumed teaching posts at Eastern Illinois University where she became the first African American appointed as a full-time professor. Smith went on to work at the University of Indiana and then Northeastern Illinois University. While there, she progressed through the ranks from instructor, assistant and associate professor to Assistant to the President and Vice President for Academic Affairs. In 1978, Smith transitioned from academia to business and joined Prudential Insurance Company. After earning several performance awards in her first year as an agent, she was promoted to sales manager. In 1981, she became director of marketing for Cook, Stratton & Company, an insurance brokerage firm. In 1986, she assumed a full time role as vice president of Endow, Inc., an insurance planning and consulting firm she had co-founded seven years earlier. Smith began serving a six-year term on the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois in 1985, thus becoming the first black woman to hold office in Illinois through a statewide election. After serving almost four years, she resigned in July of 1988 to be considered for the position of Associate Chancellor at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), and accepted the appointment in September of 1988. Later, Smith served as director of

Community Relations at UIC at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and then became President of the Gamaliel Foundation until retiring in 2011.

Smith has served on the boards of a wide variety of local and national educational, community and cultural organizations, including as vice-president of Business and Professional People for the Public Interest and the West Central Association. She served on the boards of the Illinois Arts Alliance and Foundation, the National Advisory Council for the NAACP, the Duncan YMCA and the Marcy-Newberry Association. Smith was also appointed as chairman of the boards of the Chicago Access Corporation and the Southside Community Arts Center, and served on the boards of the Joel Hall Dancers, the Illinois Committee on Black Concerns in Higher Education and The American College.

Anne E. Smith was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on August 21, 2013.

## Related Entries

**Lincoln University** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

**University of Iowa** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**M.A.**

**Union Institute & University** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Ph.D.**

**Gamaliel Foundation** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**President**

**University of Illinois, Chicago** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Associate Chancellor and Director of Community Relations**

**Endow, Incorporated** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Vice President**

**Northeastern Illinois University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Vice President of Academic Affairs**

**Eastern Illinois University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Instructor**

**University of Indiana** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Instructor**

**Northeastern Illinois University** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Instructor**

**Public Interest and the West Central** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Vice-President of Business and Professional People**

**Prudential Insurance Company** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1978 to 1981]

**Agent**

**Cook, Stratton, & Company** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1981 to 1986]

**Director of Marketing**

**University of Illinois** [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

**Board of Trustees**

**Illinois Arts Alliance and Foundation** [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)** [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

**National Advisory Council Member**

**Duncan YMCA** [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**Marcy-Newberry Association** [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**Chicago Access Corporation** [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

**Chairman of the Board**

**Southside Community Arts Center** [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

**Chairman of the Board**

