

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Terry J. Hatter

PERSON

Hatter, Terry J., 1933-

Alternative Names: The Honorable Terry J. Hatter;

Life Dates: March 11, 1933-

Place of Birth: Chicago , Illinois, USA

Residence: Pasadena, CA

Work: Los Angeles, CA

Occupations: Judge

Biographical Note

Judge Terry J. Hatter, Jr. was born on March 11, 1933 in Chicago, Illinois to Gloria E. Wilson and Terry Hatter, Sr. He graduated from Hyde Park High School in Chicago, Illinois in 1950 and received his B.A. degree in government from Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut in 1954. Hatter then earned his J.D. degree from the University of Chicago Law School in Chicago, Illinois in 1960.

In 1960, he served as an adjudicator for the United States Veterans Administration in Chicago and maintained a private law practice. The following year, Hatter was hired as an assistant public defender in Cook County, Illinois and later became an Assistant United States Attorney of the Northern District of California in 1962. He was then appointed Special Assistant United States Attorney of the Eastern District of California in 1965; and, the following year, Hatter served as the regional legal services director of the Office of Economic Opportunity in San Francisco. In 1970, Hatter served as executive director of the Western Center on Law and Poverty in Los Angeles, and as an associate clinical professor of law at the University of Southern California Gould School of Law. In 1973, Hatter was hired as professor of law at Loyola Law School in Los Angeles. He later served as special assistant to the Mayor of Los Angeles, Tom Bradley, and was director of criminal justice and urban development in Los Angeles. In 1977, Hatter was appointed by California Governor Jerry Brown as a judge of the Superior Court of California in Los Angeles; and, in 1979, he was appointed by President Jimmy Carter to the United States District Court for the Central Division of California. In 1998, Hatter became chief judge, serving until 2001. He assumed senior status in 2005.

Hatter served as a member of the Just-the-Beginning Foundation and on the board of directors for Mexican-American Legal Defense, the American Judicature Society, the National Legal Aid & Defender Association, the NAACP, the Constitutional Rights Project, the National Senior Citizens Law Center, and the National Health Law Program. He also received honorary doctorate of law degrees from the University of San Fernando Valley and Wesleyan University. Terry J. Hatter, Jr. was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on February 7, 2019 and December 2, 2022.

Related Entries

Wesleyan University [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

A.B.

University of Chicago Law School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

J.D.

Forrestville Elementary School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Hyde Park Academy High School [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

Western Center on Law and Poverty [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1970 to 1973]

Executive Director

United States District Court, Central District of California [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1998 to 2001]

Chief Judge

Veteran's Administration [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1960 to 1961]

Adjudicator

Cook County Public Defender's Office [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1961 to 1962]

Assistant Public Defender

United States Attorney's Office, San Francisco [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1962 to 1966]

Assistant U.S. Attorney

United States Attorney's Office, Sacramento [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1966 to 1966]

Special Assistant U.S. Attorney

San Francisco Neighborhood Legal Assistance Foundation [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1966 to 1967]

Chief Counsel

Office of Economic Opportunity [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1967 to 1970]

Regional Legal Services Director

University of Southern California [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1970 to 1974]

Associate Clinical Professor of Law

Loyola University of Los Angeles [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1973 to 1976]

Professor of Law

City of Los Angeles [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1974 to 1975]

Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Director of Criminal Justice Planning

National College of the State Judiciary, Reno [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1974 to 1974]

Faculty

City of Los Angeles [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1975 to 1977]

Special Assistant to the Mayor and Director for the Office of Urban Development

California Superior Court [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from 1977 to 1980]

Judge

Los Angeles Criminal Justice Planning Board [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Member

Wesleyan University Board of Trustees [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Trustee

NAACP Richmond Chapter [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Executive Board Member

Bay Area Social Planning Council [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Board

Black Law Center [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Board

National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board

Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board

National Health Law Program [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board

National Senior Citizens Law Center [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board

California Law Center [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board

Board of Counselors, U.S.C. Law Center [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board

Young Democrats, Cook County [MEMBEROF]
[from 1961 to 1962]

Vice Chairman

Northbay Halfway House [MEMBEROF]
[from 1964 to 1965]

Vice President

Mayor's Policy Committee [MEMBEROF]
[from 1973 to 1977]

Member

Los Angeles Mayor's Cabinet Committee on Economic Development [MEMBEROF]
[from 1976 to 1977]

Member