

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Sheryl Williams Stapleton

PERSON

Stapleton, Sheryl Williams, 1957-

Alternative Names: The Honorable Sheryl Williams Stapleton; Brenda

Life Dates: July 30, 1957-

Place of Birth: St. Croix, Virgin Islands, USA

Residence: Albuquerque, NM

Work: Albuquerque, NM

Occupations: State Representative

Biographical Note

State representative Sheryl Williams Stapleton was born on July 30, 1957 in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands to Clementine Hendrickson and Walter Hendrickson. Williams Stapleton and her family moved to Chicago, Illinois, and then to Queens, New York, where she attended Hillcrest High School. In 1978, Williams Stapleton received her B.S. degree in education from New Mexico State University. She received both her M.A. degree in education in 1987 and her Ph.D. degree in education administration in 2013, from the University of New Mexico.

In 1984, Williams Stapleton joined the Albuquerque Public School District as an elementary school teacher. In 1991, she was elected vice chair of the New Mexico Democratic Party, and later served as its chair. In 1994, Williams Stapleton was elected to the New Mexico House of Representatives. She was the first African American woman elected to the New Mexico legislature. As a state representative, Williams Stapleton advanced legislation that created the New Mexico Office of African American Affairs, the Charlie Morrissey Research Hall at the University of New Mexico, the African American Day at the New Mexico State Legislature, the African American Alice Faye Hoppes Pavilion, and the Sheryl Williams Stapleton African American Performing Arts Center at Expo New Mexico. Williams Stapleton served on the House Education Committee and the House Safety, Workforce and Economic Development Committee. In 2004, Williams Stapleton served as House majority whip; and, in 2015, she served as House minority whip. In 2017, she was elected House majority floor leader. She was the first African American woman elected to the New

Mexico legislature. During her time as a representative, Williams Stapleton continued her career in Albuquerque Public Schools, working as a school principal and director of Career and Technical Education.

Williams Stapleton was a member of the American Federation of Teachers and the National Council of Negro Women. She served as president of the Duke City Business and Professional Women's Foundation.

Williams Stapleton has received multiple awards for her work. In 2001, she was nominated as one of the three women who received the Women of the Year Award. Williams Stapleton has also been awarded the Who's Who in Women of the World and the Who's Who in Black America. The state of New Mexico also recognized her as an "Honored and Respected Woman of New Mexico."

Williams Stapleton and her husband Edread Stapleton have three children: Veronica Williams, David Hendrickson, and Edread Stapleton, Jr.

Sheryl Williams Stapleton was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on July 23, 2019.

Related Entries

Elena L. Christian Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Roswell B. Mason Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Hillcrest High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

New Mexico State University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.S.

University of New Mexico [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.A.

University of New Mexico [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Doctorate in Education

University of New Mexico [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.A.

Quaker Oats Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 197907 to 198307]

Account Supervisor

Albuquerque Public Schools [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 198409 to ?]

Teacher/Administrator

New Mexico State Legislature [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1994 to ?]

Representative - District 19

Duke City Business and Professional Women [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

President

American Federation of Teachers [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

National Council of Negro Women [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Member

Duke City Business and Professional Women's Foundation [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

President