

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Maurice Watson

PERSON

Watson, Maurice, 1958-

**Alternative Names:** Maurice Watson;

**Life Dates:** January 13, 1958-

**Place of Birth:** Kansas City, Missouri, USA

**Residence:** Kansas City, MO

**Work:** Kansas City, MO

**Occupations:** Lawyer

## Biographical Note

Lawyer Maurice Watson was born on January 13, 1958 in Kansas City, Missouri to Christene and George Watson. He attended Barstow School and was the first African American to graduate from there in 1976. Watson then attended Harvard University where he graduated cum laude and received his B.A. degree in social studies in 1980 before earning his J.D. degree from Harvard Law School in 1984.

After graduating from Harvard University in 1980, Watson worked in the legal department at Hallmark Cards, Inc. until 1981 when he entered Harvard Law School. Upon receiving his J.D. degree from Harvard Law School in 1984, Watson was hired as an aide for Senator John Danforth (R-MO) where he worked with civil rights, healthcare, and education issues. He remained here until 1987 when he returned to Kansas City, Missouri to serve as an associate at Blackwell Sanders, working on civil rights and education issues. Here, he would later become partner and relationship manager for the Kansas City Public School system. In 2012, Watson was named chairman of the board of Husch Blackwell, making him the first African American to head a major law firm in Missouri and the third to do so in the country. He remained as chairman until 2018 when he co-founded Credo Philanthropy Advisors and became of counsel to Husch Blackwell.

Watson has served on numerous boards throughout his career, including as president of the board of trustees for Barstow School from 1989 to 1996, chairman of the board of directors for Children's Mercy Hospital from 1993 to 2007 and vice chair of their board of trustees from 2002 to 2007, and secretary of the board of trustees for the National Association of Independent Schools from 1995 to 2003. He has also been a member of

the African American Managing Partners Network, the Jackson County Bar Association, the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity, the Civic Council of Greater Kansas City, and the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association.

Watson also received numerous awards, including the 2007 Missouri Hospital Association Excellence in Governance Award, the NAACP Kansas City, Missouri Chapter's Velma E. Woodson Outstanding Leadership Award in 2012, the Urban League of Greater Kansas City Difference Maker of the Year Award in 2012, Kansas City Business Journal's Power 100 recognition from 2014 to 2017, the Missouri Lawyers Weekly's 2018 Law Firm Leader Award, and the African American Managing Partners Network's 2018 Managing Partner of the Year Award.

Watson resides in Kansas City, Missouri.

Maurice Watson was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on November 4, 2019.

## Related Entries

**George Washington Carver School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**George Melcher Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

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

**The Barstow School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

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

**B.A.**

**Harvard Law School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**J.D.**

**Hallmark Cards, Inc.** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1980 to 1981]

**Legal Assistant**

**Blackwell Sanders Matheny Weary & Lombardi** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1982 to 1982]

**Clerk**

**Lord Lloyd & Bissell** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1983 to 1983]

**Clerk**

**Senator John Danforth (R-MO)** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1984 to 1987]

**Aide**

**Blackwell Sanders** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1987 to 2008]

**Partner**

**Husch Blackwell Sanders LLP** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 2008 to 2010]

**Partner**

**Husch Blackwell** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 2010 to 2012]

**Partner**

**Husch Blackwell** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 2012 to 2018]

**Chairman**

**Husch Blackwell** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 2018 to ?]

**Of Counsel**

**Credo Philanthropy Advisors** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 2018 to ?]

**Co-Founder; Principal**

**Children's Mercy Hospital Foundation** [MEMBEROf]  
[from 2012 to 2012]

**Vice Chair**

**Greater Kansas City Civic Council** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Director**

**Metropolitan Community College Foundation** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board of Directors**

**Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board of Directors**

**University of Missouri - Kansas City** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board of Directors**

**African American Managing Partners Network** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**American Bar Association** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Jackson County Bar Association** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Leadership Council on Legal Diversity** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**The Missouri Bar Association** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**National Association of College and University Attorneys** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**Children's Mercy Hospital** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 1993 to 2007]

**Chairman**

**The Barstow School** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 1989 to 1996]

**President**

**National Association of Independent Schools** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 1995 to 2003]

**Secretary, Board of Trustees**

**National School Boards Association** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board of Directors, Council of School Attorneys**

**MRIGlobal** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2016 to ?]

**Board of Directors**

