

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Leon Richards

PERSON

Richards, Leon, 1945-

Alternative Names: Leon Richards;

Life Dates: June 7, 1945-

Place of Birth: Autauga County, Alabama, USA

Residence: Aiea, HI

Occupations: Academic Administrator

Biographical Note

Academic administrator Leon Richards was born on June 7, 1945 in Autauga County, Alabama to Carrie Richards and John Richards. One of twenty-two children, Richards and his family moved to Montgomery, Alabama soon after his birth. After graduating from George Washington Carver High School in 1964, Richards received his B.S. degree in history from Alabama State College in 1968. He went on to receive his M.A. degree in political science in 1970, his Ph.D. degree in political science in 1974, and his second M.A. degree in teaching English as a second language in 2000, all from the University of Hawai'i.

In 1968, Richards joined Wai'anae High School as a social science teacher in Wai'anae, Hawai'i, where he worked for two years, before joining the Wai'anae Research & Planning Center's Model Cities Project for one year. After receiving his M.A. degree, Richards worked as a research assistant for the University of Hawaii department of political science's Dimensionality of Nations Project for two years. After receiving his Ph.D. degree, Richards joined the East-West Center Communication Institute and the advisory council on international relations at the University of Hawai'i, as a researcher. In 1977, he joined Kapi'olani Community College, where he served as assistant dean of instruction and title III grant coordinator from 1977 to 1987, acting provost from 1981 to 1984, and dean of instruction from 1982 to 1999. In 2000, Richards was promoted to senior academic dean and executive director for international education for the University of Hawai'i Community Colleges system and served there until 2002, when he was once again appointed acting provost of Kapi'olani Community College. He returned to his positions as senior academic dean and executive director for international education in 2003. In 2005, Richards was promoted to vice chancellor for academic affairs and international education, continuing to serve as executive director for international education until 2016. He was promoted to interim chancellor in 2005,

before becoming chancellor of Kapi‘olani Community College in 2007. Richards resigned in 2016 and went on to found the Mid-Pacific International Higher Education Consultancy, LLL in 2017, serving as a senior consultant.

Richards has written numerous scholarly works, including *Island Roots, Global Reach: A Case Study of Internationalizing Kapiolani Community College in International Reform Efforts and Challenges*, published in *Community Colleges: New Directions for Community Colleges* in 2007, and *Elevating Developmental Education at Kapi‘olani Community College: Thoughts on Our Past, Present, and Future*, published in the *Journal of the Japan Association for Developmental Education* in 2009. He also wrote *Education and Youth Unemployment: Answering a Challenge in Emerging Countries - An Asia Pacific Perspective*, published in 2015, and *Community Colleges in America: Creating Economic, Human Capital, and Social Development for Today and Tomorrow*, published in 2016.

Richards and his wife, Pauline Sakai Richards, reside in Honolulu, Hawai‘i. They have two children: Kayin and Kalera.

Leon Richards was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on December 10, 2019.

Related Entries

Lomax School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

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

George Washington Carver Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Alabama State University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.S.

University of Hawaii at Manoa [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.A.

University of Hawaii at Manoa [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.A.

University of Hawaii at Manoa [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Ph.D.

Mid-Pacific International Higher Education Consultancy, LLL (MPIHEC)
[EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 201701 to ?]

Founder and Senior Consultant

Kapi'olani Community College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 200708 to 201612]

Chancellor

Kapi'olani Community College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 200507 to 200707]

Interim Chancellor

Kapi'olani Community College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 200502 to 200507]

Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Kapi'olani Community College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 200301 to 200501]

Senior Academic Dean

Kapi'olani Community College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 200202 to 200301]

Acting Provost

Kapi'olani Community College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2000 to 200202]

Senior Academic Dean

University of Hawaii Community Colleges System [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2000 to 201612]

Executive Director for International Education

Kapi'olani Community College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 198206 to 1999]

Dean of Instruction

Kapi'olani Community College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 198108 to 198401]

Acting Provost

Kapi'olani Community College [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197703 to 198712]

Assistant Dean of Instruction and Title III Grant Coordinator

Wai'anae High School [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1968 to 1970]

Social Science Instructor

Wai'anae Research & Planning Center [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1970 to ?]

Researcher, Model Cities Project

University of Hawaii Department of Political Science [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1970 to 1972]

Research Assistant, Dimensionally of Nations Project

Model Cities' Research and Planning Program [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1972 to 1973]

Graduate Tutor

East -West Center Communication Institute [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1974 to ?]

Researcher