

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Rehema Ellis

PERSON

Ellis, Rehema

Alternative Names: Rehema Ellis;

Life Dates: April 10, 1952-

Place of Birth: Raeford, North Carolina, USA

Residence: Riverdale, New York

Work: New York, New York

Occupations: Broadcast Journalist

Biographical Note

Broadcast journalist Rehema Ellis was born on April 10, 1952, in North Carolina to Cattie Jame McLaughlin-Ellis and John Ellis. She received her B.A. degree in sociology in 1974 from Simmons College, in Boston, Massachusetts, and her master's degree in 1977 from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, in New York City.

After graduate school, Ellis was hired at KDKA Radio and TV in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1980. She remained there until 1985, when she joined WHDH-TV in Boston, Massachusetts as a reporter and weekend anchor. In 1994, Ellis became a general assignment correspondent at NBC News, where she covered events like 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, the death of Michael Jackson, and the Haiti earthquake. In her coverage of 9/11, she was the first person to identify the attack on air as "Nine-Eleven." She won a News & Documentary Emmy Award for Outstanding Live Coverage of a Current News Story – Long Form for her coverage of the 2008 United States Presidential election for NBC News Decision 2008: Election Night. In 2010, Ellis was named the chief education correspondent for NBC News and its Education Nation initiative. Her reports have appeared on NBC Nightly News, TODAY, MSNBC, and NBCNews.com.

Ellis received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Simmons University in 1996, and an honorary doctorate degree in journalism in 2000. She is also the recipient of several Associated Press awards. Ellis was part of the NBC Emmy award-winning coverage of the plane crash in the Hudson River called "Miracle on the Hudson" in 2008, for which she also won an Edward R. Murrow Award from the Radio Television Digital News

Association. She won another News & Documentary Emmy Award for Outstanding Live Coverage of a Current News Story – Long Form in 2013 for her reporting on the NBC News Special segment on the Boston Marathon bombing. In 2019, Ellis won a National Association of Black Journalists Salute to Excellence Award for Television Network-General Assignment News: Short Form.

Ellis and her son, Khorl, live in New York, New York.

Rehema Ellis was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 26, 2022.

Related Entries

Simmons College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.A.

Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Master's

WINS News Radio [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1977 to 1978]

KDKA-TV [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1980 to 1985]

WDHD-TV [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1985 to 1993]

Anchor - Reporter

NBC News [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1994 to 2010]

General Assignment Reporter

NBC News [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2010 to ?]

Lead Education Correspondent

National Association of Black Journalists-Pittsburgh [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Founding member

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