

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with James Roberson

PERSON

Roberson, James, 1943-

Alternative Names: James Roberson;

Life Dates: June 14, 1943-

Place of Birth: Birmingham, Alabama, USA

Residence: Birmingham, Alabama

Occupations: Auto Sales Entrepreneur;

Biographical Note

James Earnest Roberson was born on June 14, 1943 to Aressa and Mack E. Roberson in Birmingham, Alabama. Roberson's parents were activists and involved in the Civil Rights Movement. Roberson lived across the street from Bethel Baptist Church, home to Reverend Fred L. Shuttlesworth, that was twice-bombed by the Ku Klux Klan.

Roberson attended A.H. Parker High School where he graduated with an advance academic honors diploma in 1960. He received his B.A. degree in secondary education from Alabama A&M University in 1964; his M.A. degree in educational leadership in 1986 from University of Alabama; and his J.D. degree from Faith College in Alabama.

Roberson led demonstrations and was a political broker on the Alabama A&M University campus. He spearheaded sit-ins to desegregate Shoney's and Big Boy restaurants.

For nearly thirty years, Roberson worked as an educator and administrator for the Alabama Board of Education. He taught earth science at A.G. Gaston and Leeds Junior High Schools before becoming assistant principal.

Roberson joined the Ford Motor Company's Minority Dealer Development Program, and in 1993, he was named a dealer candidate, making him the first African American with a Pontiac dealership. Roberson then became owner of USA Auto and Budget Truck Rental Store in 2000 until his retirement in 2003.

Roberson holds memberships and leadership positions in various organizations including 100 Black Men of Birmingham, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., the March of Dimes and Grace House Ministries. He has received multiple awards and

recognitions for his contributions to the community.

Roberson and his wife, Linda, currently reside in Birmingham, Alabama.

Roberson was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on March 21, 2007.

Related Entries

A.H. Parker High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Hudson Elementary School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Alabama A&M University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University of Alabama at Birmingham [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Samuel Ach Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Roosevelt Elementary School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1964 to 1965]

Teacher

A.G. Gaston Junior High School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1965 to 1973]

Teacher

Brownell Pontiac [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1970 to 1982]

Sales Representative

Leeds Junior High School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1973 to 1983]

Teacher

Jefferson County Board of Education [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1984 to 1990]

Principal

Ford Motor Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1990 to 2000]

Dealer Candidate

Sixth Avenue Baptist Church [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Deacon

March of Dimes, Northern District [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Chapter President

100 Black Men of Birmingham [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board Member