

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Michele Coleman Mayes

PERSON

Mayes, Michele Coleman

Alternative Names: Michele Coleman Mayes;

Life Dates: July 9, 1949-

Place of Birth: Los Angeles, California, USA

Residence: New York, NY

Work: New York, NY

Occupations: Corporate Lawyer

Biographical Note

Michele Coleman Mayes was born on July 9, 1949 in Los Angeles, California to Geraldine and Wilbert Coleman. Mayes graduated from MacKinzie High School in Detroit, Michigan in 1967. She received her B.A. degree from the University of Michigan in 1971 and her J.D. degree from the University of Michigan Law School in 1974.

Mayes taught as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois for two years and then as an Adjunct Professor of Civil Trial Advocacy at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan from 1981 to 1987. Mayes served in the United States Department of Justice from 1976 to 1982 as Assistant United States Attorney in Detroit and Brooklyn. Mayes eventually assumed the role of Chief of the Civil Division in Detroit. In 1982, Mayes entered the corporate sector as managing attorney of the Burroughs Corporation. Her career continued to evolve as the Burroughs Corporation and the Sperry Corporation merged, creating Unisys Corporation, for which she was appointed staff vice president and associate general counsel for Worldwide Litigation. In 1992, Mayes joined the Colgate-Palmolive Company as vice president and associate general counsel. One year later, she was promoted to vice president of Human Resources and their Legal Division for North America. In May 2001, Mayes was promoted to vice president, legal and assistant secretary, and elected a corporate officer. Two years later, she accepted the position of senior vice president and general counsel at Pitney Bowes. In 2007, Mayes was named vice president and general counsel of The Allstate Corporation and senior vice president and general counsel for Allstate Insurance Company.

Mayes is the recipient of numerous awards, including The Margaret Brent Award and The Trailblazer Award. She was also named one of America's top black lawyers by Black Enterprise Magazine in 2003.

Mayes was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on November 6, 2008.

Related Entries

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

Tappan Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

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

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

University of Michigan [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

University of Michigan Law School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Illinois State University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1974 to 1976]

Professor

U.S. Attorney's office, Detroit [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1976 to 1980]

Assistant U.S. Attorney

U.S. Attorney's office, Detroit [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1980 to 1982]

civil division chief

Unisys Corporation [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1982 to 1992]

corporate attorney

Colgate Palmolive Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1992 to 1993]

Associate General Counsel

Colgate Palmolive Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1993 to 1996]

vice president human resources

Colgate Palmolive Company [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1996 to 2001]

Deputy General Counsel

Colgate Palmolive Company [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2001 to 2003]

vice president legal and corporate officer

Pitney Bowes, Inc. [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2003 to 2007]

General Counsel

Allstate Insurance [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2007 to ?]

General Counsel

Federal Bar Association [MEMBEROf]
[from 1987 to 1988]

Chapter President

American Bar Association [MEMBEROf]
[from 1989 to 1994]

Member

National Bar Association [MEMBEROf]
[from 1989 to ?]

Member

Legal Momentum [MEMBEROf]
[from 1996 to ?]

Boardmember

National Judicial College [MEMBEROf]
[from 2007 to ?]

Board Member

RAND Institute of Civil Justice [MEMBEROf]
[from 2007 to ?]

Board Member