

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dolly Adams

PERSON

Adams, Dolly Desselle, 1931-

**Alternative Names:** Dolly Adams;

**Life Dates:** August 13, 1931-

**Place of Birth:** Marksville, Louisiana, USA

**Residence:** Atlanta, Georgia

**Occupations:** Nonprofit Chief Executive

## Biographical Note

Nonprofit executive Dolly Desselle Adams was born in Marksville, Louisiana on August 13, 1931, the only child of Moses J. Following her graduation from of Xavier University Preparatory High School in New Orleans, Adams enrolled at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where she received her B.S. degree. Adams went on to earn her M.A. degree in education from the University of Michigan, and her Ph.D degree in education from Baylor University.

As an educator, Adams has held a variety of positions, including elementary school teacher and administrator; college dean and Professor at the University of Michigan, Wilberforce University, Albany State College, Paul Quinn College, and Howard University School of Law. Adams last served as an adjunct professor at the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta, Georgia. She has also held outstanding leadership positions in community service organizations. Her role as Episcopal Supervisor of the Women's Missionary Society (WMS) and the Ministers' Wives of the Tenth (Texas), Second (Mid-Atlantic States), Sixth (Georgia) and Seventh (South Carolina) and Eleventh (Florida and Bahamas) Episcopal Districts covered a span of 32 years. Adams served for four years as National President of The Links, Inc., and The Links Foundation, Inc., and five years as National President of the Black Women's Agenda, Inc. In addition, Adams served on the board of directors of the United Negro College Fund, Paul Quinn College Foundation, the Southern University Foundation and the sisters of Charity Foundation. Adams now serves on the Board of Directors of the Black Women's Agenda, Inc., the WMS Foundation and the Links, Inc.

From 1982-86, Adams was cited as one of the "100 Most Influential Black Americans" by Ebony Magazine, and Dollars & Sense Magazine named her as one of the "Top 100 Black Business and Professional Women" 1986 and 1987. Adams is a member of

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and the N.A.A.C.P. In recognition of her services in South Carolina, the Governor presented to her the Order of the Palmetto, the highest citation given by the State to a citizen.

Adams and her husband, Reverend John Hurst Adams, live in Atlanta, Georgia. They are the parents of three successful daughters: Attorney Gaye Adams Massey, Dr. Jann Adams, and Madelyn R. Adams

Dolly Desselle Adams was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on December 13, 2012.

## Related Entries

**St. Katharine Drexel Preparatory Academy** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**High School Diploma**

**Southern University and Agricultural and Mechanical College** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

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

**Masters**

**Southern University Laboratory School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

[STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

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

**Ed.D.**

**Paul Quinn College** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Administration/Teacher**

**Seattle Public Schools** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Assistant Principal**

**Head Start** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**director**

**Neuropsychiatric Institute** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Paul Quinn College** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Professor**

**New Orleans Public Schools** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 195101 to 195106]

**Teacher**

**University of Michigan** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1952 to 1954]

**Teacher**

**Wilberforce University** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1954 to 1956]

**Professor**

**Albany State College** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1954 to 1956]

**Summer Professor**

**Howard University Law School** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1980 to ?]

**Visiting Professor**

**Women's Missionary Society** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Supervisor**

**United Negro College Fund (UNCF)** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

[MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Links, Incorporated** [MEMBEROf]  
[from 2013 to 2015]

**National President**

**Black Woman's Agenda** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**President**

**Children's Defense Fund** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

