

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Penfield W. Tate III

PERSON

Tate, Penfield W., 1956-

**Alternative Names:** Penfield W. Tate III;

**Life Dates:** May 19, 1956-

**Place of Birth:** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

**Residence:** Denver, CO

**Work:** Denver, CO

**Occupations:** State Government Official

## Biographical Note

Lawyer and state government official Penfield W. Tate III was born on May 19, 1956 to Ellen Mildred Tate and Penfield W. Tate II. Tate grew up on military bases while his father served in the U.S. Army. His family eventually settled in Boulder, Colorado, where Tate's father became the city's first African American city councilman and mayor. Tate earned his B.A. degree in sociology at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado in 1978, and his J.D. degree from Antioch School of Law in Washington, D.C. in 1981.

Upon graduation from law school, Tate obtained a position as a trade regulation attorney with the Denver Regional Office of the Federal Trade Commission. In 1984, Tate left the Federal Trade Commission and joined the law firm of Trimble, Tate & Nulan, founded by his father seven years earlier. He became a partner with the firm in 1988. In 1990, Tate returned to public service in an administrative role at Denver Mayor Federico Peña's office, but rejoined Trimble, Tate & Nulan in 1991 once Mayor Peña's term ended. The following year, he and his father founded the law firm of Tate & Tate, P.C. Shortly after founding the new firm, Tate took a leave of absence to become executive director of the Colorado Department of Administration. In 1994, he was elected to the vice chairmanship of the Colorado Democratic Party, which he resigned in 1996 during his successful run for Colorado State House. The following year, he was elected to the the Colorado State House of Representatives, representing the 8th District. In 2000, Tate was elected to serve the 33rd District in the Colorado State Senate. In 2003, he resigned from this position to run for Mayor of Denver, but was defeated. He returned to public finance law practice, and joined the law firm of Kutak Rock in 2015, where he represented public entities, lenders, and underwriters

engaged in financing essential public improvements, and advised local and state governments. He was also a frequent panelist on the political talk show Colorado Inside Out.

Tate has served as a trustee of the Colorado Children's Chorale and on the board of Denver Water, the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce, and the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority. He was named the 2004 Father of the Year by the National Father's Day Coalition and the American Diabetes Association.

Penfield W. Tate III was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on September 25, 2016.

## Related Entries

**Colorado State University** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**B.A. degree**

**Antioch School of Law** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**J.D. degree**

**Boulder High School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Charles S. Deneen Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**University Hill Elementary School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Federal Trade Commission** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1981 to 1984]

**Counsel**

**Trimble, Tate and Nulan, P. C.** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1984 to 1992]

**Partner**

**Office of the Mayor of Denver** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1989 to 1991]

**Administrative Assistant**

**Tate & Tate, P.C.** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1993 to ?]

**Founder**

**Colorado Department of Administration** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1993 to ?]

**Executive Director**

**Colorado State Senate** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1996 to 2003]

**State Senator**

**Colorado House of Representatives** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1997 to 2003]

**State Representative**

**Trimble, Tate and Nulan, P.C.** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 1998 to ?]

**Partner**

**Kutak Rock** [EMPLOYEEOf]  
[from 2015 to ?]

**Lawyer**

**Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**Colorado Housing and Finance Authority** [MEMBEROf]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**Metro State College Foundation** [MEMBEROf]  
[from 1993 to 2001]

**Trustee**

**Colorado Democratic Party** [MEMBEROf]  
[from 1993 to 1996]

**2nd Vice Chai**

**Colorado Children's Chorale** [MEMBEROf]  
[from 1996 to 2001]

**Trustee**

**Denver Water Board** [MEMBEROf]  
[from 2005 to ?]

**Appointee**