

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Virgis Colbert

PERSON

Colbert, Virgis, 1939-

Alternative Names: Virgis Colbert;

Life Dates: October 13, 1939-

Place of Birth: Jackson, Mississippi, USA

Residence: Riviera Beach, FL

Occupations: Corporate Chief Executive

Biographical Note

Corporate chief executive Virgis Colbert was born on October 13, 1939 in Jackson, Mississippi. Colbert earned his B.S. degree in industrial management from Central Michigan University in 1974.

Before joining Miller, Colbert was general superintendent of manufacturing for Chrysler Corporation in Toledo, Ohio. In 1979, Colbert became assistant to the plant manager at Miller's Reidsville, North Carolina. In 1980, he was named production manager at the Fort Worth, Texas, container plant and in 1981, he was appointed production manager at Milwaukee Container. In 1981, he was named Milwaukee Container plant manager. In 1987, Colbert moved to the corporate offices as assistant director of can manufacturing. He was appointed director of can manufacturing in 1988 and director of container and support manufacturing in 1988. In 1989, he was named vice president - materials manufacturing. In 1990, he was named vice president - plant operations. In 1993, Colbert was named senior vice president - operations. In 1995, Colbert was named senior vice president - worldwide operations.

Virgis serves as a director of the NASDAQ Exchange, Single-Tenant Acquisition Group and the New Senior Investment Group. Other boards include: Merrill Lynch & Co.; Bank of America Corporation; Delphi Corporation; Sara Lee Corporation; Stanley Black & Decker; lead director at Lorillard, Inc.; Hillshire Brands; and Bradley Center Sports and Entertainment Center.

Virgis is a co-owner of the Milwaukee Bucks and director emeritus of the Green Bay Packers.

He is chairman emeritus and co-founder of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund and

former chairman of the Board of Trustees of Fisk University. He received honorary doctorate degrees from Fisk University and Kentucky State University.

In 1997, he was named a national honorary member of the 100 Black Men of America. In 1996, he received the Trumpet Award from Turner Broadcasting Systems. His other awards include Harlem YMCA Black Achiever, Milwaukee YMCA Black Achiever, and Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Black Achiever, and the National Urban League service award and the NAACP service award. Colbert is a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and the Boule'. He is a life member of the NAACP.

Fortune magazine named him as one of the "50 Most Powerful Black Executives in America." Black Enterprise magazine named him as one of the "75 Most Powerful Blacks in Corporate America." In 2001, Colbert was named "Beverage Executive of the Year" by Beverage Industry Magazine. Black Enterprise Magazine named him as one of the "50 Top Black Executives in Corporate America" and as one of "America's 40 Most Powerful Black Executives." Ebony Magazine named him as one of the "24 To Watch in '94," one of the "50 Top Black Executives in Corporate America" and one of the "12 Most Powerful Blacks in Corporate America." In 1998, he received the Executive Leadership Council Achievement Award. Colbert is listed in "Who's Who in Finance/Industry," "Who's Who in the World," and "Who's Who in Black Corporate America."

Colbert and his wife Angela, an attorney, have three children.

Virgis Colbert was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on February 23, 2017.

Related Entries

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

B.S.

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

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

Miller Brewing Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 197905 to 200512]

E.V.P. Worldwide Operations

Chrysler Corporation [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1966 to 1979]

General Manager

