

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Akwete Tyehimba

PERSON

Tyehimba, Akwete, 1963-

Alternative Names: Akwete Tyehimba;

Life Dates: April 3, 1963-

Place of Birth: Waco, Texas, USA

Work: Dallas, TX

Occupations: Bookstore Owner

Biographical Note

Bookstore owner Akwete Tyehimba was born on April 3, 1963 in Waco, Texas to Oblee Monroe and Isiah Monroe. She graduated from Richfield High School in Waco, Texas in 1981 and attended McLennan Community College in Waco, Texas. She then transferred to the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas in 1984, and attended night classes at North Lake College in Irving, Texas where she met her husband, Bandle Tyehimba.

Tyehimba was active in the Dallas County Democratic Party, and worked on Eddie Bernice Johnson's campaign for Texas State Senate in 1986, and served as Johnson's office manager for a year after she was elected. In 1989, Tyehimba and her husband, Bandle Tyehimba, co-founded the Pan-African Connection Bookstore, Art Gallery, and Resource Center in Dallas, Texas. She joined Delta Airlines in 1996, and worked there for nineteen years while her husband operated the bookstore full-time. At Delta, Tyehimba travelled West Africa to purchase items directly from African vendors. In 2012, when her husband passed away unexpectedly, Tyehimba continued to manage and operate the bookstore, which also sells fabrics, art, and jewelry and serves as a venue for hosting local events and cultural programming. Tyehimba also hosted the annual Malcolm X Festival on May 19th at the Pan African Connection Bookstore. In 2018, during the Mayor's Summer Reading Challenge, Tyehimba hosted African Art and Culture of West Africa to celebrate Marvel's first African superhero, "Black Panther."

In 2013, Tyehimba was named one of thirty of the most interesting people in Dallas by the Dallas Observer. In 2016, she was invited to speak at a fundraiser hosted by the Negro Business and Professional Women's Club of Midland. In 2018, she served as a panelist at the Dallas Public Library during Women's History Month for a discussion,

“Drinking Lemonade: Feminism, Womanism and Beyonce.” Tyehimba was also the recipient of the Legends of Literacy Award by Equanimity.

Tyehimba had three children with her late husband, Bandele Tyehimba; Adjwoa, Bambata and Sekou.

Akwete Tyehimba was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on September 12, 2017.

Related Entries