

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Eric Johnson

PERSON

Johnson, Eric, 1951-

Alternative Names: Eric Johnson;

Life Dates: March 29, 1951-

Place of Birth: Chicago, Illinois, USA

Residence: Miami Beach, Florida

Work: Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois

Occupations: Corporate Chief Executive

Biographical Note

A native of Chicago, Illinois, Eric Johnson, who was born on March 29, 1951, grew up learning about the business world. As the son of groundbreaking entrepreneur George Johnson, founder of Johnson Hair Products, Eric Johnson was part of Chicago's black elite. Johnson got his first business experience working in his father's hair product factory at the age of eight.

After graduating from Chicago's Laboratory School, Johnson attended Babson College in Boston before obtaining an M.B.A. from the University of Chicago. Johnson began his career in business at Procter & Gamble before joining the management team of his family's company. He then effectively used this experience when he took over management of Johnson Hair Products.

As president, he increased sales and Johnson's Hair Products stock was the seventh best-performing stock on the American Stock Exchange in 1991. Later, Johnson acquired Baldwin Ice Cream Company, which he merged with Richardson Foods to become Baldwin/Richardson Foods. In 2000, Baldwin/Richardson Foods' annual profits were around \$62 million. The company is also one of the largest African American owned businesses in the food industry. Johnson is active in civic activities and serves on numerous boards including the Boy Scouts of America, the Rochester Institute of Technology and Chicago State University. In 1998, Johnson was elected to the board of directors of Lincoln National Corporation.

Related Entries

University of Chicago Laboratory Schools [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Diploma

Babson College [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

Bachelor's

University of Chicago Booth School of Business [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

MBA

Procter & Gamble [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1997 to 2006]

Johnson Products Company [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 197606 to 197608]

Owner

Baldwin Ice Cream Company [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1989 to 1999]

Baldwin Richardson Foods [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]