

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with The Honorable Reverend Dr. Floyd Flake

PERSON

Flake, Floyd

Alternative Names: The Honorable Reverend Dr. Floyd Flake; Floyd H. Flake;

Life Dates: January 30, 1945-

Place of Birth: Houston, Texas, USA

Residence: Old Westbury, NY

Occupations: U.S. Congressman; Minister

Biographical Note

Reverend Dr. Floyd H. Flake was born on January 30, 1945. He grew up in segregated Houston as one of fifteen children to Robert Flake, Sr. and Rosie Lee Johnson-Flake. Their small two bedroom house lacked running water. Flake was heavily influenced by his parents' strong moral beliefs and by excellent teachers who challenged him.

After high school, Flake attended Wilberforce University, obtaining his B.A. in 1967 and becoming the first member of his family to graduate from college. After graduation, Flake served as a social worker and then as a marketing analyst with Xerox Corporation.

He was recruited to serve as Director of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Afro-American Center in Boston University. Then in 1976, he was asked to head the Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church (now The Greater Allen Cathedral of New York) in Jamaica, Queens, New York. At the time, the church had 1,400 members. Under Flake's leadership, the church's membership has grown to more than 23,000, complete with a private school, senior citizens center and hundreds of housing units for its members and other community residents. Allen A.M.E. Church has become one of the United States' largest non-profit corporations and the second largest African American employer in New York City.

Flake was elected and served as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1986-97, while still leading Allen A.M.E. Church. In Congress, Floyd established a reputation for bi-partisanship. He also led several initiatives to revitalize urban commercial and residential communities. Flake left Congress, in the midst of his sixth

term, to devote his time and energy solely to the pastorate of The Greater Allen Cathedral of New York.

In addition to his duties as Senior Pastor of Allen Cathedral, Flake serves as President of Edison Charter Schools and as a member of several prominent organizations including the Fannie Mae Foundation Board, the Brookings Institute, The Initiative for a Competitive Inner City and the Princeton Review Foundation.

Related Entries

Xerox Corporation [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2003 to 2005]

Marketing Analyst

Martin Luther King Jr. Afro American Center [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1960 to 1963]

Director

Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1976 to ?]

Pastor

United States House of Representatives [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1986 to 1997]

U.S. Representative