

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Amy Tate Billingsley

PERSON

Billingsley, Amy Tate, 1936-

**Alternative Names:** Amy Tate Billingsley;

**Life Dates:** November 29, 1936-

**Place of Birth:** Chicago, Illinois, USA

**Residence:** Hampton, Virginia

**Occupations:** Civic Leader

## Biographical Note

Civic leader Amy Tate Billingsley was born on November 29, 1936 in Chicago, Illinois to parents Herman Tate and Inez Duke Tate, who were both active leaders educational in local and international co-op communities. Billingsley's great-grandfather, Jesse Chisholm Duke, was a prominent newspaper editor and activist in Montgomery, Alabama and Pine Bluff, Arkansas during the 1880s and 1890s; her grandfather, noted architectural engineer Charles Sumner Duke, was the first African American graduate in mathematics at Harvard University in 1905, founder of the National Technical Association in 1926, and the supervising engineer of the Public Works Administration in the Virgin Islands from 1946 to 1951.

Billingsley was raised in Chicago, attended John D. Shoop Elementary School, the University of Chicago High School (the Lab School), and Morgan Park High School. She then enrolled at the University of Chicago, receiving her A.B. degree in mathematics and education in 1958. She went on to earn her M.A. degree in counseling psychology from Ohio State University in 1961, and her M.B.A. degree in marketing and management from the University of Baltimore in 1982.

Billingsley travelled to the Republic of Senegal, West Africa with the non-profit organization, Operations Crossroads Africa, and then worked at Harvard University's Center for Research in the Study of Personality. In 1961, she married Brandeis University student Andrew Billingsley, becoming instrumental in his many landmark publications including the classical sociological text *Black Families in White America*. Her work with political campaigns, started with one candidate's 1966 campaign for California Assemblyman, which lead to the successful political career of Congressman Ronald Dellums. Billingsley's participation in the campaigns of Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley and Atlanta Congressman Andrew Young were precursors to her

significant involvement in the presidential campaigns of William J. Clinton, Al Gore, and John Kerry. In the 1990s, Billingsley worked with the Clinton Administration in the White House Public Liaison Office; as Program Manager at the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities; and as Special Assistant to U.S. Labor Secretary Alexis Herman.

Billingsley was a founder of Black Women's Agenda, Inc. in 1977, and has served on the board of the National Black M.B.A. Association (N.B.M.B.A.A.). In 1982, Billingsley started Amistad Associates, and since has been a consultant on national projects for clients including, marketing for Dr. Dorothy I. Height's Open Wide the Freedom Gates: A Memoir, serving as a Regional Coordinator for The HistoryMakers, and coordinating organizational projects for Tom and Barbara Skinner's Leadership Institute Seminars For Upper Level Executives.

Billingsley lives in Washington, DC. She was married to Andrew Billingsley for nearly 40 years, with whom she had two daughters, Angela Billingsley and Bonita Billingsley Harris, and three granddaughters.

Amy Tate Billingsley was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 26, 2003.

## Related Entries

**John D. Shoop Math-Science Technical Academy** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Reed College** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**The Ohio State University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**University of Baltimore** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**MBA**

**University of Chicago Laboratory Schools** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Morgan Park High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**University of Chicago** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**United States Department of Education** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to 2001]

**Special Assistant**

**Amistad Associates** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1980 to 1983]

**Consultant**

**Black Women's Agenda** [EMPLOYEE OF]  
[from 1977 to ?]

**Co-Founder**