

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lonnie Bunch

PERSON

**Bunch, Lonnie G.**

**Alternative Names:** Lonnie Bunch;

**Life Dates:** November 18, 1952-

**Place of Birth:** Newark, New Jersey, USA

**Work:** Washington, D.C.

**Occupations:** Curator; Museum Chief Executive

## **Biographical Note**

Historian and educator Lonnie G. Bunch was born November 18, 1952, in Newark, New Jersey. After graduating from Belleville High School in 1970, Bunch enrolled in Howard University and later transferred to the American University in Washington, D.C. Bunch stayed at American, earning his B.A. degree in 1974; his M.A. degree in 1976; and his Ph.D. in 1979. Bunch's degrees were in the fields of American and African American history.

While working on his doctorate, Bunch went to work for the Smithsonian Institution as an educator and historian. After earning his Ph.D., Bunch took a position with the University of Massachusetts as a professor of history, where he remained until 1983. Crossing the country, Bunch became the founding curator of the California African American Museum in Los Angeles in 1983, and remained there until 1989. From there Bunch went on to become the associate director for curatorial affairs at the National Museum of American History, a position he retained until 2000. In 2001, Bunch became the president of the Chicago Historical Society, one of the oldest history museums in the nation.

Bunch published numerous books and magazine articles on topics ranging from African American history to cultural experiences in Japan. Bunch served as a trustee of the American Association of Museums and the Council of the American Association of State & Local History, and was a member of the American Antiquarian Society. Bunch was later appointed by President George W. Bush to the Commission for the Preservation of the White House.

## Related Entries

**Belleville High School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**HS diploma**

**Howard University** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**American University** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**BA -**

**American University** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**M.A.**

**American University** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Ph.D.**

**Smithsonian Institute** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 197801 to 197909]

**Educator & Historian**

**Chicago Historical Society** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 200101 to ?]

**President**

**California Afro-American Museum** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 198306 to 198906]

**Curator**

**National Museum of American History at the  
Smithsonian Institution** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 198906 to 200101]

**Curator & Associate Director**

**University of Massachusetts, Amherst** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 197909 to 198306]

**Professor**

**American Association of Museums** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Board of Trustees**

**Smithsonian Institution** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Council of Advisors**

**Academy of Juvenile Justice** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Board of Trustees**

**Organization of American Historians** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Board Member**

**American Historical Society** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Board of Trustees**

**Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity (Boule)** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Member**

**American Association of State and Local History**

[MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Lincoln Library and Museum** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Board of Trustees**

**National Museum of American Industry** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Board of Trustees**