

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Edward D. Irons

PERSON

Irons, Edward D.

**Alternative Names:** Edward D. Irons;

**Life Dates:** August 29, 1923-January 17, 2022

**Place of Birth:** Hulbert, Oklahoma, USA

**Residence:** Atlanta, GA

**Work:** GA

**Occupations:** Economist;

## Biographical Note

Economist, banker, and academic administrator Edward Irons was born in Hulbert, Oklahoma, on August 29, 1923. After attending Attucks High School, Irons was drafted into the Navy, and while recovering from rheumatic fever in a V.A. hospital, he and several other patients organized a sit-in to protest segregation in the hospital.

Following his honorable discharge, Irons traveled to Ohio intent on attending Wilburforce University, despite the fact that he had not been admitted nor had his G.I. Bill papers been processed. Nevertheless, he successfully completed his B.S. degree in business administration, after being unable to obtain an internship in engineering due to prejudice. From there, Irons worked in a hospital as business manager and then went on to receive his M.A. degree in hospital administration from the University of Minnesota in 1951. After working a number of jobs, Irons served as the assistant business manager at Florida A&M University, but his involvement in the Civil Rights Movement led to him being ostracized by university executives. He left there to receive his D.B.A. degree from Harvard Business School, the second African American to do so, where he studied new banks.

In 1964, Irons and his partners opened Riverside National Bank in Houston, Texas, the first African American-owned bank given a charter in forty years. From there, Irons worked for USAID and served as the founding dean of Howard University's business school. After leaving Howard, he worked as a consultant to dozens of organizations around the globe and retired as a professor and the dean of the business school at Clark Atlanta University, whose program he helped to achieve reaccreditation. He also served as superintendent of banking for Washington, D.C., and as a former executive director

of the National Bankers Association.

Irons and his wife, Joyce, lived in Atlanta, Georgia. They had five children: Trisha Lynn Irons, Edward Daryl Irons, Jr., Tamara Joy Irons, Tony Rene Morrow, and Brigitte Morrow Killings.

Edward Irons was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on October 13, 2004, and September 24, 2004.

Irons passed away on January 17, 2022, at the age of 98.

## Related Entries

**Attucks School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Wilberforce University** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**University of Michigan** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Post-doctoral certificate**

**University of Minnesota Curtis L. Carlson School of Management** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**MBA**

**Harvard Business School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**DBA**

**Florida A&M University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1977 to ?]

**Professor**

**United States Agency for International Development** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1993 to ?]

**Division Chief**

**Howard University Business School** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Founding Dean**

**Clark Atlanta University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Riverside National Bank** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1964 to ?]

**Founder**

**Atlanta University** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1971 to 1986]

**Professor**

**District of Columbia** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1986 to 1990]

**Commissioner of Banking**

**Business School of Clark-Atlanta University** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1984 to ?]

**Professor and Dean**

**Atlanta Life Financial Group, Inc.** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Herndon Foundation** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**National Economic Association** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**President**

**New York Urban Coalition Venture Capital Corporation** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**President**

**Georgia Health Commission** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Atlanta Economic Development Corporation** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Institute for Community Business Development** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]