

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Cheryl McKissack Felder

PERSON

McKissack-Felder, Cheryl,  
1961-

**Alternative Names:** Cheryl McKissack Felder;

**Life Dates:** May 15, 1961-

**Place of Birth:** Nashville, Tennessee, USA

**Residence:** Philadelphia, PA

**Work:** New York, NY

**Occupations:** Construction Chief Executive

## Biographical Note

Cheryl McKissack Felder, civil engineer and CEO of The McKissack Group, was born with her twin sister, Deryl, on May 15, 1961 in Nashville, Tennessee.

Felder comes from a family of architects that start with an enslaved Ashanti ancestor in 1790. Grandfather Moses McKissack founded the family business in 1905. Her father, William DeBerry McKissack, took it over in 1968. Felder's mother, Leatrice Buchanan McKissack, grew the business after her husband died. Felder attended Peabody Demonstration School, graduating in 1979, in the meantime earning her B.S. degree in civil engineering in 1981 and her M.S. degree in 1983 from Howard University.

At the United States Department of Defense, Felder provided quality assurance and quality control for government research projects, including MX missile silos, the United States Embassy anti-terrorist program and a large space structures project for NASA. From 1985 to 1989, she worked as a civil engineer for Weidlinger Associates and, in 1989, she served as an estimator for Turner Construction, both New York City firms. Felder also served as the estimation manager for the \$2.5 million restoration/addition of the historic Schomburg Theatre. In 1991, she formed The McKissack Group (TMG), a full service construction management firm based in New York City. In 1999, Felder launched McKissack and McKissack Associates, an architecture and design company.

As The McKissack Group's chief executive officer, Felder managed construction of the US Airways maintenance hangar in Philadelphia. She also served as project executive for the Medgar Evers Academic Building and Student Support Services buildings in Brooklyn, New York. Felder was the principal in charge of Philadelphia's \$395 million Lincoln Financial Field football stadium, the \$450 million US Airways International Terminal in Philadelphia and the \$1.5 billion renovation and reconstruction of the School District of Philadelphia. Other projects include the Brooklyn NBA Stadium, the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, the New York School Construction Authority and the African Burial Ground Monument in New York City. Felder and her husband

Fred Felder belong to the 25,000-member Christian Cultural Center in Brooklyn, New York.

## Related Entries

**University School Of Nashville** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Howard University** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Weidlinger Associates** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1985 to 1989]

**Turner Construction** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1989 to 1989]

**Estimator**

**McKissack and McKissack** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1991 to ?]

**President**