

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Debra Martin Chase

PERSON

Chase, Debra Martin

**Alternative Names:** Debra Martin Chase;

**Life Dates:** October 11, 1956-

**Place of Birth:** Great Lakes, Illinois, USA

**Residence:** New York, New York

**Work:** West Hollywood, California

**Occupations:** Film Producer

## Biographical Note

Movie producer Debra Martin Chase was born on October 11, 1956, in Great Lakes, Illinois. Chase's father, policeman Robert Douglas Martin, and her mother, teacher Beverly M. Barber Martin, moved to Pasadena, California, when Chase was six years old. Attending Copernicus Elementary School and Our Lady of Solace School in Chicago, and Washington School and Loma Alta School in Altadena, California, Chase graduated from Amherst High School in 1973. Chase earned her B.A. degree from Mount Holyoke College in 1977, and graduated from Harvard Law School in 1981.

Chase practiced law at Houston's Mearday, Day, and Caldwell firm, and wrote freelance articles for Houston City magazine. After serving as a lawyer for Tenneco from 1983 to 1985, Chase moved to New York City where she worked for Stroock, Stroock, and Lavan law firm, and eventually became in-house counsel for Avon Products. In 1988, Chase worked for the Michael Dukakis presidential campaign and David Dinkins's successful mayoral campaign.

Interested in the film industry, Chase joined the legal department of Columbia Pictures, and by 1989, she was executive assistant to Frank Price. By 1992, Chase was heading Denzel Washington's production company, Mundy Lane Entertainment, producing *The Pelican Brief*, *Devil in a Blue Dress*, *The Preacher's Wife*, *Courage Under Fire* and the Academy Award nominated documentary, *Hank Aaron: Chasing the Dream*. By 1995, Chase had become the executive vice president of Whitney Houston's Brown House Productions, which produced the 1997 Emmy nominated television musical *Rogers and Hammerstein's Cinderella*, and *The Princess Diaries*. In 2000, Chase formed Martin Chase Productions; she went on to produce Fox-TV's *Missing* and Disney's *The*

Cheetah Girls, Miracle (2004), and Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants (2005).

Chase volunteered for Friends of the Studio Museum of Harlem; the Heartland Film Festival; the Community Resource Advisory Committee of the Los Angeles County Museum; and served on the board of Chicago's Columbia College. A producing mentor for the University of Southern California, Chase remained a resident of the Hollywood Hills.

## Related Entries

**Amherst High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Our Lady of Solace School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Langford Academy** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Washington School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Loma Alta School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Washington STEAM Magnet Academy** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Amherst High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Mount Holyoke College** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

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

**Harvard Law School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Brown House Productions** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Vice President**

**Mundy Lane Productions** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Manager**

**Stroock & Strocok & Lavan** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Lawyer**

**O'Melveny & Myers** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Paralegal**

**Kirkland & Ellis** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Lawyer**

**Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Lawyer**

**Butler & Binion** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Lawyer**

**Day & Caldwell & Keeton** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Lawyer**

**Tenneco** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Lawyer**

**Avon Products, inc.** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Lawyer**

**Columbia Pictures** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Lawyer**

**Sony Pictures Entertainment, Inc.** [EMPLOYEEOf]

[from ? to ?]

**Director of Creative Affairs**