

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Larkin Arnold

PERSON

**Arnold, Larkin, 1942-**

**Alternative Names:** Larkin Arnold;

**Life Dates:** September 3, 1942-

**Place of Birth:** Kansas City, Missouri, USA

**Residence:** Beverly Hills, CA

**Occupations:** Entertainment Lawyer; Talent Management Chief Executive; Music Executive

## Biographical Note

Entertainment lawyer, music executive and talent management chief executive Larkin Arnold, Jr. was born on September 3, 1942, in Kansas City, Missouri to Larkin and Annie Arnold. When Arnold was in elementary school, the family moved to Phoenix, Arizona, for his mother's health. In Kansas City and Phoenix, Arnold attended Catholic schools. He received his B.S. degree in political science from American University in Washington, D.C. in 1966, and

graduated from Howard University Law School in 1969.

In 1970, Arnold became one of the first African Americans to be hired as an attorney by a major record label when he joined Capitol Records. Four years later, he was promoted to vice president of Capitol Records, creating and heading the company's Black Music Division. In 1975, Arnold signed Natalie Cole to Capitol Records and, in 1977, he served as the executive producer for Caldera's record Sky Island. That same year, he signed Maze featuring Frankie Beverly, the former backup band for Marvin Gaye. In 1978, Arnold left Capitol Records for Arista Records. As senior vice president, Arnold ran the West Coast office and was in charge of bringing in new artists and products. Arnold held this position until he was hired in 1980 by CBS/SONY Music as senior vice president. There, he spearheaded the marketing and promotion of Michael Jackson's Thriller album that sold over twenty-five million units worldwide. Arnold also represented Teena Marie, Luther Vandross, Surface, Peabo Bryson and The Reflections. In 1988, Arnold founded Arnold & Associates, one of the few wholly integrated legal and management teams in the record industry.

Arnold co-founded the Black Entertainment and Sports Lawyers Association, serving as its chairman for eight years. He has served on the boards of the Los Angeles Board of Governors of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, the Executive Committee of XI Boule Fraternity, the United Negro College Fund Ladders of Hope Program, and the Los Angeles Zoo Commission. Arnold has received numerous honors and awards including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Executive of the Year Award, Outstanding Graduate Award of Howard University School of Law, the Distinguished Graduate Award of Howard University, the Congressional Black Caucus Outstanding Citizen Award, the Langston Bar

Association Lawyer of the Year Award, the NATRA Award for Record Executive of the Year, Pollstar Award for R&B Manager of the Year, the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Award for Outstanding Community Leadership and a 100 Black Men Honor.

Arnold is married to Cynthia Arnold and is the father of two children.

Larkin Arnold was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on July 10, 2007.

## **Related Entries**

**St. Monica's Catholic School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**St. Mary's Catholic High School** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

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

**B.S.**

**Howard University School of Law** [STUDENTOF]  
[from ? to ?]

**J.D.**

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

**Capitol Records, Inc.** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1970 to 1978]

**Vice President**

**Arista Law** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1978 to 1980]

**Senior Vice President, West Coast**

**CBS** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1980 to 1987]

**Senior Vice President, Corporate**

**Arnold & Associates** [EMPLOYEEOF]  
[from 1988 to 2006]

**President and Chief Attorney**

**Black Music Association** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Founding Board Member**

**Black Entertainment and Sports Lawyers Association**  
[MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Cofounder, Chairman**

**National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences**  
[MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board of Governors, Los Angeles**

**United Negro College Fund (UNCF)** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board of Trustees, Los Angeles Board**

**XI Boule Fraternity** [MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Member of the Executive Committee**

**Los Angeles Visitors and Convention Bureau**  
[MEMBEROF]  
[from ? to ?]

**Board of Directors**

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

**Board Member**

**Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity (Boule)** [MEMBEROF]  
[from 2002 to 2006]