

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Carver Gayton

PERSON

Gayton, Carver

Alternative Names: Carver Gayton;

Life Dates: October 18, 1938-

Place of Birth: Seattle, Washington, USA

Residence: Seattle, WA

Occupations: Civic Leader;

Biographical Note

Academic administrator, corporate executive, and museum chief executive, Carver Clark Gayton was born on October 18, 1938 in the Madrona District of Seattle, Washington to John Jacob and Virginia Clark Gayton. Born to a rich heritage, Gayton was raised in a family of ten and attended Madrona Grade School and Meany Junior High School as a youth. Afterwards, he attended Seattle's Garfield High School where he excelled academically and athletically. He was a member of the school's football team and was named to the All-City and All-State teams for his talents as a running back. In his senior year, he was elected Class President and was recruited by the University of Washington Head Football Coach Darrel Royal with a four year scholarship. In 1959, Gayton started as a freshman on the University of Washington football team, but was injured and unable to play after his second game, when he tore ligaments and cartilage in his knee. By the following season, Gayton recovered from his injuries, and he was allowed to play in the 1960 Rose Bowl, helping the Huskies defeat the University of Wisconsin forty-four to seven. That spring, he graduated from the University of Washington with his B.A. degree in history and a minor in English.

In 1961, under the leadership of Coach Jim Owens, Gayton served as an Assistant Coach for the University of Washington and was instrumental in the team winning the Rose Bowl for a consecutive year. Afterwards, he was hired as a teacher at his alma mater Garfield High School. In January of 1964, Gayton became the first black Federal Bureau of Investigation agent from the state of Washington when he received a letter signed by the bureau's director J. Edgar Hoover. While serving in that capacity, he conducted thorough background checks on appointed government officials and alleged members of the Italian mafia. Subsequently, Gayton returned to his career in education and pursued his M.A. degree in educational administration at Temple University. In 1967, he went on to work as a special security representative for the Lockheed Missiles

and Space Company in Sunnyvale, California.

In 1968, Gayton became the first full-time black coach for the University of Washington. He was also assigned to the Department of University Relations and served as an assistant to the department's vice president. During his tenure as an assistant football coach, Gayton recruited fourteen black players, the most in the University of Washington's history. In 1969, in protest of the suspension of four black players by Coach Jim Owens for threatening to boycott the team, Gayton resigned as head coach and was appointed to the new position of Director of Affirmative Action Programs. As the director, he established the first affirmative action program by an institution of higher learning in the state, and instituted the first comprehensive staff training program at the University of Washington. In 1972, Gayton earned his M.A. degree in public administration, and in 1976, he received his Ph.D. from the University of Washington. Shortly after, he was hired as a full-time assistant professor in the Department of Public Administration at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida.

After serving two years as Assistant Professor, Gayton was recruited by the Boeing Company as Corporate Manager of Education Relations, and was responsible for supervising a contract with Cogswell College. Under his leadership, Boeing helped its employees in furthering their education by promoting night classes at Cogswell College. In the mid-1980s, Gayton was promoted to Director of Education Relations and Training, and in 1991, he became Boeing's Corporate Director of College and University Relations. From 1997 until 2001, Gayton served under Governor Gary Locke as the Commissioner of Washington State Department of Employment Security. Prior to becoming the Executive Director of the Northwest African American Museum in 2005, Gayton was a lecturer and consultant for the University of Washington. He serves on several boards, including the U.S. Department of Education National Advisory Panel/National Center for Post Secondary Governance and Finance and The Association of Governing Boards. Gayton retired as Executive Director June 25, 2008 and lives in Seattle, Washington with his wife Carmen and their son Chandler.

Carver Gayton was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on June 4, 2008 and October 9, 2017.

Related Entries

Madrona Grade School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Meany Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

James A. Garfield High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Diploma

University of Washington [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

BA History

University of Washington [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

MA Public Administration

University of Washington [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

PhD Political Science

Garfield High School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Teacher

University of Washington [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Director of Affirmative Action programs

Florida State University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

26th Ward Alderman

Boeing Company [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Corporate Manager of Education Relations

University of Washington [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Lecturer/Consultant

Lockheed Martin [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 196401 to 196711]

Special Security Rep.

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 196401 to 196711]

Special Agent

State of Washington [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 199702 to 200104]

Commissioner

Northwest African American Museum [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 200502 to ?]

Executive Director

University of Washington [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 200104 to 200412]

Lecturer

University of Washington [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 196808 to 196812]

Assistant Football Coach

Florida State University [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197708 to 197909]

Assist. Prof.

Seattle Public Schools [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 196109 to 196401]

History Teacher

Boeing Company [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197909 to 199702]

Corporate Director

University of Washington [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 196912 to 197708]

Director of Affirmative Action

University of Washington [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1961 to ?]

Assistant Coach

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1964 to ?]

Agent

Lockheed Martin [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1967 to ?]

Special Security Representative

University of Washington [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1968 to ?]

Coach

State of Washington [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1997 to 2001]

Commissioner of Washington State Department of Employment Security

Northwest African American Museum [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2005 to 2008]

Executive Director

Art Institute of Seattle [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

Board Of Directors

Center for Occupational Research and Development [MEMBEROf]
[from ? to ?]

President

University of Washington Alumni Association [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

President

Seattle School Board [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors

Sigma Phi Alpha [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

President

Seattle Community Colleges [MEMBEROf]

[from ? to ?]

President