

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with William Akins

PERSON

Akins, William Charles, 1932-2017

Alternative Names: William Akins;

Life Dates: November 9, 1932-March 29, 2017

Place of Birth: Austin, Texas, USA

Residence: Austin, TX

Occupations: Academic Administrator

Biographical Note

Academic administrator and educator during integration, William Charles Akins was born in 1932 in Austin, Texas. He attended segregated Blackshear Elementary School. He next went to Kealing Junior High School and then Anderson High School where he met W.B. Campbell who inspired him to become a principal. He graduated from Huston-Tillotson University with his B.A. degree in history in 1954 and received his M.A. degree from Prairie View A&M University in 1956. Akins also received his administrative certification from Southwest Texas State University.

In 1959, Akins began teaching at Anderson High School, his alma mater, also known as Old Anderson. Three years after beginning, he was recognized as Anderson's Teacher of the Year. In 1964, Akins was selected to be the first African American teacher at Johnson High School, a recently desegregated school. In 1971, he returned to Anderson High School to serve as Assistant Principal where he served until it was closed due to busing desegregation laws. He was then transferred to Lanier High School before becoming the first principal of the new L.C. Anderson High School in 1973. Akins worked through conflicts to set the school on its feet. After leaving L.C. Anderson High School he assumed several central administration roles for the Austin Independent School District including Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs and Associate Superintendent for Development and Community Partnerships.

Akins received an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Huston-Tillotson University in 1982. For his commitment to the Austin school district, in 1998, the district Board of Trustees voted to name Austin's newest high school after Akins. The following year the groundbreaking ceremony for the W. Charles Akins High School was held and the school opened to more than 2,700 students.

Akins passed away on March 29, 2017 at age 84.

Related Entries

Huston-Tillotson University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Theodore Kealing Junior High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Blackshear Elementary Fine Arts Academy [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

L.C. Anderson High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Prairie View A&M University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

Texas State University [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

1968

KLRN-TV [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Sportscaster

[EMPLOYEEOF]
[from ? to ?]

Booker T. Washington High School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1956 to 1959]

Teacher

L.C. Anderson High School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1959 to 1964]

Teacher

Albert Sidney Johnston High School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1964 to 1971]

Teacher

Sidney Lanier High School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1971 to 1973]

Assistant Principal

L.C. Anderson High School [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1973 to 1982]

Principal

Austin Independent School District [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1982 to 2000]

Assistant Superintendent for Human Relations

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Junior Achievement USA [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Boys and Girls Club of America [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board

National Urban League [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board

Austin Capitol City Lions Club [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Founder