

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Sylvia Sprinkle-Hamlin

PERSON

Sprinkle-Hamlin, Sylvia
Yvonne, 1945-

Alternative Names: Sylvia Sprinkle-Hamlin;

Life Dates: April 25, 1945-

Place of Birth: Winston-Salem, North Carolina, USA

Residence: Pfafftown, NC

Work: Winston Salem, NC

Occupations: Theater Chief Executive; Library
Director

Biographical Note

Library director and theater executive Sylvia Sprinkle-Hamlin was born on April 25, 1945 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina to Thelma N. Holtzclaw, a custodian, and Arthur William Henry Sprinkle, Jr., a factory worker. She received her B.S. degree in education from

Winston-Salem State University in 1967 and her M.S. degree in library science from Clark Atlanta University in 1968.

After the completion of her studies, Sprinkle-Hamlin joined the staff of the Free Library of Philadelphia as a children's librarian. In 1970, she became an information specialist at the Benjamin Banneker Urban Center and in 1973, she became the instructional media center director for the Philadelphia Public Schools while taking education administration classes at Cheyney State University. Sprinkle-Hamlin returned to Winston-Salem State University in 1978 where she served as a public services librarian and assistant director of the university library. In 1979, she joined the Forsyth County Public Library system as department head for children's outreach. Also in 1979, Sprinkle-Hamlin met her future husband, Larry Leon Hamlin, who was the founder of the North Carolina Black Repertory Company. They married in 1981 and Sprinkle-Hamlin became secretary of the National Black Repertory Company in 1983. Hamlin would go on to found the National Black Theatre Festival in 1989, with the fundraising support of Dr. Maya Angelou. Sprinkle-Hamlin has served on the board of directors for The National Black Theatre Festival since 1991. The Festival grew from thirty performances and 10,000 in attendance in 1989 to over 100 performances and 50,000 in attendance in 2005. In 2007, Hamlin died after an extended illness and Sprinkle-Hamlin carried on her husband's work becoming executive producer for the National Black Theatre Festival. In 2010, she became president of the board of directors for the North Carolina Black Repertory Company. During this time, Sprinkle-Hamlin also continued to work for the Forsyth County Public Library serving as assistant library director , extension division, associate library director and becoming the library director in 2000. She also served as a library consultant for W.H. Roberts & Associates.

Sprinkle-Hamlin has worked extensively in the

Winston-Salem community serving on the board of directors for Family Services, Inc., Forsyth County Smart Start, The Shepherd Center of Greater Winston-Salem and The Diggs Gallery of Winston-Salem University. She has also served as a council member of the American Library Association (ALA), president of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, Public library Association Board member and chair of the African American Issues Roundtable of the Southeastern Library Association. Sprinkle-Hamlin has received the Roundtable for Ethnic Minority Roadbuilder's Award, the DEMCO/ALA Black Caucus Award for Excellence in Librarianship and The Chronicle Women of the Year Award. She lives in Pfafftown, North Carolina.

Sylvia Sprinkle-Hamlin was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on February 23, 2012.

Related Entries

Winston-Salem State University [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

B.S.

Clark Atlanta University [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

M.S.

Carter High School [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

North Carolina Black Repertory Company [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from ? to ?]

Board President

Free Library of Philadelphia [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1968 to 1970]

Children's Librarian

Benjamin Banneker Urban Center [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1970 to 1973]

Information Specialist

Fashion Two-Twenty Cosmetics [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1977 to 1984]

Owner

Winston-Salem State University [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1978 to 1979]

Associate Director/ Public Service Librarian

Forsyth County Public Library [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1979 to 1980]

Departmental Head, Children's Outreach

Forsyth County Public Library [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1980 to 1984]

Associate Director, Extension Division

Forsyth County Public Library [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1984 to 1999]

Associate Library Director

W.H. Roberts & Associates [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1989 to 2000]

Consultant

Forsyth County Public Library [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 2000 to ?]

Library Director

Highsmith Library Innovative Committee [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Chair

American Library Association [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Chair of the Affiliate/Chapters Committee

Public Library Association [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Executive Board Member

Southeastern Library Association [MEMBEROF]

[from 2010 to ?]

Chair of African American Issues Roundtable

North Carolina Library Association [MEMBEROF]

[from 2010 to ?]

**Director of Roundtable for Ethnic Minority
Concerns**

American Library Association [MEMBEROF]

[from 1998 to 2005]

President

American Library Association [MEMBEROF]

[from 2008 to ?]

Council Member

National Black Theater Festival [MEMBEROF]

[from 2006 to 2007]

Executive Producer

Family Services, Inc. [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors

Forsyth County Smart Start [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Advisory Board

Salem College Center for Women Writers [MEMBEROF]

[from 1977 to 1997]

Board of Directors

Sheperd Center of Greater Winston-Salem [MEMBEROF]
[from 1997 to ?]

Board of Directors

Winston Salem University, Diggs Gallery [MEMBEROF]
[from 2003 to 2005]

Board of Directors

Forsyth County Employees Credit Union [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board of Directors

**Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Council on the
Status of Women** [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]