Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Lilia Abron

Abron, Lilia, 1945-

Alternative Names: Abron, Lilia, 1945-;

Life Dates: March 8, 1945-

Place of Birth: Memphis, Tennessee

Residence: Washington, D.C.

Occupations: Chemical Engineer;

Biographical Note

Chief executive officer and chemical engineer Lilia Ann Abron was born on March 8, 1945 in Memphis, Tennessee. Her father was a school principal and her mother was a school teacher who taught art and geography. Abron attended Lemoyne College in Memphis, Tennessee where she received her B.S. degree in chemistry in 1966. She earned her M.S. degree in sanitary engineering from Washington University in St. Louis in 1968. After receiving her M.S. degree, Abron worked for the Kansas City Water Department. She went on to become a research engineer for the Metropolitan Sanitary District of Greater Chicago. Abron received her Ph.D. in chemical engineering from the University of Iowa in 1972, the first African American woman to do so.

After completing her education, Abron served as an assistant professor of civil engineering at Tennessee State University and held a joint appointment as an assistant professor of environmental engineering at Vanderbilt University. In 1975, she joined the faculty of Howard University as an assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering while serving as a consultant to local engineering firms. Abron founded PEER Consultants in 1978, an environmental engineering consulting firm that provides solutions to the problems of contamination of the environment. Her firm had contracts with the Superfund program including the Boston Harbor cleanup; the Department of

Abron is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and the International Women’s Forum. Professionally, she is a member of the Water Environment Federation, American Water Works Association and American Society of Civil Engineers. She also serves on the Advisory Board for the College of Engineering, University of South Florida. Abron has been active in community serving as the president of the Washington DC chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc., and as a board member for the Baptist Home for Children. She was an original participant of the 1975 American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) study, “The Double Bind: The Price of Being a Minority Woman in Science.” In 1999, Abron was the recipient of the Hancher-Finkbine Alumni Medallion from the University of Iowa; in 2001, she was awarded the Magic Hands Award by LeMoyne-Owen College, and in 2004, she was elected to the National Academy of Arts and Sciences. Abron has three adult sons.

Lilia Ann Abron was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on June 17, 2012.

Related Entries

Abron, Bernice Wise [CHILDOf]
Mother

Abron, Ernest Buford [CHILDOf]
Father

LeMoyne-Owen College [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1966]
B.S.

Washington University [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1968]
M.S.

University of Iowa [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to 1972]
Ph.D.

Kansas City water department [EMPLOYEEOf]
Engineer

Tennessee State University. [EMPLOYEE Of]
[from 1971 to 1975]

Assistant professor of civil engineering

Vanderbilt University [EMPLOYEE Of]
[from 1973 to 1975]

Assistant professor of environmental engineering

Howard University [EMPLOYEE Of]
[from 1975 to 1978]

Professor of civil and environmental engineering

PEER Consultants [EMPLOYEE Of]
[from 1978 to ?]

Founder and CEO

Peer Africa [EMPLOYEE Of]
[from 1995 to ?]

Co-Owner

Washington DC chapter of Jack and Jill of American, Inc. [MEMBER Of]
President

Baptist Home for Children [MEMBER Of]
Board Member

Water Environment Federation [MEMBER Of]
Member

American Water Works Association [MEMBER Of]
Member

American Society of Civil Engineers [MEMBER Of]
Member