

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Karen DeWitt

PERSON

DeWitt, Karen, 1944-

Alternative Names: Karen DeWitt;

Life Dates: April 18, 1944-

Place of Birth: Washington, Pennsylvania, USA

Residence: Baltimore, MD

Occupations: Newspaper Reporter

Biographical Note

Newspaper journalist and communications executive Karen DeWitt was born in Washington, Pennsylvania on April 18, 1944. DeWitt graduated from Miami University with her B.A. degree in english and philosophy. From 1966 to 1968, she enrolled in the U.S. Peace Corps. DeWitt began her journalism career in 1977 when she was hired by the Washington Post as a staff writer for its style section. That same year, the New York Times hired DeWitt as its national correspondent for its Washington D.C. bureau, where she served until 1981. In 1982, she was hired as a columnist for USA Today. While at USA Today DeWitt served as a foreign correspondent, White House correspondent and national editor. After six years, she was rehired as the national correspondent for the Washington Post. Then in 1997, DeWitt was hired as a senior producer for the critically acclaimed ABC News television magazine Nightline. After four years with ABC News, in 2001, she launched her own media and communications consultation company.

In 2003, DeWitt served as the communications consultant for several municipalities and non-profits, like the Washington D.C. Water and Sewer authority. She also served as editor and columnist for the Washington Examiner a year after being named director of communications for The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a civil and human rights coalition. In 2011, DeWitt was named communications manager for the prisoners' rights advocacy group The Sentencing Project.

Throughout her career, DeWitt has amassed notable honors, including a 1999 award for best feature from the New York Association of Black Journalists for coordinating a Nightline show that featured the recorded recollections of former slaves. DeWitt also garnered a journalism award from the University of the District of Columbia and a research fellowship from the Japan Society.

Karen DeWitt was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on June 16, 2012.

Related Entries

Miami University [STUDENTOf]
[from ? to ?]

B.A.

USA Today [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 198401 to 198901]

Foreign correspondent

USA Today [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 198601 to 198701]

White House Correspondent

Media Consultant & Producer [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 200101 to 200402]

President

Sentencing Project [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 201101 to ?]

Communications Manager

New York Times [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 197712 to 198109]

National correspondent

United States Peace Corps [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1966 to 1968]

Teacher

Washington Post [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1977 to 1982]

Reporter

ABC News [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 1997 to 2001]

Producer

Washington Examiner [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 200402 to 200503]

Washington editor/columnist

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 2006 to 2009]

Director of Communications

Karen's Kitchen [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 198206 to 198209]

Host

New York Times [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 199006 to 199709]

National correspondent in Washington bureau

District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 200307 to 200403]

Director of Communications

USA Today [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 198209 to 198403]

Rewrite Editor

USA Today [EMPLOYEEOf]
[from 198809 to 199005]

Assistant National Editor